FROM THE RABBI’S STUDY

STRATEGIC PLANNING

As we near our 5th anniversary of moving into our gorgeous building, it is appropriate to think about our future. Since we moved into our facility we’ve seen tremendous growth in our Rose and George Teller Preschool and we’ve seen some growth in our innovative Chavaya - Religious School. But we haven’t seen the growth we hoped for in our membership. Why is that? Is it due to demographics, or to the economy, or to the nature of the Jewish community in the 21st century, or to competition? None of us in the leadership of our shul or in our membership has “the” answer on how to grow our synagogue community.

Therefore last month we embarked on a strategic planning process. We belong to the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ) and as a result we are entitled to receive help and advice. One program that has met with rave reviews is USCJ’s SULAM program, which includes a track for strategic planning. We are one of 12 synagogues participating this year. Our committee met the day after the congregation meeting in May and will be hard at work through next winter developing a mission statement and a strategic plan moving forward. You will be asked to complete short yet very helpful surveys to help the committee assess who we are and where we want to go in the future. It’s an exciting and challenging process and I hope you will participate when asked!

I’m sure you agree that this will be a valuable endeavor. So many of us have invested many years in the history of the shul. We are blessed to have members who founded our shul nearly 65 years ago and we are blessed with members who just joined us this past year. All our members value what Shaare Tefila has to offer. All our members gain a lot from the religious, educational and social programs of our shul. All our members find Shaare Tefila to be their Jewish home. Our goal is to find the tools to transform what our current members value into something that many more new members will value too. I’m proud to be part of this process and I look forward to sharing our progress with you in the months ahead.

B’vracha - with blessing,
Rabbi Jonah Layman
rjlayman@shaaretefila.org

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Fellow congregants, I now address you as your soon-to-be immediate past president of Shaare Tefila. It has been a rewarding experience for me as well as my family, and I hope a prosperous experience for the growth of our community. As a future past president, I can now speak to you from a place of enhanced understanding about our members and the needs of our community. I would like to take this opportunity to share with our readers what I, along with the help of my supporting staff and committee chairs, have been able to accomplish during the last two years and address some potential challenges we may face in the future.

As you may know, I was and am now very much involved with constructing, enhancing and maintaining our beautiful building. At the start of my term, my personal goals were to furnish and maintain the building infrastructure and grow our membership. While we have since added on to our building, our membership numbers have remained unchanged. We have been fortunate and thankful to welcome many new and young members into our Shaare Tefila family. However, with gains there are also losses. Unfortunately, our community has also lost a number of our beloved legacy members over the past 2 years.

As a response to this membership plateau, as of May 2016, we began a strategic planning process to reach our vision and goals. What I have learned during my time as president has shown me that focusing on planning and implementing the growth of our congregation through Jewish Preschool enrollment and work toward transitioning this community segment into the Congregation and Chavaya (Religious School) would be our best strategy to help our congregation flourish. In order to succeed, continuing to develop and promote membership and program activities to attract and retain our members should become our institution’s primary goal. Additionally, reverting our attention back to our initial plan of enhancing our building as was designed for our members before we relocated should also become a priority. One way this might be accomplished would be to attract donations through planned giving, a topic I have discussed many times throughout my term.

Let’s not forget about our incoming commander-in-chief! Of course I wish all the best to my successor, Stuart Carroll, whom I’ve known for many, many years.

(Continued on page 2)
The Shofar

NEWS FROM THE MEMBERSHIP VP

The warmth of summer is just around the corner! Children, teachers and parents are all counting down the days until summer vacation. Shaare Tefila Membership Committee is gearing up and planning for 2016-2017 events such as Prospective Member Open Houses, Olney Outreach programs at the Olney Farmers Market, End of Year BBQ (June 3, 2016), New Member Teas, Religious School & Preschool Welcome Back to School parties in the fall, and Chavurah gatherings.

I am excited to announce that our incoming Membership VP, Stacey Lynch will be organizing and spearheading these wonderful programs and events! Stacey Lynch is a third generation member of our Shaare Tefila community. In fact, her grandparents, Sylvia and Stanley Love, were founding members. Since joining the shul, Stacey has participated in Shabbat Alive services and the Purim Shpiels, and has served on the Cantor Search Committee. She was also a substitute music teacher in Shaare Tefila Chavaya Religious School. Stacey is a first grade teacher and has been teaching for ten years. She was also the performance coordinator for her husband’s barbershop chorus. She enjoys singing whenever she has the chance. She and her husband, Vincent, have been married for five years and are the proud parents of their dog TJ.

