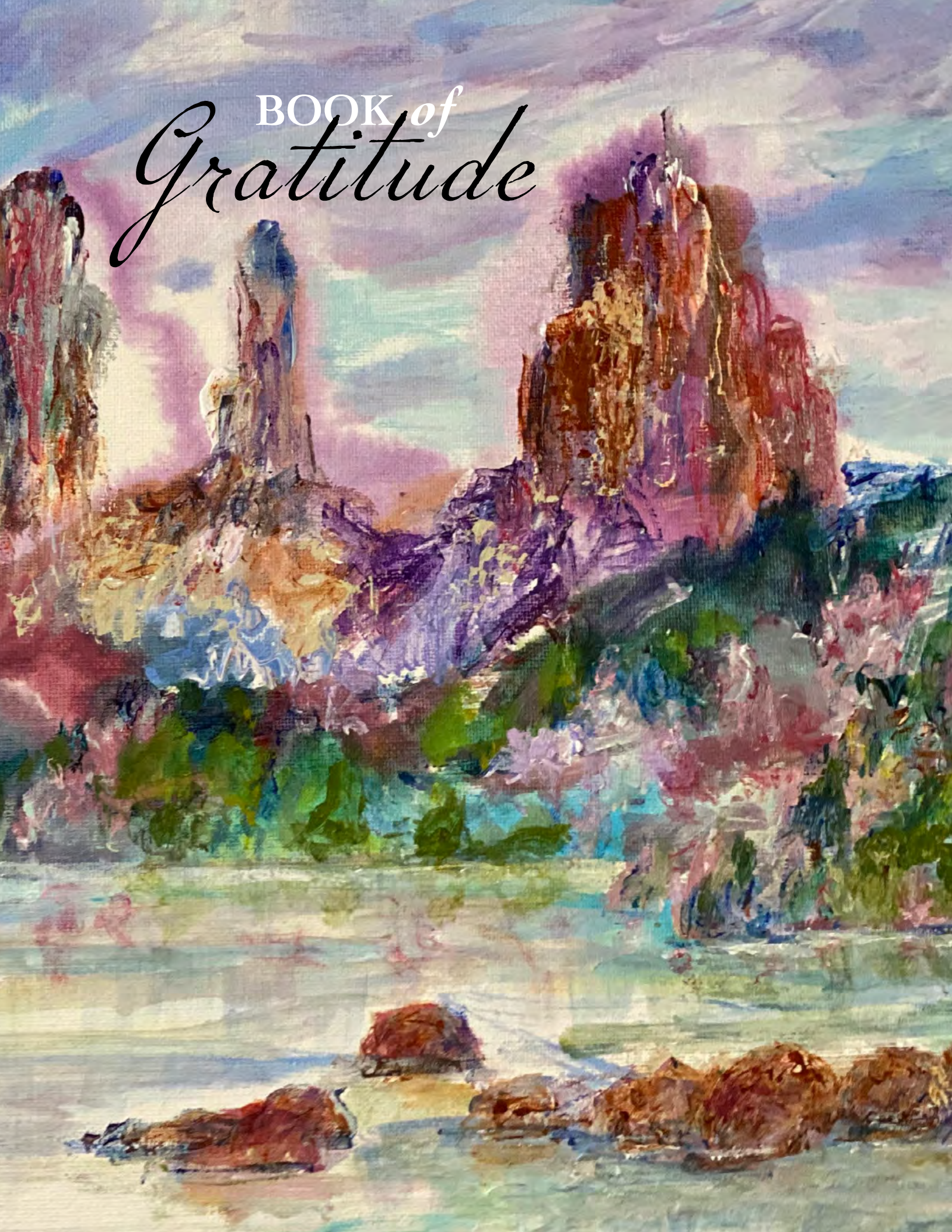


BOOK *of*
Gratitude





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www.emanuelsynagogue.org

On the cover: "Oak Creek Canyon" © 2022 Beth S. Goldberg

From the artist: "Oak Creek Canyon" is an acrylic painting of a scenic place of beautiful, colorful, red rock buttes, sedimentary formations, and steep canyons. It is a river gorge located between Flagstaff and Sedona where the crystal clear Oak Creek flows throughout the year. I find Sedona to be a wonderful place to experience the beauty and healing wonders of nature.

[grat·i·tude]

the state of being grateful,
a feeling of thankful appreciation

The Jewish people are known as the PEOPLE OF THE BOOK. Our Book, the Torah, recounts the biblical story of our ancestors, from which our traditions, ethics, and values have been shaped for generations.

We pride ourselves, and learn from, telling our stories and the history of our people. Our faith teaches us how important it is to remember (*Zachor*), whether it's at the Passover seder, in shul on the High Holy Days, at Yizkor services, or at daily Minyanim.

We are also people who value gratitude. We express our gratitude every day. The first prayerful words of the day are "I am grateful." Our prayer services offer many expressions of gratitude. And we practice thankfulness in our daily lives.

We thought it important to publish this *Book of Gratitude* for several reasons: One, to remember all of the things we are

grateful for after two-plus challenging years of the pandemic. Two, to tell some of our special stories. Three, to reflect on how we adapted and overcame periods of uncertainty and disappointment. And Four, to mark this time in The Emanuel's history, illustrating our resilience so that future generations can learn and prevail during challenging times. And, at the same time, raise needed funds for The Emanuel. We are immensely grateful to our donors to this project, in terms of money and time.

We encourage you to spend some time with the pages that follow. We hope you will be inspired by the wisdom, thoughtful words of gratitude, and creativity of your fellow congregants and clergy.

May The Emanuel continue to thrive.

— Alan Parker

On behalf of the Book of Gratitude Committee

AND SO MUCH MORE...

A Prayer of Gratitude

by Rabbi David J. Small



When I was very young, I learned the prayer *Modeh Ani* that expresses gratitude for waking up in the morning and being alive. Until Covid, this prayer was a bit of an abstraction.

Now it feels concrete and real. My first thought upon waking is, “I need coffee!” The second thought is “Thank you Blessed Creator — I am alive today.” I will never take for granted life and health again!

Blessed Creator, I thank you:

- For my spouse, Debbie, our children, and our entire extended family circle. I love and cherish them and appreciate their treasured presence in my life.
- For the blessing of serving The Emanuel Synagogue. How fortunate I feel to know so many wonderful, good human beings who share a common love of our beautiful Jewish tradition, who care for each other and support each other and The Emanuel with a generous spirit. During the pandemic, our people were able to respond with great lovingkindness towards each other because this was not a new practice. Pathways of kindness and caring were already well established and we were able to creatively adapt to new conditions and challenges while intensifying our commitment to good ways and good deeds.
- For our wonderful Emanuel colleagues: clergy, staff and lay leaders who came together to uphold our mission and to lead and serve our people in greatly challenging conditions. Their generosity of spirit, camaraderie, and commitment to our community inspire me on a daily basis.

■ For the many friends and allies within our Jewish community and in the larger community who join together to improve the lives of others, share knowledge and resources and encourage each other to be the best we can be and to make the world a better place.

■ For our nation, the United States of America, and the ideals that it represents to me, freedom, human dignity, enterprise, generosity of spirit, courage, and a sense of fairness and decency at home and in the world. At times we stray from these ideals and can always do better, yet I cannot think of another great power in world history that has served as such a beacon to so many people from around the globe.

■ For the State of Israel, a modern miracle whose people inspire me. The return of our Jewish people to the historic homeland and the emergence of a modern, dynamic nation amid the most profound challenges is a story that never ceases to amaze me. The dignity and vitality of Jewish people around the world are upheld and nourished by Israel's existence. The struggle for peace and equality for all the inhabitants of the land poses an abiding challenge; I admire the many ways that this tiny nation explores to seek a good way forward for all amid the most difficult circumstances imaginable.

■ For the treasure of our Torah and all of our Jewish culture and history. These offer a true “tree of life” guiding us to live better, more meaningful lives, lifting our spirits and offering joy and delight every day.

■ For the beauty and grandeur of our world and the Universe. The song of the birds, the blinking of the fireflies, the heron's majestic flight, the darting of the fish in the shallows, all these and more awaken a deep sense of wonder and delight. ***How many are Your creations, Adonai, how great Your designs! Grant us Your love in the morning that we may joyously sing all our days, Amen.***

Our deepest gratitude to our Emanuel Synagogue family for your friendship and support, especially during the pandemic.

—*Sheryl & Stu Kopel*

We are grateful for our Emanuel friends and family who are with us during good times and support us during difficult ones.

— Joyce & Mickey Libbin

I am grateful for this gift of life, for my family and caring friends who are sharing it with me.

— **Bea Mitlak**

We are deeply grateful for the support and love of our family. Our connection to The Emanuel helped us stay centered and grounded.

— The Topol & Molinari Family

We are profoundly grateful to the entire Emanuel community for allowing everyone to continue to participate in the Synagogue offerings throughout the Covid pandemic. In particular, after Deb's mom's passing on Rosh Hashanah in 2020, we were able to observe the rituals and attend Minyan for the year thanks to the dedication and ingenuity of the clergy, the president, the many wonderful Zoom hosts, and the regular Minyan attendees! We are forever grateful to all! With love and gratitude...

— *Joel & Deb Kent*

We are forever grateful to our Emanuel family who provided meals, gift cards and support after our family faced health challenges.

*With heartfelt gratitude —
Lisa, Mike, Rebecca & Zach
Lenkiewicz*

We're grateful for our children's national contributions to the health and financial well-being of the country — and for video communications keeping everyone connected.

— *Sandra & Michael Myers*

With deepest gratitude to/for G-d, Family, Health, Science, our Emanuel Kehillah.

— *Lisa Levy, Jim Schulwolf, Erik, Alex, Daniel & Sara*

Many thanks to the clergy, staff, and members of the congregation for your dedication, hard work, and creativity over these past two years. We are grateful!

— The Glucksman/Amblo family



A Hearty “Amen!”

by Hazzan Daniella Risman



Each night, my husband Eric and I say a *bracha* with our children before dinner as part of our gratitude practice. Judah quickly learned to participate as a baby with a hearty “Amen!” For months, if we sat down to a meal without saying a *bracha* out loud as a family, he would call out “Amen” as a reminder. It was one of his first words. Judah is nearly two now. He and our four-year-old daughter Zehava are growing and changing daily by some magic I cannot seem to fathom. Two days ago they both received their first Covid vaccine.