Shaare Tefila Membership Committee and Chavaya Religious School hosted a wonderful Open House in May. Guests and prospective members had an opportunity to experience our community and all of our fun activities: Café Shaare Tefila, Rabbi Layman’s Talmud class, Sisterhood cooking for the Mother’s Day Dinner, Conversational Hebrew Class, Tours of our Gates of Discovery Preschool by Morah Einat, as well as meeting with Chavaya Director Aviva Janus. Visiting children got a chance to sit in on Chavaya classes while preschool age children participated with Mara Lansky in story time and a project around the theme of Tikun Olam. Dara Radnor and Eve Washington were on hand with face paintings and temporary body tattoos, exciting the children and parents too.

A special thank you to all our volunteers who helped with the Open House; Hyman Grosberg, President, Stuart Carroll, Incoming President, Cathy Plotkin, Programming VP, and Membership Volunteers: Deborah Letow and Karen Becker, Mara Lansky, Tot Shabbat Director, Jodi Goldreich, Café Shaare Tefila Volunteer, and our wonderful Chavaya parents were all actively involved. We are happy to report that 3 young families and 9 children attended that morning.

I have had the opportunity to work with this wonderful committee for the past 18 years, 13 of which I was Membership Chair or VP. It has been a joy to help Shaare Tefila membership grow, whether it was hosting outreach programs, meeting and helping transition new families into our warm and engaging community, or assisting in setting up retention programs. Thank you to Rabbi Layman, Jill Goldwater, Sara Miller, Milton and Susan Goldsamt (advertising & publicity) and my wonderful membership committee volunteers for all their support and help throughout the years: Ellie Alpert, Bess Teller, Sherry Cohen, Carol Nove, Deborah Letow, Fran Weiss, Stuart Carroll, Bob Freedman, Ellen Beebe, Karen Becker and Melissa Felzenberg. I would also like to thank all the past presidents, lay leaders and members of the board of directors who have supported our goals and events. Moving forward, I will still stay on the Member-ship Committee and support Stacey and her committee while I transition into my new role as Shaare Tefila Programming VP.

As you plan your summer getaways, please give some thought to ways to involve your family in the programs offered by our shul. Volunteer on a committee...there are so many to choose from, attend a membership outreach or retention program, join a Chavurah friendship group. Bring us your ideas for building a stronger, continually more vibrant Shaare Tefila....your thoughts count and are critical to the success of Shaare Tefila’s future! Remember we all sit on the membership committee. You are Shaare Tefila’s best form of advertising. Share your great experiences and memories of this community and the Shaare Tefila family.

Wishing you and your families a wonderful and safe summer!!!
Shalom and best always,
Cilla B. Grosberg, Membership VP

“Shaare Tefila, Where you will always belong”

(President’s message continued)

As a community we were looking for someone to continue to empower the incredible team of staff and committee chairs who have stepped up during my tenure to participate in determining the best courses of action for our synagogue.

I know I can say without hesitation that Stuart’s sights are set high and ambitious for our community’s future. Stuart has voiced that throughout his presidency, he intends to center his attention on the physical as well as fiscal well-being of our Shaare Tefila family.

I can tell you personally, that from the close working relationship I’ve developed with our congregational leaders over the years, they can surely understand that multiple issues can arise in rapid succession. I’ve come to know that where there is passion, patience and the desire to promote the welfare of others, a community like Shaare Tefila rises to the occasion and its lay leaders come to see the rewards of having deeply immersed ourselves in the life of community. At this time, I would like to thank all the people who helped me throughout my presidency. The list begins with the Board of Directors, extends through Rabbi Layman, Jill Goldwater and our permanent staff. It includes the many volunteers who chair and work on committees, help with fund-raising, programming and education, and give encouragement to all community members who want to see our congregation remain the Jewish community it is.

Stuart, may your charisma, patience, organizational abilities and wisdom serve you well in your endeavors as president of our congregation and aid you in serving the needs of our community. Mazel tov and good luck!

Hyman J. Grosberg, President
DID YOU KNOW...???

Charter member, **Sylvia Potash** is blessed with 9 grandchildren and 41 great-grandchildren! Is that a record for Shaare Tefila?

We had 3 members announce engagements this year:
**Paul Tilles to Sheryl Sternberg**
**Perry Sandler to Nomi Long,**
**Marv Schneider to Diane Gastfreund.**

Maybe there is something in our water?

If you are alert to reading the **Washington Post** newspaper [yes real paper, not on a PC] you might have seen the full page ad on the back of the A Section that **Bess** pointed out to me. It showed our very own **Jeff Hysen**, casually seated and discussing why he is a loyal GEICO Insuree. Way to go **Jeff**. [My suspicion is that **Susan** had something to do with this as GEICO is one of her clients.]