Two days from the writing of this message will mark one year of my time with The Emanuel. Joining The Emanuel at this intense time of global upheaval and social isolation has been challenging and complicated. How does one foster relationship and community, and still remain vigilantly protective of

Every day, we walk a path most of us never imagined we would be on. What bolsters me daily is the act of choosing awe, wonder, and gratitude.

individual safety? How does one nurture connection without stigmatizing isolation or, vice versa, encourage social distancing without condemning gathering? And in struggling with this impossible balance, how do we renew our hope and faith in a future of goodness?

Every day, we walk a path most of us never imagined we would be on. What bolsters me daily is the act of choosing awe, wonder, and gratitude. How glorious is it to hear a bird sing. To see leaves emerging anew from a tree. To watch a baby yawn. How wondrous to witness someone learn something new, gaining a

skill and a sense of empowerment. To know that with one phone call a slew of loving synagogue friends are at the ready to celebrate or mourn together. How remarkable to imagine the effort so many hundreds of people have made to provide us with food in our cabinets, sturdy tables to lean on, bright lights to shine in our homes, safe streets to drive on, beautiful music to listen to. Every moment around us is peppered with opportunities for gratitude.

May we all remember to say “Amen” every day.

With gratitude for all of you, my new friends.

Endurance is a blessing and a virtue.

— Marcia & Michael Krinsky

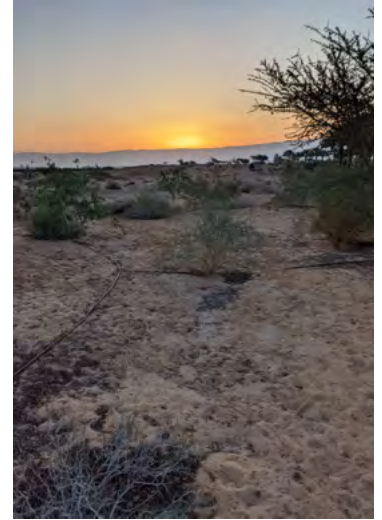
We thank Rabbi Small for allowing the use of technology for services, especially for Shabbat. It enabled us to feel connected to our Jewish souls, to our Rabbi and Hazzan, and to our fellow Emanuel members.

We were all together, able to see each other on our computers while being safe in our homes. *Todah Rabbah* for understanding how important it was and making that happen for all of us. We needed it and it helped us feel connected.

— Susan & Paul Goldberg

Decompressing & Reconnecting in Israel

BY HAZZAN MOSHE PINCHOVER



First and foremost, I am so grateful to be part of this wonderful community. We have endured hard times these past few years, but I have been blessed to see the resilience, kindness, and loving support that has been a source of light in these dark and difficult times.

Now that we are able to gather together again in person, it is a joy to see our community not just surviving but thriving. I'm looking forward to many happy times ahead.

In addition, I am very grateful that I had the opportunity in May, after a long separation, to travel to Israel and spend time with beloved family members. I also had the privilege of attending a communal meditation and yoga seminar, where I was finally able to decompress, relax, and restore my positive energy. After that I felt refreshed and ready to rejoin our community and share that positivity with others.

After the seminar, I hiked to a beautiful oasis, called *Ein Aqeb*, which is just about a mile from the resting place of David Ben Gurion in *Kibbutz Sde Boker*. It was an amazing feeling to jump into the cold water after the long hike in the blazing desert heat.

I've learned, in these past few years, to see the gifts that I am given and to appreciate each one. I'd like to thank this congregation for being one of those precious gifts that sustained me through hard times.

I've learned, in these past few years, to see the gifts that I am given and to appreciate each one. I'd like to thank this congregation for being one of those precious gifts.



Jenna Behan

There are two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle.

— *Attributed to Albert Einstein*

Lisa & John Behan

B'NAI MITZVAH IN THE COVID ERA



*Bradley Cramer
with family*

My Bat Mitzvah experience was not what I expected following the Bar Mitzvahs of my two brothers. With them, I saw big parties with lots of food and family, and large celebrations. That became my norm. But in 2021, that was not going to be my experience. What was going to happen for me? I was unsure. How would I learn? Would we wear masks and be required to use hand sanitizer? Would my Bat Mitzvah be at the Shul, or would it have to be on Zoom? Could my extended family come to it, or would it be just my immediate family? Could I have a party at all? How was my Bat Mitzvah supposed to work?

Somehow, we got it to work according to the new norm. I learned virtually with Rabbi Small and Cantor Cohn z”l. Leading up to my Bat Mitzvah, I led portions of different services on Zoom from my dining room, with my family gathered around the table. We had my Bat Mitzvah at the Shul, where we wore masks. I had most of my immediate family at the service. A lot of my extended family was on Zoom from around the country and in other countries, and they participated virtually. I was excited to see family on Zoom who may not have been able to attend even if there was no Covid because they were so far away. We had a party afterwards in my backyard with family and family friends. It wasn’t EXACTLY what I had in mind, but none of the Bar and Bat Mitzvahs in 2020-21 followed the expected norm. We all followed the new norm, and I was happy and thankful for my Bat Mitzvah experience.

— Rebecca Bomzer

Planning a simcha under normal conditions takes time, effort and coordination. You want everything to be perfect and everyone to have a wonderful experience. During the pandemic, all efforts guaranteed no particular outcome.

As time passed, our son Bradley was busy studying hard and preparing for his Bar Mitzvah. He met with Rabbi Small to study his *Parsha* and prepare his speech. I was so impressed with the Rabbi’s patience with Bradley, trying to get to know him. Bradley can’t stay still for long so he would run around outside, and one day he did an impressive backward handspring. The Rabbi liked it, and asked Bradley if he wanted to incorporate the move into his D’var Torah. Bradley loved the idea and worked it into his speech. He may be the only child to perform a backflip on any synagogue bimah.

Bradley studied during the summer over Zoom with student Rabbi Jessica. Cantor Risman was so generous with her time and developed a really special relationship with him. She was a calming influence on a boy who didn’t know how to calm down. We have so much gratitude for the leaders of The Emanuel, who didn’t hesitate to spend time with Bradley and help him prepare despite the challenges posed by the pandemic.

We prayed that we would be able to have our large, in-person Bar Mitzvah. By fall, we breathed a sigh of relief as Covid receded. It was comforting to know that the service would be livestreamed and zoomed to anyone in the world who wanted to attend. That technology had long been perfected by The Emanuel geek squad and was a blessing to many, every week connecting them to the shul. Zooming and streaming work well for B’nai Mitzvah. We believe that streaming will survive Covid.

When the big weekend finally arrived, we were overjoyed to welcome so many family and friends to all the planned events. Everything turned out amazing. Bradley did a spectacular job as he really basked in the limelight of the bimah. Those who attended will never forget his strong effort. The kiddush luncheon went really well. Covid veered off course for the time being, and it felt like we had missed a big hurricane. We were pleased to report zero cases of Covid following our celebration.

Our family members coming from near and far enjoyed the entire weekend immensely. We heard so many thankful comments, as it was the first family event for most in a long time. It was indeed a very joyous and memorable time for everyone.

— Avi & Joleen Cramer



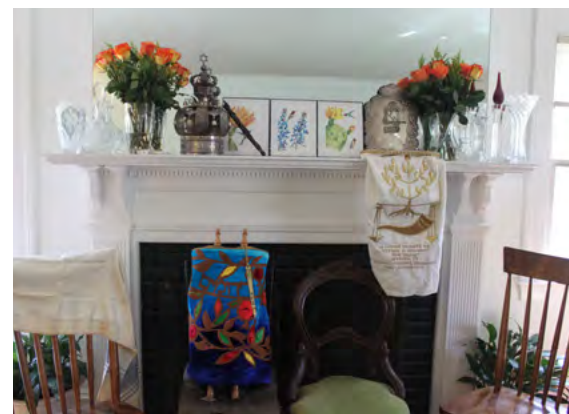
When the state shut down five weeks before our daughter Abigail's Bat Mitzvah The Emanuel community surrounded our family with love and support.

Once the decision to "go virtual" was made, Rabbi Small, Cantor Cohn z"l, Barbara Fink, and countless other Emanuel helpers worked feverishly to get the technology up and running to keep our community thriving despite the circumstances.

It was fortuitous that Abi's Torah portion was *Tazria-Metzora*, which discusses the treatment of ailments in the community, times of quarantine, and the healing power of personal interaction, as we all processed our new isolation.

The prospect of celebrating one of life's happiest and most anticipated moments alone can be so depressing. Nothing that a parent can do individually for their child can match the power of what the child can experience when a whole community rallies for the occasion. The Emanuel provided our family an embrace of celebration when it was most appreciated. The Emanuel gave Abigail an understanding that her presence matters in the world, and that her presence in our Emanuel community matters. There is nothing more a parent can ask for their child. For that we are eternally grateful to all of you.

— Lisa & Scott Sadinsky



The Value of a Dream

by Rabbi Philip Lazowski

“

If we will it, it will be no passing dream, but inevitably, a reality.



WE ALL HAVE DREAMS. There are many views and interpretations regarding dreams. In the Bible, dreams serve as a means by which God communicated with man. Such messages were limited to a few individuals such as the Patriarchs, prophets, and rulers.

As he slept at Bet-El, Jacob dreamed a message from God. King Solomon had a similar revelation at Gibeon. God revealed His message to King Abimelech regarding Sarah. Dreams served as Divine revelations. In Talmud the scholar Rav says there are three things we should always pray for: 1) a good king; 2) a good year; and 3) a good dream. We can easily understand the first two. We always pray for good government. Our prayer book includes a prayer for the leaders of our country, especially in an election year. We pray for a President with ability, compassion, and one who will be a friend to Israel. We also understand the idea of praying for a good year. But does the Rav go on to mention a prayer for a “good dream?”

Rav is teaching us to have a dream that inspires us, providing a vision of something beyond our-

selves that we reach for, especially in these times of economic stress and Covid. Without such a vision, life focuses only on personal concerns and the minimal necessities. With a vision, we feel inspired to transcend the daily pressures of our lives. All of us, at some time, see visions that affect the way we live. We have dreams of what we want to accomplish. Keeping these visions fresh requires ongoing efforts. We need to take time out of prayer for reminding ourselves of what is important to us and be thankful a good dream is a good gift. Every dream has a particle of prophecy in it. A person's every act begins with a dream and ends with one.

Theodor Herzl kept alive the vision of his long-standing dream, “If we will it, it is no dream.” What Herzl meant is that it is a dream that can come true. Indeed Herzl, the founder of modern political Zionism, provides a wonderful example of how holding fast to a vision leads to impressive results. If we will it, it will be no passing dream, but inevitably, a reality.

Therefore, friends, hold on to your dreams and have gratitude for your wishful thoughts.

When we moved to Bloomfield in 2016 to our summer home, it was terra incognita – we knew no one. So it is with sincere gratitude that we thank Regina and Don, Gail and Jeff, Marsha and Mike, Sheila and Meyer, Sheryl and Stu, Caroline and Mike, and Ona and Tom who welcomed us into their homes, hearts, and circle of friends.

— Nancy & Darryl Garfinkel

With extreme gratitude, deep appreciation, and heartfelt thankfulness to Hashem for our loving family, wonderful friends, health, safety, and our meaningful spiritual life at The Emanuel Synagogue for over fifty years.

— Barbara & Stephen Berns

Silver Lining

These past couple of years have been challenging to all, as we have navigated through the pandemic and very challenging times. During this time, we had the opportunity to spend quality time with our children, Cheryl and Michael and Marcia, and grandchildren, Layla and Noah. This was the silver lining, for which we are very grateful. Being part of their lives as they are growing up is wonderful and the pandemic made it possible in ways we would have never otherwise had. They bring joy and light into our world.



We are also grateful for our synagogue family. We are so fortunate to have been members of Beth Hillel Synagogue when we relocated to Connecticut in 1990. Our girls became Bat Mitzvah by Rabbi Lazowski and along with Rabbi Small, he named our grandchildren at The Emanuel Synagogue. We have shared simchas and also the loss of our parents with our synagogue community, who have provided comfort and extended family at those times.

We wish everyone the best throughout the year and we are grateful you are in our life.

— Gail & Jeff Adler



Despite the challenges and limitations of the past 2½ years, we continue to gather and maintain our ties as a genuine community. Our initiatives to adapt to our new environment have given us fond memories and broadened our ways of thinking for the greater good. The Brotherhood has continued its annual events successfully online and returned to in-person programming with enthusiastic attendance. A special thanks to all who have participated and volunteered at our events. We could not have done it without you!

In memory of all those who we have lost. May their memory be a blessing to all.

— The Emanuel Brotherhood

The Sisterhood of The Emanuel Synagogue is so very grateful for everyone who helps make up our extended family: our dear clergy, staff, volunteers, and congregants. We take delight in and cherish our young, blossoming families who grow with us and share and enjoy our rich, beautiful heritage.

It is our pleasure to support our Emanuel Synagogue and all those who are a part of our treasured family. May we all continue to enjoy good health and all our loved ones continue to share our bounty of blessings and go from strength to strength.

— The Emanuel Sisterhood



Sanford Cohn z”l

1954-2022

*Beloved husband, father, teacher, musician, cantor,
leader, and friend to so many.*

May his memory be a blessing.



Photo: Rabbi David Small

Todah Rabbah

by Rabbi Jessica Dell'Era

When we daven the Amidah, there is one paragraph in the middle that requires special attention: the *Modim*, so named for its opening words “*Modim anachnu lach* / We give thanks to You...” For this moment of gratitude, we give a half-bow, from the waist only, without the bent knees characteristic of other bows in Jewish prayer choreography. And even when the service leader is making a full repetition of the *Amidah*, after we have each prayed silently and individually, the congregation bows even from their seated position and recites a *Modim* variation for themselves. Why is it insufficient simply to say “Amen” to this particular blessing, as we do for all the others during the repetition? Why does it require our continued action, our words, and our concentration?

Rabbi Elijah Spira, a 17th-century Czech commentator on the Shulchan Aruch law code, explained the peculiar demands of the *Modim* passage thus: “There is no way to effect gratitude/thanks collectively, with one person giving thanks on behalf of another. Each person must accept for themselves the yoke of heaven, with their own lips and not by proxy.” (Eliyahu Rabbah, Orach Chayim 127). More recently, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks wrote, “when it comes to saying thank you, we cannot delegate this away to someone else to do it on our behalf. Thanks has to come directly from us.”

Thus, I am thankful for the opportunity to say on my own behalf a profound *todah rabbah* to The Emanuel



community. For what? Well, that list could go on for many pages, but I want my thanks to encompass everyone I interacted with during my three years at The Emanuel, in ways large and small. I am very grateful to Rabbi Small for his mentoring and friendship; and grateful also to Barbara Fink, Hazzan Risman, Hazzan Pinchover, and the Adult Ed Committee for sharpening my teaching and leading. Thank you to donors like Ray and Gail Weinstein, Regina and Don Miller, and many others whose generosity has kept the Student Rabbi Program thriving even through uncertain times. Thank you to Lisa Lenkiewicz, Lisa Taylor, Kobi Benita, and Kathy Hart for their logistical support in the office. I am grateful to Lisa Sadinsky and Regina Miller for coordinating my accommodations, as well as the dozens of members who hosted Leah and me in their homes, invited us for meals, and ferried us here and there. Thank you to everyone who sang along with my davening and responded to my sermons and teachings, everyone who invited me to join them at kiddush, approached me with their questions and comments, or even simply looked me in the eyes to smile or say “Shabbat Shalom.” All of you are doing holy work in God’s image, building an inviting spiritual community where it is easy to learn and grow. *Todah rabbah* for the infinite ways you have shaped me as a Rabbi.



All of you are doing holy work in God’s image, building an inviting spiritual community where it is easy to learn and grow.

Congratulations to **Kira Goldenberg** on her New England Emmy Award nomination for her work as Episode Producer and Interviewer on CPTV's CUTLINE: The Cost of Covid — Personal Stories from a Year of Loss (originally aired on March 18, 2021).

Congratulations too, on her Master of Social Work degree, with honors, from Hunter College, June 2022.

We are very proud of you and love you!! ❤️

— Andrea, Steven, Jeremy
Goldenberg & Rachel Dreyer

We are grateful

for the leadership, flexibility, and creativity of clergy, administrative, custodial and Religious School staffs, Board of Trustees, committee leaders and members, countless volunteers, and, of course, our technical crew, who have worked so hard to ensure that The Emanuel has been able to continue to provide so many diverse opportunities for worship, learning, and social support and contact, during the past two years.

— Ona & Tom Mastronarde

Two Years in the Life of a Pandemic (A Time Capsule)

BY KEN SIMON

WINTER

2020

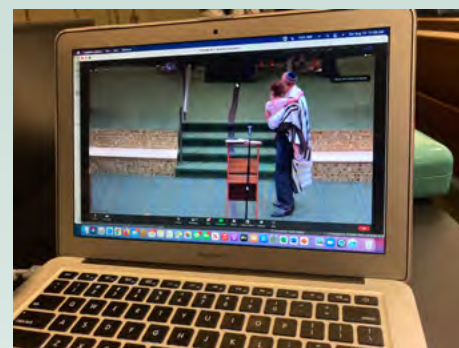
March 12, 2020: I call my brother Mel to wish him a Happy Birthday. He is President of The Emanuel Synagogue. It is not a happy birthday as Covid has descended upon us; decisions are looming.

March 15, 2020: The Emanuel Synagogue leadership meets to ratify closing our synagogue and discuss how to keep our core function of rituals ongoing. Rabbi Small suggests Zoom and I offer to help. Much thanks to Regina Miller, my partner in this effort. Pesach will be virtual this year and Rabbi Small hosts a Seder. (It is now summer 2022 as of this writing, and we have continued to provide Zoom services, three times a day everyday, since that early date, despite power and Internet outages.)



SPRING

April 2020: Peter Graber-Lipperman and I chair a task force to determine guidelines for a healthy reopening which included medical professionals and lay and professional leaders. This helps to prevent the spread of Covid in our building and slowly allows us to open our building for prayer in January 2021.



Not just included: *Thriving*

by Tammi & Andrew Selinger

Soon after Jodi was in preschool — when she was diagnosed with a genetic condition, Fragile X Syndrome, an autism spectrum disorder — we met a congregant who told us about a wonderful Religious School program for special needs students. We were very excited to give her the opportunity to identify with her Jewish heritage. When Jodi was 10 years old, we joined The Emanuel and enrolled her in the Religious School. In the beginning it was very challenging for Jodi, but Faye and Carolyn worked with her in a slow and methodical way. Using her interests and taking consideration of her comfort level, they familiarized her with the synagogue, religious symbols, and the Hebrew alphabet.

One of Jodi's strengths has always been her ability to model leadership. Teachers in school always told us that she could run the classroom in their absence! This carried to her Emanuel experiences as well. As her resource room progress report said, "By far Jodi's most praiseworthy achievement has been her modeling of the leadership of a congregation in the prayers familiar to her from her participation in afternoon *Tefilah* in the small chapel." With this base and the nurturing environment of The Emanuel family, Jodi continues to thrive.

In 2001 a meeting was set to discuss Jodi's goals and much to our surprise, her Bat Mitzvah. Our

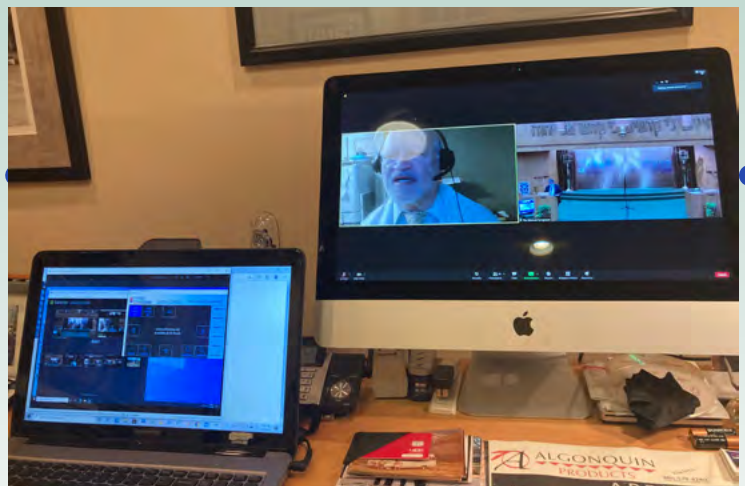
initial goal was for her to be able to identify with her religion. We had not even thought that a Bat Mitzvah would be possible. Due to the inclusive nature of The Emanuel, it was expected that she would become a Bat Mitzvah. Everyone worked together to plan a service designed to both fulfill the requirements of a Bat Mitzvah and create a beautiful service. Since Jodi learns better when she understands the entire process, two full rehearsals were held to rehearse the service from beginning to end. This helped Jodi anticipate each step in the process and the teamwork helped with any rough spots. For example, Jodi began to pretend to sneeze right after the Rabbi said "I will now bless you." Changing the Rabbi's words to "I'd like to share with you a very special blessing" eliminated Jodi's literal connection and response. The Bat Mitzvah, on



April 2020: After being shut in for a month, I start to venture out cycling on the roads. Beauty abounds everywhere. Few cars are on the road so it is safer. There is a dramatic decrease in air pollution and thus the sky is bluer than I could remember. The birds are singing loudly and animals are coming out to experience this new quiet. Cycling is gorgeous, new, and wonderful.