We are a peripatetic bunch!
**The Froehlichs** went to Paris, France to see **Mike**’s 88 year old aunt.  
**The Beckers** went to North Carolina, US.  
**Wendy & Richard Abraham** went to Israel.  
**The Marshall** family went to Florida.  
**Phil Goldman & Shelley Rochester** went to Florida, twice!  
Of course, **Paul Tilles** also went to Florida for spring training, [to watch, not tryout].

I have a request: Since I am no longer the Shofar editor, I have more stringent deadlines to submit this column, so please check your calendars and by the 5th of each month, sit down and write me a little note giving me updates that you are aware of what’s happening with our congregation members and their families and your updates too. It’s easiest for me if you can email your note(s) to shaarepubs@verizon.net.

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SISTERHOOD

As we write this last article of our Sisterhood tenure as co-presidents, we raise our virtual glasses in celebration toast the end of our many years of service to the congregation. We have been uplifted and inspired by your loyalty, support and faith in us and know that you will welcome **Fran Weiss** and her new slate of officers with open arms. Please join us on June 3 for the installation.

**Barbara Fink** presented the congregation with a check for $3,000 from the proceeds of scrip sales. As you know this is our synagogue’s most profitable fundraising program so we urge you to continue to support scrip as you purchase all of your June shopping needs.

Thank you to **Marjorie Fuhrmann** for chairing another successful Mother’s Day dinner and program and thank you to **Debbie Yedlin** and her cooking committee for providing such a sumptuous meal for us to enjoy. Hats off to our ever so supportive Men’s Club for serving and cleaning up so we could all sit back and enjoy the evening.

Mark your calendars for our annual potluck dinner at the home of **Stephanie Buckberg** on June 7 at 6:00 pm as we begin to plan our calendar of programs for the upcoming 2016-17 year. Please let Stephanie know what you will be bringing to share. As you think of activities for next year, we remind you that chairing and following up are the keys to a successful event.

The June kiddush volunteers are as follows:
**June 4:** Elaine Silver, Cpt: Berman, J/J Levin, Miller, Zagnit, Zajac, Zitomer  
**June 11:** Sandy Stein-Cpt: Abrams, Feldmann/Bender, Fero, F. Futrovsky, Joseph, Mottler  
**June 18:** Stacey Lynch, -Cpt: D/J Katz, Lamm, Maudlin  
**June 25:** Rita Rubinstein-Cpt: B. Rosenthal, Shapiro, Steinberg

What do King Solomon, Pete Seeger, the Limeliters, The Byrds, Judy Collins, Fran and Ethel (not to be confused with Lucy and Ethel) and the Book of Ecclesiastes have in common? Give up? The Byrds sang their version of this epic song of celebration and life cycles in “*Turn, Turn, Turn*” (circa 1965). As we leave our Presidency, we are comforted by the opening stanza of this song - “To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven. A time to plant, a time to reap, a time you may embrace.” We have spent many years planting. The congregation has reaped the rewards of our leadership and now as we step down it is time for our membership to embrace our new Sisterhood President, **Fran Weiss** and her new cabinet. Our heartfelt thanks to those strong, tireless and capable women who held vital positions on our board for many years. As they turn over their duties and responsibilities we wish them a *yasher koach*, may your strength be firm and your days serene.

We wish a hearty Mazel Tov to recent graduates, upcoming weddings, engagements and kick offs for summer recreational activities.

We’ll be around and you know where to find us.

**Ethel Levine & Fran Kensky**, Co-Presidents

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Buy Scrip

See page 5 for details
WHAT REAL LEARNING LOOKS LIKE

There is a lot of debate these days about our public education policies and how to measure learning. We hear fearful stories about falling behind other countries and needing to improve our education. But then, out of that fear, policymakers create arbitrary goals and outcomes. While they certainly don’t mean to hurt our kids, this is often the practical result of these policies. Childhood anxiety and depression rise at an alarming rate year after year. Recess is severely reduced or eliminated, leading to a rise in attentional issues and childhood obesity. Children have less time to process and reflect on their learning, rushing to the next topic. And developmental appropriateness is disregarded in our concern for “school readiness”.

So what does real learning look like?

Anyone who has spent any time in a classroom knows that real learning does not look like children slumped in chairs staring at iPads. A few things that real learning looks like include:

Real learning looks like testing our physical limits.

Real learning looks like exploring the world and trying to make sense of it.

Real learning looks like children doing things for themselves.