May 2020: Our Ritual Committee initiates a plan to Livestream our services. We engage a company with the requirement that Zoom must be integrated with Livestream so congregants can participate in the services. This is novel!

June 2020: Clergy and I meet to talk about virtual High Holy Days. We plan for Clergy to be in the building with all others on Livestream or Zoom.



Jodi's 13th birthday, was incredible and we never in our wildest dreams imagined that it would be so wonderful!

After her Bat Mitzvah and Religious School learning ended, Jodi began requesting to attend Minyan whenever possible. She enjoyed her social interactions with Rabbi Small, Cantor Cohn z"l, and Moshe Pinchover very much. This even led to her increased comfort level in the sanctuary. Every time she is in the sanctuary, she chooses to sit right up front to be close to the bimah. On Yom Kippur, Jodi attends the entire evening and day services!

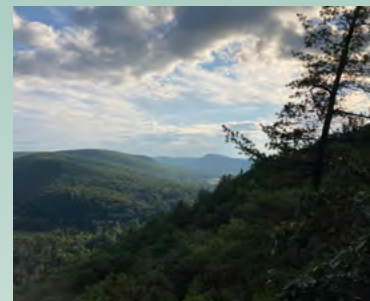
When the pandemic created the opportunity for Minyan services to be conducted on Zoom, Jodi began to be a regular participant, to the point that she plans activities around Minyan times. Soon we started hearing lots of information

about Judy's dog, Marshall's trips, Regina's granddaughter, and much more as she became very connected to her fellow Minyonaires. As time went on, we could see that the Zoom began a bit before the set Minyan time and continues a little after to allow for some schmoozing. Jodi is always eager to participate. It brings us such joy to hear how Jodi is included in conversations and how her comfort level and confidence have increased in social situations. So many have felt restricted by the pandemic, but for Jodi, Minyan has opened her world. Since Jodi likes to share so much of her life and experiences with her fellow Minyonaires, she often shares what we are having for dinner or what "dad" has baked. One time she showed a pan of cinnamon rolls and bragged about how good they were. She later asked us if we can share them with

her friends. So, we wrapped some up and delivered them. She was so happy to share! Another time Jodi mentioned that "my dad went fishing on his boat." This led to a conversation with Rabbi Lazowski and Jodi about fishing and soon after to Rabbi Lazowski and Moshe Pinchover joining her dad on his boat for a spectacular day of fishing.

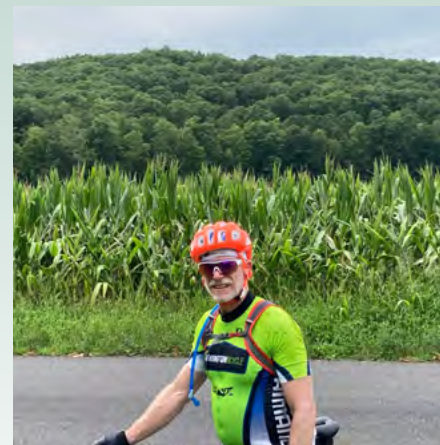
On many of Jodi's Religious School progress reports it says, "All of the above curriculum and goals for Jodi aim for incremental inclusion to the extent possible not only with the Religious School and Synagogue, but with the Jewish community as a whole." This was written over 20 years ago and was true then and even more now. These were not just words, this is the fabric and the culture ingrained in this wonderful environment we call our family, our shul, our community. ■

July 2020: While hope springs eternal it appears that I will miss the Israel Ride (charity bike ride from Jerusalem to Eilat, Israel) as the ride is canceled. I enter the Virtual Ride (fund-raiser for Hazon and The Arava Institute). The Isabella Freedman Retreat Center in Falls Village (run by Hazon) will hold limited retreats in August.



SUMMER

August 2020: Mel and I embark on an Isabella Freedman Retreat where they have separate cabins for us, three kosher meals a day, and some of the most beautiful country for riding. Our brother Chet joins for our first-day ride. We ride 50 miles a day over five days in the Berkshires and Litchfield Hills. I am thankful for the love and friendship of my brothers and that we can enjoy nature in a place so close to our homes. *"At night the stars put on a show for free"* (Carole King).



We are thankful for our family and friends, clergy, staff, lay leaders and volunteers who supported us all during the Covid pandemic. We appreciate the hard work of our Emanuel community members who worked to keep us safe and connected when we could not be together in person. We have come through the challenges of the past two years a stronger and more vibrant community. We have much to look forward to in the years ahead.

— Reesa Olins &
Robert Teitelman

Massachusetts General Hospital



JEWISH CEREMONIES CAN ELEVATE US during difficult times. This is a wedding in the ICU at Mass General Hospital. Our son, Jake Rosenberg on the far right, helped to find what was important to his patient with Covid. And we are grateful.

— Hilda Slivka & Ralph Rosenberg



October-December 2020: Josh Cohen runs virtual programming with trivia contests. The Fierbergs steal the show at the Broadway Trivia Contest, and why not? Families have meaningful Bar and Bat Mitzvahs at home or in their offices. Torahs are delivered to their homes to create a genuine experience. Some hold drive-bys for well-wishers. After no live music for over six months, a rock promoter scams the Town of Morris into thinking a farm is a wedding destination. We sit two to a pod separated from others by eight feet — a nightclub spread out over acres of farmland. Great to hear live music again!

FALL

September 2020: Livestream and Zoom integration installed and running, although not without glitches. I run the Livestream and Zoom (with Regina) and we have close to 700 people virtually attending our holiday services. Congregants participate on Zoom and I am grateful for this technology as it has allowed us to keep our congregation together. A lifeline for many.





— *Howard & Elaine Smith and family*

WINTER

January 2021: We are back live for Shabbat Services. We mask, we distance, we wash our hands and we pray. Congregants trickle back. With the help of Zoom we continue to have our Minyanim virtually and in person. Vaccines come on the scene and it gives us hope that there is a brighter future.



2021

February 2021: As we are slowly coming back into the building, we begin to dream about a tribute to Rabbi Small, Debbie Chameides, and Rabbi and Ruth Lazowski. This had been planned for a year. What will this look like? How many people can attend? Can we serve food? My wife Pam and I get vaxxed. Things are looking up.

March 2021: It's been a year of deprivation, sadness, and loss. We have persevered. We hold in-person Passover services. It is a pleasure to be together. I have agreed to be President to follow my brother. I know this won't be easy but someone has to do it. Ben Engel and Arts at The Emanuel begin plans to produce his latest play, *Havdalah*!

IN A MORNING BLESSING we thank God for פוקה עורים — for opening our eyes.
The last two years have opened our eyes to an understanding of a Passover song and a prayer:

Had Covid forced us to stop singing His praises in our beautiful sanctuary
and only provided us with Zoom

יִנּוּ — *we would have been gratefully satisfied*

In the אשר יצר prayer we thank God for our complexity and recognize our vulnerability:

For creating us with multiple air passages

That can be plugged by Covid infection

For creating us with a brain to develop a vaccine and a responsive immune system

And free will to refuse to be vaccinated, putting all of us at risk

With gratitude to our clergy, administration, staff, and members for keeping us safe and the
synagogue active during a most difficult time.

— Jean & Leon Chameides

SPRING

April 2021: As Covid cases start to drop off and many become vaccinated, people come back to shul. I plan a boxed kiddush lunch for May.

May 2021: We have 60 in person for a kiddush lunch. Lunch is a big draw! Some time-honored traditions still are observed. We hold Friday Night Under The Stars. We hire a new Hazzan, Daniella Risman. Who is she? Just you wait!!!



June 2021: I become President of the Board of Trustees of The Emanuel Synagogue. Oh Boy! Rabbi Small, Hazzan Risman, and Ritual Director Moshe Pinchover sit down with me to plan our first in-person High Holiday services in two years. We are optimistic and yet have no idea what to expect. We know we have a virtual backup. Kiddush following Shabbat Services is back, thanks to Regina Miller and her team.

July 2021: Elena, Pam, and I get away for the first time in two years. We go to Martha's Vineyard where we luxuriate in the beauty of the Island. Good food (best tuna ever!), great biking, beaching, and strolling in mostly great weather. It was such a pleasure after being cooped up for so long. Upon our return, Hazzan Risman joins our clergy and sings up a storm, and The Emanuel celebrates its new solar power installation!

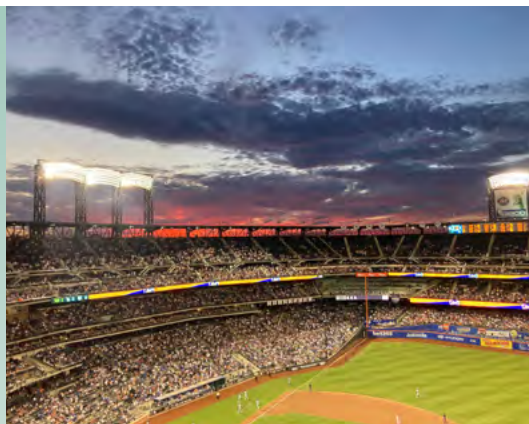


“We can complain that rose bushes have thorns or we can rejoice that thorn bushes have roses.”

— Abraham Lincoln

RONA GOLLOB

August 2021: If you are a baseball fan you may have missed seeing baseball in person in the last two years. Going to a Dodgers-Mets game at Citi Field with my brother Mel was a highlight of the summer. Oh, yes, and more cycling. On a sad note, we lose our friend Phil Handler.



October 2021: We pull off the impossible! A three-day tribute to Rabbi and Ruth Lazowski and to Rabbi Small and Debbie Chameides is well attended with good food and worthy honors. Rebecca Frankel launches her new book and answers questions about *Into the Forest*, the story of Ruth Lazowski. Everybody was touched by the beauty of the weekend. At the end of the month we celebrate our most highly attended Bat Mitzvah of the year, Hannah Ruby Fink, Barbara and Jonathan's daughter.

FALL



September 2021: Well over 500 congregants joined us for in-person High Holiday services. Everyone was masked and vaxxed. It felt so good to come together in prayer. Our first year with Hazzan Risman. When the Rabbi was concerned about a possible Covid contact, and absented himself from the sanctuary, Hazzan Risman and Moshe Pinchover managed the bimah beautifully.



The Emanuel Players

by Ben Engel, Playwright



Amid the ups and downs of the “test positivity” graph, The Emanuel Players had an opportunity in Fall 2021 to stage a play, and we took it.

The cast and crew committed. Financial supporters stepped up as they always have. We worked through all the logistics and rehearsed with gusto.

And on November 7, 2021 — with a fully-vaccinated, Covid-tested cast, socially distanced seating, and a Zoom option — we gave you *Havdalah*, the story of how Jews encountered modern life in nineteenth century Germany, focusing on the Mendelssohns.



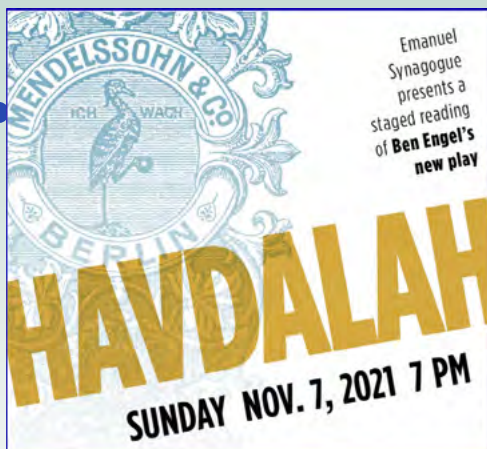
Michael Kazakoff

I had forgotten that, when writing the play pre-pandemic, I’d had Felix Mendelssohn admit that “I do wear a mask” to conceal his true feelings. Re-reading that line during rehearsals, I realized that it had picked up an unintended meaning, but I decided to retain it. More for the audience to contemplate.

Shortly after the performance, Covid closed in again. But as Franklin Delano Roosevelt once assured us, “*This great Nation will endure as it has endured, will revive, and will prosper.*”

With continued vigilance, The Emanuel Players plan to mount the stage soon and delight you again!

November 2021: We pull off the Impossible 2! Following a great lecture and Q&A by a Yale scholar on the topic of the times of the setting of Ben Engel’s play *Havdalah* and a really wonderful concert by Hazzan Risman with accompaniment by Cantor Emeritus Sanford Cohn (maybe the last time some of us heard him sing), the play is performed in front of a live audience of over 100 to rave reviews.



December 2021: December arrives with a spike in Omicron cases. We first see these cases in November in South Africa. The spike is quick and steep. The advice from our medical experts is to close for a few weeks until the spike passes. And the year ends much as it started.



I am very grateful that The Emanuel chose to embrace Zoom these past few years and I hope it will continue. Zoom has provided me with access to my Emanuel family during Minyan, and before Minyan, when for 10 minutes you can learn all sorts of important information like how long to cook the brisket or just enjoy the fellowship of being there. During times when it is necessary to “be there” without having to walk into the synagogue you can see and enjoy comforting faces. Zoom has not only provided an important link during Covid but has given extended family members, who live out of town and even far away, the ability to be there when they feel they need to (for example during yahrzeit, to attend a funeral, or to attend the commemoration of a baby naming, etc.). I am very grateful to Regina, Ken, Tamar, Joel, Debbie, Ellen, and all those I have forgotten to name who have facilitated this technology. Thank you for making possible the warmth Zoom brings into my home from The Emanuel.

—Joyce Flescher

Thank you for making possible
the warmth Zoom brings into
my home from The Emanuel. ”

Peggy and I are
grateful to be part
of a 4th generation
Emanuel family and to
be one of the members
of Chavurah Aleph,
which started some 42
years ago.

—Peggy & Alan
Mendelson

WINTER

January 2022: We are open again. We are masked again. We distance again. People are amazingly patient and cooperative. People are being kind to one another. Our volunteers here at The Emanuel work so hard to make this a place of beauty, grace, and warmth.

February through June 2022: We had a wonderful weekend with our Scholar-in-Residence, Dr. Keren McGinity, who spoke to us about how to be more inclusive and diverse as a congregation. Emanuelites and their guests enjoyed many simchas, B’nai Mitzvah, with festive kiddush luncheons following. Our Rabbinic intern, now Rabbi Jessica Dell’Era, and Rabbi Leah Nussbaum celebrated an *Auf Ruf* on our bimah surrounded by love and appreciation for their time with us the last three years. Let us not, however, forget the other side of the balance sheet. With Cantor Emeritus Hazzan Sanford Cohn’s passing, we have lost a giant!

SPRING

*I give thanks to my friends, my
congregation, my family for helping
me get through these very stressful
times. Here’s to seeing the Light
at the end of the Tunnel.*



“How strange we are in the world, and how presumptuous our doings! Only one response can maintain us: *gratefulness* for witnessing the wonder, for the gift of our unearned right to serve, to adore, and to fulfill. It is *gratefulness* which makes the soul great.”

— Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, 20th century philosopher, theologian, activist



Don & Regina Miller

Rabbis' Tribute – L'Chayim to Life! Honor Yesterday, Live Today, Hope for Tomorrow

by Gail Adler

In the beginning, about three years ago...several congregants wanted to have a tribute dinner for Rabbi Lazowski for his 90th birthday and Ruth's 85th birthday, and a separate party to recognize Rabbi Small and Debbie Chameides for 18 years as spiritual leader at The Emanuel. As we tried to find a date and changed it twice, Covid began to lurk, but we had no idea of what was ahead. We soon found out. We canceled the events and soon we were in full lockdown. The synagogue was closed! Thankfully we had Zoom and Livestream. As we were successfully navigating this new way (led by Ken Simon) the conversation turned to wanting to show our love and appreciation to our Rabbis and spouses. The original ideas were changed, we combined the two events and made it into a Shabbaton with prayer and words from congregation members and words from each Rabbi. Finally, we were able to honor our Rabbis who now had additionally brought us through the pandemic.

The weekend (October 1-3, 2021) culminated with a book talk by Rebecca Frankel (lower right), author of *Into the Forest: A Holocaust Story of Survival, Triumph, and Love*. The book recounts Ruth Lazowski's family story of escape from a Nazi ghetto and how they miraculously survived two years in the woods.

It is with love and appreciation: I am grateful for Rabbi Lazowski and Ruth and Rabbi Small and Debbie Chameides. I am grateful that we got through the first stages of the pandemic and we're able to show them how important they are to us. I am grateful to all who helped to make the Shabbaton a success as we continue to be fortunate to receive the wisdom and learning from our beloved Rabbis.



All photos: Gary Cohen

We are grateful that we have survived the challenges our families have faced in the past two years. Those of us who immigrated here can appreciate the wonderful opportunities of America more than native-born citizens.

— Dr. & Mrs. Lou Brown and
Dr. & Mrs. Steven Brown
and families

Hashem, Be Thou my strength, my hope,
my guide. Give purpose to my work,
meaning to my struggle and direction to
my striving. Cause me to know that only
through human betterment, true fellowship
and deeds of kindness can I feel Thy
presence.

*Rabbi Morris Silverman's Sabbath
and Festival Prayer Book (1949)*

— Faith Helene

So many reasons to be grateful

by Stan Miller & Emily Lebovitz-Miller

We are thankful for so much — for the obvious, such as family and friends. And for the less obvious but no less important — Zoom, which kept together our family and our Emanuel community during the most frightening days of Covid, and which still allows our vulnerable members to be present virtually at services and other programs; the wisdom of Rabbi Small, who determined that use of electronics on Shabbat and holidays was acceptable as necessary for the preservation of life; the skills of Ken Simon, Regina Miller, and so many others who applied the available technology to bring us together safely; the first responders, health care workers, and essential workers who risked their own safety for the wellbeing of others; the scientists and physicians who developed the vaccines to protect us from the worst possible outcome of contracting Covid; and the ability finally to gather again in person in the shul we love, to pray, schmooze, and eat together. *Shehecheyanu!* We are also more grateful than we can say for the hard work of all the volunteers whose love of The Emanuel and hard work on its behalf make this synagogue the place of friendship and comfort that it is. And last, but by no means least, we are so grateful to have had the music, leadership, friendship, and comfort given by our beloved Hazzan Sanford Cohn z”l during his 20-plus years with The Emanuel.

We are more grateful than we can say for the hard work of all the volunteers whose love of The Emanuel make this the place of friendship and comfort that it is.

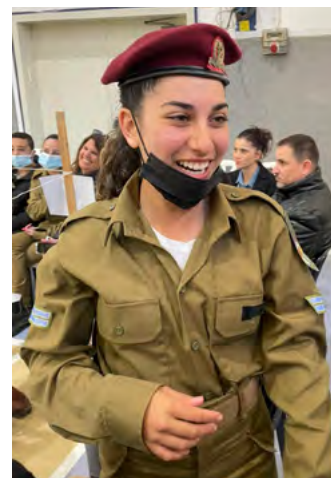
Defending Israel

Simi and I are proud of the way our daughters, **Mai** and **Leonne**, chose to continue the path of their parents and brothers and enlist in the



IDF. Their decision to make aliyah to Israel and enlist as lone soldiers comes from their pure love for Israel. We are grateful for the path Mai has chosen this past year and Leonne will follow this year. We wish them an easy, safe, and meaningful service, full of experiences that will empower them and equip them with important tools for life.

— Kobi & Simi Benita



*“In the house of a wise person,
none is ever slow to perform
the duties of hospitality.”*

— Philo, The Jewish Wisdom database



In loving memory and tribute to:
Renee Neikrie (1931-2022)

*In gratitude for all of her acts of kindness
for The Emanuel Synagogue.*

ODE TO THE EMANUEL

by Melvin Simon

Oh Shul of mine,
It is to you I give thanks,
For the community you provide,
And the spirituality you inspire,

Oh Shul of mine,
It is to you I am grateful,
For the caring congregation you are,
And the comfort you instill,

Oh Shul of mine,
It is to you I give credit,
For the Rabbi who teaches,
And those that study,

Oh Shul of mine,
It is through you we are blessed,
For the voices in harmony,
And the Hazzan who leads,

Oh Shul of mine
It is to you I offer praise
For the arts, the children, the young and the old
For the nosh and the moments to mingle,

Oh Shul of mine,
It is to you I give praise,
For the Bat and Bar Mitzvahs,
And the coming of age,

Oh Shul of mine,
I am in awe of your history,
For the years you have given,
And the years yet to come,

Oh Shul of mine,
I offer gratitude,
For the leaders that lead,
In these times of travail.

MY DAY BEGINS AND ENDS WITH GRATITUDE.

— Louise Hay

Our gratitude begins with what we learned from our parents. We are also grateful for what we have learned from family and friends. Most of all, we are grateful for the “nachas” we get from our sons.

— Saul & Joanne Pasternack



The Covid Rs

Readied. Reviewed. Revised.
Resisted. Received. Reclused.
Relinquished. Revived. Recovered.
Relapsed. Restored. Renewed.
Remained. Returned. Rejoined.
Reinvigorated.

Relieved!
Rejoice!!

— Lou Blumenfeld &
Jackie Isaacson



How Deep is the Ocean, How High is the Sky

Triptych, Mixed Media, 2015

Artist: PB Simon

Although this artwork was not created during the pandemic years, I reexamined my intention to consider some new ideas. The title is a nod to a song written by Irving Berlin in 1932.

How do we appreciate the natural world? Just as the depths of the ocean (lower left) seem infinite, so are the depths of our relationships. We reach to the stars in our aspirations. Imagination, like the cosmos (upper right), is limitless.

The tree, in the center, supports our grounding — our family, our friends, and our community.

May we all find meaning and depth in our relationships and reach great heights in our goals and aspirations.

— Pam Simon





Memories Lost & Found

by Marc Resnick



In April 2019, my mother, Eleanore, drove to Costco and saw her doctors. She was independent. But when she began falling out of bed and driving to doctors' appointments in the middle of the night, my sister took her to see her doctor and she was diagnosed with early stages of dementia. By the end of September 2019, Eleanore required a full-time aide.

In March 2020, Covid hit and the isolation made her condition worse. When I finally visited her that summer, we stayed outside and wore masks — since no one was vaccinated at that time. Seeing that her memory was fading, I combed

through the numerous family photo albums, so she'd remember her parents, aunts, uncles, siblings, cousins, and especially her children, grandchildren and great-grandchild. It helped for a few months. The last time I saw my mother was in August 2021 when I brought my son, Jonah, to see her. We took photos of him and my mother together, hoping he'll cherish these images for the rest of his life. When Jonah talked about the visit with his brothers, they wished they had gone too.

In January 2022, I received the bad news. She was having trouble breathing, then passed away an hour later. While I was upset at first, I was relieved knowing that it was over and she was at peace. At the end, she could barely talk, eat, and couldn't leave her bed. She was 86 years old.

While we buried my mother in New Jersey, we sat shiva in West Hartford. After eleven years, West Hartford has become our home. Talking with friends from SSDS, The Emanuel, Young Israel, as well as Rabbi Small and Rabbi Brander, I felt

better knowing that there were people I could turn to. My wife's mother suggested that I pay someone to say Mourner's Kaddish for me. What kind of example would that set for my children? It was comforting to know that there was a daily Minyan on Zoom. It's been heartwarming seeing everyone wishing each other a great day and I can see how the Zoom Minyan brings the community closer together.

While I make most morning Minyanim (and catch the evening Minyanim on my way home from work), I typically arrive late. I recently joined the Minyan on time and discovered that Mourner's Kaddish is said at the beginning of the service, too. Who knew?



50 Years of Gratitude for my Emanuel Jewish Life

Aliyah, **B**imah, **C**hapel, **D**avening, **E**manuel, **F**riendship, **G**abbai, **H**aftorah, **I**srael, **J**udaism, **K**iddush, **L**ivestream, **M**inyan, **N**iggun, **O**der, **P**salms, **Q**uiet, **R**abbis, **S**inging, **T**orah, **U**nderstanding, **V**oices, **W**orship, **eX**odus, **Y**armulke, **Z**oom.

Judy Silver
Emanuel member since 1972

**“Every day, tell at least one person
something you like, admire, or
appreciate about them.”**

— Richard Carlson

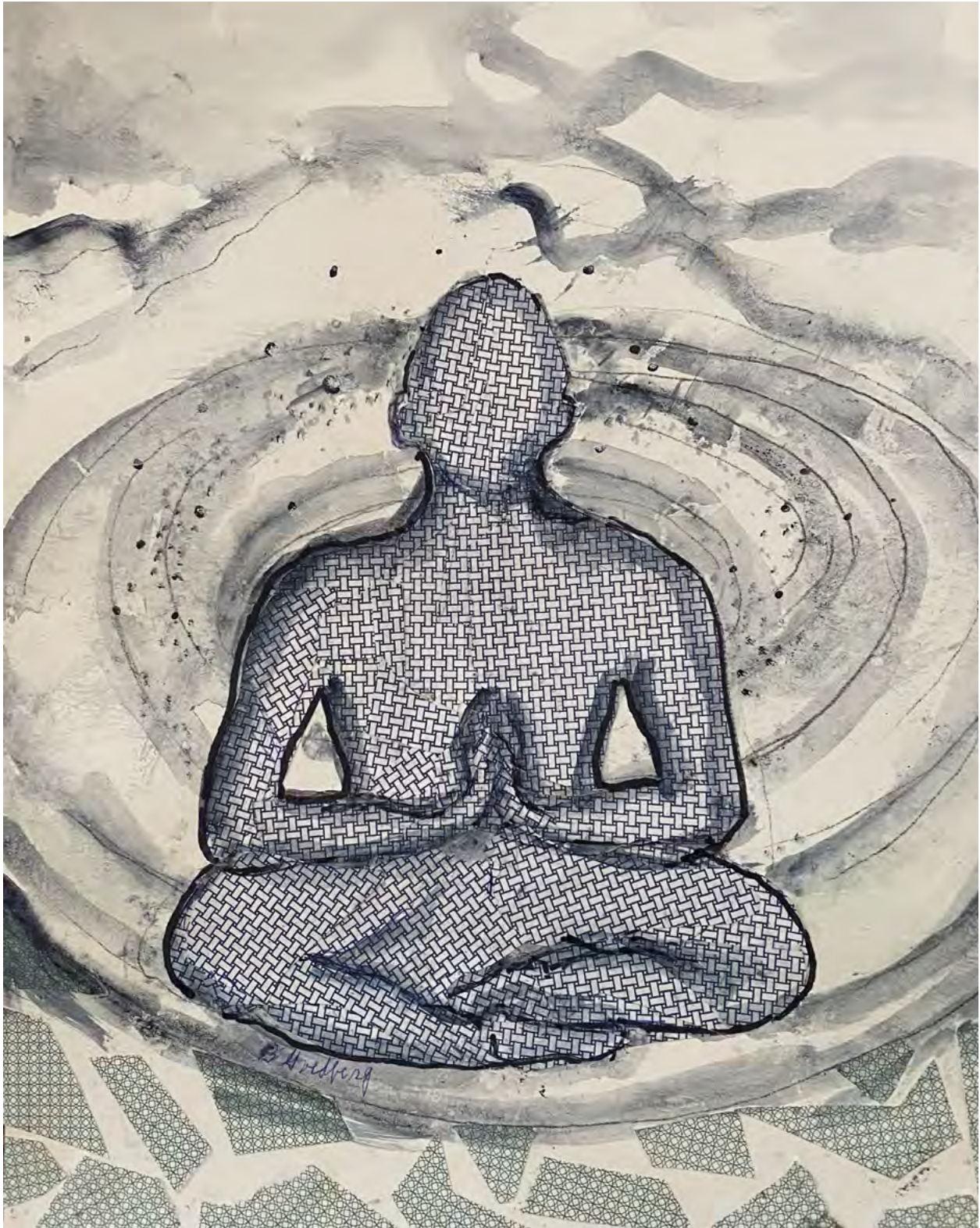


Janet & Steven Selden

Gratitude

© 2022 Beth S. Goldberg

The hands of this image are in the Yoga prayer position of Namaste. When you say Namaste to someone your heart is full of love, kindness, gratitude, and respect towards them. This painting was created with the use of mixed media, paper, marker, and watercolor.



The Gifts of Love During the Pandemic

by Barbara & Stephen Berns

The pandemic changed so many lives, in so many ways. During this time, we were fortunate to experience new beginnings. In the beginning of the pandemic, during April, our granddaughter Nicole gave us the gift of a beautiful great-grandson, one of life's blessings and a precious, cherished, immeasurable gift of unconditional love.

Another unexpected gift of love was given to us by our daughter, Debra, when she arrived on our doorstep with a rescue dog, a Yorkshire Terrier named Lilly. She is as cute as can be with her two pointed ears. The only information we received was her date of birth, August 2, 2007. Lilly needed a home where she would be loved.

In addition to our grown children, granddaughters, and a great-grandson, we knew we had endless love for her. She became our shining star, bringing us tremendous joy and unconditional love. She weighs 5.25 pounds, lost her bladder control, and does not hear. Our daughter found a solution to her problem so that we would not be able to resist her. Lilly arrived with tushie wipes, doggie diapers, and wears Carter's newborn onesies to hold up her diapers as she does not have hips. She does not need to be walked because of the diapers, and she barks for three different reasons — feed me, change me, or pick me up and hug me.

On Mother's Day we received a note from Lilly which read, "Dear Mom, thank you for giving me a new life." Our promise is to give her the best remaining days of her life. We are extremely grateful for the wonderful gifts of love we received during the pandemic.



Debra Berns

"We knew we had endless love for her. She became our shining star, bringing us tremendous joy and unconditional love."

Alanna Malley



Wishing everyone peace and love!
— The Malley Family

Dear members of The Emanuel Synagogue,

I wanted you all to know that I have been truly inspired and feel fortunate to have been attending services on Zoom with such an amazing group of clergy and congregants during the Covid pandemic.

— William & Sandra Rosenbaum
Del Mar, CA

I want to express my sincere GRATITUDE to all The Emanuel staff and hosts who make it happen on Zoom religious services. I've had the need to say Kaddish since early January and you friendly fellow Jews are there for me.

— Ronald Schwartz

In Gratitude For Our Family

by Gerald & Barbara Sperber

During this pandemic period, Barbara and I had time to think how grateful we are to have family and friends as well as all the good things in our lives. It was better to think about the good than the problems caused by the pandemic.

From our condo window, we watched a tree removal company cut down a large tree early in our quarantine. I asked one of the workers if I could have a couple of discs to make a couple of small snack tables. When I got the discs in the garage, Barbara and I talked about what to do and where to put the finished tables. In jest, I suggested making a “Family Tree” tree. Barbara loved the idea.

The journey began when we counted the rings and discovered the tree was “born” in the late 1860s. We decided to make an Ancestral Family Tree start from our grandchildren and go back as far as we could. We limited “family” to be those with a direct ancestral lineage from our grandchildren. These family members totaled 51 persons, covering five generations. We



collected basic information, names, and dates of birth. In hearing some stories, we learned a lot about our extended family including a machatunim’s grandfather who was born before the American Civil War, before the tree existed.

In order to have space and to visualize family chronology better, the tree disc was divided into twelve sections, one for each month. Each family member had a flag with name and birthdate placed on the disc made from toothpicks. There are twenty-three family units identified, each with a different colored thread so that each family unit can be easily seen. An individual’s ancestral path can be followed by generations toward the center of the tree. The final addition are the legs and – voila! – we have our “Family Ancestral Tree” tree table.

While the result might initially look messy and confusing, it isn’t. The result and the process was wonderful, fascinating, interesting, and fun since it emphasizes the importance of connections – which due to the pandemic, such connections are not easy.

If anyone wants more information on the process of making an “Ancestral Family Tree” tree, feel free to contact me.

We would like to express our gratitude for all that our clergy and lay leadership have done over the past two years. We are grateful to be a part of The Emanuel community.

— Andrew Magin &
Sharon Thomason

The warmth of our Emanuel family reaches us in our home in Arizona. For this we are grateful.

— Francene & Jeremy Weingast

Lest we forget



Jay Smith

“What would you say the biggest blessing in the world is? What is the greatest attribute anyone can have? What is the number one thing that will guarantee human happiness?

I would say that answer to all the questions is one thing: Gratitude. If there is one thing I could teach my children to do every day and every minute of every day – that would be to thank God and appreciate their abundant blessings...that guarantees happiness. Thus, the ability to appreciate and thank and be grateful is the greatest blessing of all.”

– Jack Doueck



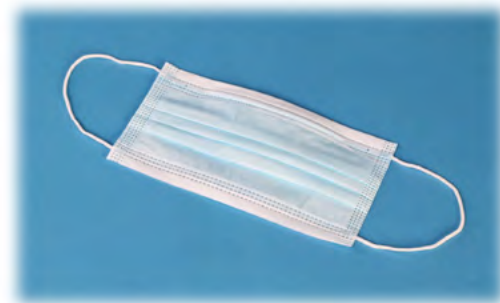
Alan & Michele Parker

We are grateful to be the
Goldberg Gelb family.

— Beth, Murray, Debbie, Ilene,
Gerald, Karen, Jeffrey, Ashley,
Rachel, Abe, Joshua, Tova &
Hannah

With gratitude to The Emanuel's
devoted clergy and staff.
Todah rabbah!

— Allen & Judith Kronick



The Pandemic Retirement

quarantined —
what a year it was
meetings without leaving home
virtual conferences and family gatherings
seeing friends and relatives only online
socially distanced voting and poll standing
masked shopping only when necessary
housework put off
volunteering on Zoom
nothing in person
living at the computer
waiting for the vaccine —
normal?

— e.m. glosser schiller

LISTENING TO THE POEMS OF YEHUDA AMICHAÏ*

by Judith Kronick

Encompassed within a small box
Evoking for us the beauty of the poetry of Yehuda Amichai
The humanity, the reality of life in Jerusalem
Over centuries ago...and now

There: The familiar voice of our Rabbi
The same encouragement he offered us in real life
In “normal times” before the world and its people began to suffer together
A chance to lift our spirits, to raise our hopes for our future when...we who will remain
will recover and live

Alevai!
Ken y’hi ratzon

* Written on December 2, 2020, after a Zoom episode of the previously in-person Zipflow class, taught by Rabbi David Small.

Minyonaire Profiles

by Marc Resnick

RON SCHWARTZ joined the Minyonaires when Sandra, his wife, passed away on January 6, 2022.

Happily married for 47 years, Ron and Sandra lived in Westfield, NJ, but came to West Hartford often to visit Sandra's sister, Martha, who with her husband, Ronald Moss, were long-time members of The Emanuel. While Ron and Sandra didn't have children, they were very close to their nephew, John, and went on joint vacations over the years. In addition to the Moss family, Sandra had another connection to Hartford County, Rabbi Bennett of Temple Sinai. Sandra and Rabbi Bennett were friends since they were kids (and had placemats with their photos on it).

To prevent catching Covid during the pandemic, Sandra and Ron never left the house, ordering food online as well as delaying their doctor appointments. When the world opened up in late 2021, Sandra finally went to the doctor after feeling discomfort and learned that she was sick. Sandra passed away three months later.

With only a brother holding him to New Jersey, Ron decided to move closer to Martha and Ron and moved to Duncaster in Bloomfield. Ron looks forward to meeting new friends at The Emanuel as well as Temple Sinai and Chabad.

MARSHALL SOLTZ, 72, has been an Emanuel Minyonaire for years and has attended our services twice a day nearly every day since his mother, Frances, passed away in 2016. In addition, he serves on the Gabbai, Oneg, Security, and Brotherhood Food Service committees, is a zoom host, and occasionally leads the davening. Marshall believes "you should give before you take."

It has always been that way. For decades, Marshall was a member of the former Congregation Agudas Achim, where he attended daily minyan, was treasurer, and served on its Board and Executive Committee. Marshall is a Hartford native who spent over 40 years in Washington, DC. After retiring as the Navy's civilian director of submarine safety, he divides his time between West Hartford and Washington and has become a full-time volunteer, helping people and various organizations in both places. In addition to the Emanuel, he supports Keshet Israel, the Georgetown Synagogue where he is also a member, and davens when in DC.

Even with his hectic schedule, Marshall always finds time to attend minyan whether in person, on Zoom, or from the road. As Marshall points out, "A synagogue needs to have a minyan every day. If I continue to help make the minyan, maybe others will be inspired to do the same and make our minyan even stronger."

DR. JAY SMITH has been part of the Minyonaires for 12 years. The date coincides with the loss of his beloved wife, Rosalie, who passed away in 2011. As Dr. Jay Smith points out, he's always been spiritual.

Drs. Jay and Rosalie joined The Emanuel in 1962 and their three children — Andrea, Eric, and Ira — each had their Bar/Bat Mitzvah at The Emanuel. Specializing in internal medicine, Dr. Jay retired at 78 and was able to enjoy his initial retirement years with Rosalie. Being a doctor, Dr. Jay never played golf, which turned out to be a good thing, since golf would have taken his time away from Rosalie. Since retiring, Dr. Jay enjoys serving on several committees at The Emanuel.

At 92 and with a large extended family that includes five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, Dr. Jay periodically leads Minyan services. He feels that services on Zoom are reassuring and gives him contact with people he otherwise wouldn't see. While Dr. Jay wants to stay with Zoom, he also looks forward to returning to in-person services.

“You should give before you take.”

Attitude is gratitude.”

JUDY SILVER began attending Minyanim when her husband, Herb, passed away in September 2016. After 11 months of attending Minyan every day and evening to say Kaddish for him, Judy continued — in person every morning and every evening — and then on Zoom. And here she is, “a regular!”

Judy and Herb became members of The Emanuel in 1972 after moving from St. Louis, MO. Having grown up in Reform Judaism, Judy’s interest in Conservative Judaism came with her marriage to Herb. Herb became Judy’s first Hebrew teacher, after she expressed interest in participating in The Emanuel’s weekly services. Judy continued her Torah study with former Ritual Director Harold Mondschein, and chanted her first Maftir and Haftorah on her 40th birthday. Judy continues to chant Torah and Haftorah when given the opportunity. Past and current positions include The Emanuel’s “resident calligrapher,” Gabbai (37 years and counting), and Past President of the Minyonaires.

Outside of The Emanuel, Judy earned a Master’s degree in teaching

and taught public school, mentored college students, and participated in special math programs across the country. Judy also served as President of the Hartford alumni chapter of Brandeis National Committee (and organized its book club celebrating its 50th year). Judy has also been a docent at the New Britain Museum of American Art for the last 18 years.

Active in The Emanuel through the years, Judy attended services every Shabbat, before and after her two sons’ B’nai Mitzvah. With Zoom, Judy can “take the Minyan with me” when she is away from West Hartford. Judy cannot imagine life without The Emanuel and all the people who make up its membership.

FAITH HELENE attended Minyan one day a week before her husband, Fred, passed away in 2014. Faith and Fred were married for 59 years. Today, Faith attends Minyan on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and uses Monday and Friday to reflect.

Over 45 years, Faith estimates that she’s worked on every committee at the synagogue, from president of the couples’ club and co-president of the Sisterhood to Treasurer under David Harris. In all, Faith says that “Emanuel has been a big part of my life.” Faith remembers when her father passed away and they had to call to get 10 men. Now counted as part of the Minyan, Faith was one of the first women in West Hartford to be able to have an Aliyah.

Faith and Fred were married at The Emanuel and celebrated her children’s milestones there. Faith has three children — her oldest son, Alan, who resides with his wife and two children in New York City; her daughter, Robin, who lives in Meriden and has a daughter; and her youngest son, Gary, who lives in Florida with his wife and four children. Faith feels blessed having seven grandchildren.

Overall, Faith just appreciates that she has her health and the community we call The Emanuel. Faith’s life mantra is “attitude is gratitude.”

We remember Murray L. Fink, 1918-2021

Thank you, Emanuel staff and Minyan members. You are there, every day, to enable our community to say Kaddish for our loved ones.

— Judd & Bella Fink

We are so blessed to have had the guidance of our clergy, support staff, and Ken & Mel Simon during these difficult years.

— Joni & Dan Fine

GRATITUDE

Family
Friends
Health
Outdoors
Connections
Kindness
Support
Faith
Hope

— Sheila Silverman

Helping Hands

My wife Susan and I along with an elderly friend Barbara went to view a film shown at the Jewish Film Festival. The film was sold out and I vividly recall a friend from years ago came over to me and I instinctively offered to shake hands. I was admonished by my wife and our friend that the pandemic was increasing and shaking hands was ill-advised. The next day an email arrived that the remainder of the Festival would not be in person. Covid was about to change our personal and professional lives.

Although my office for the Connecticut Immigrant & Refugee Coalition (CIRC), donated to us by Henry Zachs, remained open during the pandemic, most people worked from home and I came into the office masked from time to time. At CIRC, we applied for and received a grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving to deep clean our office and the JFACT office as well. We included one of the key member organizations of CIRC, the Center for Research Education and Training, that serves the West Indian population in Hartford. We also received a grant from the Hartford Foundation to help

100 frontline workers and their families, many of whom are undocumented immigrants from Latin America. We met at St. Anne's Catholic Church on Park Street in Hartford and along with Father Thomas Walsh and one of our active board members we presented \$500 gift cards to needy families. We all wore masks and Father Walsh verified for us the neediest of his congregants. He told us that one congregant from Mexico owned a food truck and if a donor would cover the cost of food and ingredients, he and other Mexican Americans would prepare and provide lunches to all the frontline workers at St. Francis Hospital. We found a generous donor and the result was frontline workers at St. Francis were fed at work during this challenging period. It is an example of how even during Covid, the undocumented in our area were willing to help.



— Robert Fishman is Executive Director of the Connecticut Immigrant & Refugee Coalition (CIRC)



The Cohen family is grateful for good health and our close-knit family. This photo is Iris's artwork of "your soul's feelings." Hope all of our Emanuel friends are well.

— Jeff, Jenn, Milo, Reva & Iris Cohen

Zoom B'nai Mitzvah (ours was among the first)! Working remotely! Essential personnel working in person! Fast-tracked vaccines! Friends & family! Netflix! The Emanuel!!! Toilet paper! Fresh air to walk in!

— Fred Spaeth & Eliana Tsukroff



It was so special to turn our home into a sanctuary with a sefer Torah! We are grateful to Rabbi Small and The Emanuel for helping make Emmet's Bar Mitzvah happen.

Unexpected Benefits of the Pandemic

by Lisa Feigenbaum

On May 19, 2020, which was Barry's and my 35th wedding anniversary, my 94-year-old mother died of kidney disease — not Covid. She was to be buried in a family plot on Long Island. That much is “normal.” What follows is how the pandemic gave my family a new normal, some of which was not at all bad.

Shortly after my parents moved from Syracuse, NY to Farmington, CT in the summer of 2014, they met with Leonard Holtz, of the Hebrew Funeral Association. They discussed and paid for their funeral arrangements. Of course, that was before Covid. When the time actually came to make “final, final arrangements,” Leonard told us the cemetery was limiting “guests” to ten but, he could Zoom my mother's funeral for those who could not physically be there. We were further advised that each family group attending was to bring their own shovel. No passing of germs was allowed.

On the day of the funeral, my daughter stayed with her Grandpa Jerry so that they could be together to mark this sad milestone. It also helped the 99-year-old with the technical aspects of the weird notion, “Zooming a funeral.” A grandpa and granddaughter mourning together, but alone.

My son wore a suit and zoomed the funeral in his studio apartment in New York City; no hugs.

My sister, alone in Syracuse, zoomed her mother's interment; also no hugs.

But two cousins and their spouses joined Barry and me, with their shovels, wearing masks, to see their aunt laid to rest. Both had attended Syracuse University and had fond memories of home-cooked meals and family fun when they stepped away from campus. At Aunt Jeanie's and Uncle Jerry's they played with their little cousins, Karen and Lisa. They enjoyed blintzes, cookies, kugel, and other food delights.

The funeral was “attended” by friends and family from Connecticut to Florida, New Jersey to California. That would never have happened, if not for the pandemic and Zoom.

Following the burial, we couldn't have a meal of consolation in anyone's home. We couldn't even go to a restaurant. So after the three families put dirty shovels into bags in their trunks, each brought out their own prepared picnic lunches and chairs on which to sit. We found a nice spot under trees in the large, lush cemetery and reminisced while eating. Of course, masks were off

and we sat about eight feet from each grouping. It was a warm, sunny day.

We borrowed prayer books of all sorts from The Emanuel and placed them on a special book holder in our family room. Every day, twice daily for 11 months, I virtually attended services...7 AM weekday mornings, evenings with the sun...4:30 to 7:00 PM. Shabbat services began at 9, Saturday evening services had changing start times, depending on sundown. Sunday morning services started at 8:00. Luckily and wonderfully, there were always at least ten people, so I was never denied the opportunity to lift my mother, Jeanette Kalb's soul, by saying the Kaddish. The Torah was read every Monday and Thursday, and every holiday and twice on Saturdays...just like it should be. I am beholden to our clergy and congregants for making that happen. I became a “regular” without stepping out of my home, unless I chose to pray on my porch. I bonded with some participants; we'd call, text, or email.

Syracuse is 250 miles from West Hartford, but on Zoom, it is right next door. My sister, Karen and her dog Buddy, participated in Zoom services too. So while we were apart, we were able to honor our mother together. That was an excellent benefit of the pandemic and technology. For me, it all worked out well.

Again, I offer special thanks to all the Zoom hosts and remote participants. In addition, I give a special shout out to Rabbi David Small. Thank you for permitting Zoom, especially on Shabbat and holidays and stating, “We are all one congregation praying together.” Without this foresight, insight, knowledge, compassion, and leadership, my year of mourning and consolation would never have been possible.

“When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves.”

— Viktor Frankl

Wishing our Emanuel family many years of good health, happiness, and meaningful challenges.

— Carolyn, Sam & Clara Sorkin

Make Peace Not War

by Beckie Sahl

This artwork is mixed media, created from pieces of former works of oil, watercolor, pastel and hand printed paper. It expresses the feeling that there is much natural beauty in the world, both in nature and inside of ourselves. Yet there is also so much destruction and ugliness to battle. It shows the struggle that ultimately resolves in peace.



Make peace not war

We are grateful for:

- Our Emanuel families who make up our caring community
- Our clergy for their leadership and support: Rabbi David J. Small, Rabbi Emeritus Philip Lazowski, Cantor Daniella Risman, and Cantor Moshe Pinchover
- Executive Director Kobi Benita and our employees who work hard to ensure we smoothly operate at all times: Josh Cohen, Wendy Greco, Kathy Hart, Joyce Hyde, Lisa Lenkiewicz, Karen Piacenta, and Lisa Taylor
- Director of Education Barbara Fink, Gail Mackey and all the Religious School teachers who share their passion for Judaism with their students
- Our custodian staff led by Joseph Ward with the assistance of Juan Zavala and Derrick Daley
- Our lay leaders and committee members whose efforts are critical for our thriving community
- Our volunteers who always step up to help in every way
- Our Brotherhood, Sisterhood and Minyonaires
- Our Zoom and streaming hosts who were a lifeline for us during the pandemic: Fern Cohen, Joel Kent, Tamar Margolis, Regina Miller, Sandra Myers, Ellen Schiller, Ken Simon, Marshall Soltz, and Jerry Sperber
- Our Medical Subcommittee Task Force for their guidance: Dr. Jennifer Madan Cohen, Peter Graber-Lipperman, Dr. Michael Krinsky, Jackie Isaacson, Michele Parker, Dr. Jake Rosenberg, and Dr. Sheila Silverman
- Our security enhancements and our chief Security Guard Mark Simon

—Anonymous

First Synagogue in Greater Hartford to Install Solar Panels

In July 2021, The Emanuel marked the energizing of the solar installation on the roof — a first-of-its-kind project in the state and the first synagogue in the Greater Hartford area to install solar panels.

The Emanuel Synagogue partnered with Hartford-based solar developer Verogy for the project, with carbon savings equivalent to the emissions of approximately 30 passenger vehicles.

Hats off to Tom Mastronarde, who chaired The Emanuel Solar Project; Past President Mel Simon, who shepherded the project as president; Howard Smith, Emanuel House Committee chair; Carolyn



Courtesy of Verogy

We are grateful to the SUN for providing carbon-friendly energy efficiency to The Emanuel for decades to come!

and Michael Levine, who were active in Emanuel's early efforts to "go green"; Rabbi David Small, Executive Director Kobi Benita, and Emanuel President Ken Simon.

Social Isolation

by Barbara Snyder
August 1, 2020

Sitting along the edge of the curb
All alone
Were you blown by the wind?
Did a bird drop you there?

Or

Obeying coronavirus rules?
Socially Distanced?
Six feet apart?
No mask?
Too beautiful to cover your smile
You desire a hug?
It must be virtual
A blossom of Queen Anne's Lace placed in a vase
You join her, exhibiting your purple royalty
Her eminence embraces you
No longer self-isolating



In Gratitude

Harry & Roberta Berry

David & Lara Bomzer

Joel & Fern Cohen

The Emanuel Synagogue
Minyonaires

In memory of DeVane
Babette Faison, by Barbara
Faison

Barry & Lisa Feigenbaum

Judye & Fred Fox

Lori Gottlieb

David & Nina Hoff

Sylvia & Martin Lazarus

Linda Margolin

Gladys Mondschein & family

Shirley Morrison & family

Ellen & Harvey Schiller

Hilary & David Silver

Barbara Snyder

Gerald & Barbara Sperber

Martin & Linda Stein

A special
Todah Rabbah

to Emanuel members
Glenn & Tiffany
Blumenstein, owners
of Blumenstein
Funeral Home, for
printing this *Book of
Gratitude*. We wish
to express our deep
appreciation to them
for their generous
donation.





אַשְׁרֵי יוֹשְׁבֵי בֵּיתָךְ

— Marshall Soltz

The Meaning of Life

by Mark & Michalee Merritt

If there is one thing we have learned these past two years, it is that gratitude is a mindset. Most days it was easy to be grateful for something. Life slowed down.

What did we do? We rediscovered our town by walking in different neighborhoods. We planted a bigger garden and enjoyed the taste of our own vegetables. We zoomed in to Shabbat services every week. We watched ALL the Harry Potter movies for the zillionth time. We tried new recipes. We baked a

LOT! We took many hikes around the state. We put together puzzles and Legos. As Hannah Merritt says, "You never know what life is going to throw out at you. It's all about pivoting..."

What have we learned? We have learned to enjoy the craziness of a full house. We have learned to let things go. We have learned we don't have to attend everything. We learned that we have to take care of ourselves first. We learned about the value of family, friends, and our Emanuel community.

Afterword

Now you have come to this final piece of *The Emanuel Book of Gratitude*. You have read shared stories and experiences. You have viewed artwork and read poetry. Perhaps these pieces have encouraged you to reflect on your own experiences during this challenging time. You might be motivated to write about your experiences and feelings to share with your family now and preserve for future generations.

When we think about documenting the history of a synagogue community, common topics might focus on buildings, programs, school, clergy, families, generations, and commemorations. Members have shared

experiences to reflect on that are usually based on activities that have brought people together. In a way, the pandemic and what The Emanuel Synagogue was able to offer through virtual gatherings did bring us together to share simchas and sorrows, to learn and to grow despite the social distancing.

May the years ahead bring more of us back together in our physical space to share good times and good friendships through shared experiences and learning. May The Emanuel continue to go from strength to strength.

— Regina Miller

On behalf of the Book of Gratitude Committee

THE EMANUEL SYNAGOGUE

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