The Chavaya school year ended with an assembly on May 22 featuring performances by the K-2 class and the 3-5 class. Morah Ilana’s K-2 class performed a dramatic reading of a Midrash (Bible story). Morah Elana’s 3-5 class performed a popular Israeli dance, “Turkish Kiss.” The enthusiasm of the students and teachers was apparent to all who attended.

A highlight of our program was when students in K-2 received their Siddurim. These were personalized with parents’ prayers to their child and included photos and drawings. We hope these Siddurim become a Jewish treasure in each child’s home.

The 5776 school year included a variety of experiences and trips such as the following: National Gallery of Art; JFGH residences; Ratner Museum; and local nursing facilities. We joined with other religious school students for Yom Ha Shoah which took place at B’nai Israel.

During the course of this school year, we hosted an Israeli emissary, J Crafts Chocolate Factory and a Purim musical performance. For Sukkot, we decorated the shul sukkah and then had the opportunity to eat lunch in it during the holiday. In celebration of Purim, many students and their families attended the Megillah reading and Purim carnival. When learning about Shabbat, we had the opportunity to bake challah in the shul kitchen. All this in a Sunday only program!

A new activity, “Meet Your Skype Tutor” morning was a great success. Students were excited to meet their tutors and spend time bonding. This will become an annual event.

We would like to thank our parents for all the help and support and participation in school events.

And finally, thank you to our dedicated teachers and Skype tutors for their hard work and commitment to our students. We wish the best of luck to two of our teachers moving on to other pursuits. Reyna Cohen is transferring to Florida International University where she will study communications. Morah Elana (3-5) will teach English in Petach Tikvah, Israel. We look forward to welcoming a few new faces this fall.

Have a wonderful summer and we’ll see everyone back at Chavaya on September 11.

(See photos on page 5)
ALL ABOUT SCRIP

Scrip is a major fund raising tool for Shaare Tefila and is one way for you to pay for your shopping at several local markets. These markets sell Shaare Tefila gift cards at a discounted rate. When you buy these cards from either the office or one of the four people listed below, the shul receives a percentage of the cost. Shopping is an ongoing activity; we all need to buy food weekly. Please consider purchasing scrip cards and using them on your next trip to the store. We currently have cards for Giant Food, H Mart, Lotte Plaza, Shalom Kosher Market, Shoppers Food Warehouse, and ShopRite. The cards are available in various dollar denominations for your convenience.

Please contact any of the people below or Sara in the office (301-593-3410) to make your purchase and support our shul.

Barbara Fink  301-438-3149
Rita Rubinstein  301-816-9686
Judy Beiser  301-598-2082
Ethel Levine  301-593-7041

Barbara Fink will be stepping down after 22 years of coordinating the scrip program. A special yasher koach and thank you go out to her for a job well done. Barbara built up the program into the great fundraiser it now is. This year, the scrip program brought in $5000 for Shaare Tefila.

Judy Beiser will be stepping into the position of “Scrip Lady” beginning June 3. We wish Judy great success in this new position.

LOOKING TO JOIN SHAARE TEFILA?

Contact:
Stacey Lynch, Membership VP
membership@shaaretefila.org

Jill Goldwater, Executive Director
jgoldwater@shaaretefila.org
301-593-3410 X101
(301)593-3410, ext. 101

YOU'RE INVITED TO A

Shaare Tefila Monthly
Shabbat Dinner Program
Our End of Year Bar-B-Q
When: Friday, June 3
Shabbat Services at 6:00 pm
Shabbat Dinner at 6:30 pm
Maariv and Installation at 7:30 pm
RSVP by 5/31 on ChaverWeb or contact Sara in the office
Cost: $18 adults/ $10 children; $54 max per family
SHAARE TEFILA TAKES RECYCLING TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Since moving into the building we have been recycling paper at our desks. We have recently expanded our recycling capabilities not only at our desks but in the common areas. We added cans, plastic and bottle recycling to our recycling efforts. Look for the new "Slim Jim" recycling containers in the kitchen and kiddush areas. They look something like this:

[Image of a slim Jim recycling bin]

Done with your foam coffee cup? Finished with those forks and spoons from your kiddush? emptied some cans and jars while cooking - put them in the Slim Jim.

Please help the overall recycling efforts and do not put regular trash or food in these bins. We have also added smaller paper recycling bins around the common areas - look for them to trash dry paper.
MISHLOACH MANOT
Thank you to Iris Hyman whose name was inadvertently omitted from the list of members donating mishloach manot to the entire membership.

KIDDUSH SPONSORSHIP
Have something to celebrate? Share the joy of a milestone in your life with your Shaare Tefila family by sponsoring a Kiddush on Shabbat following services.

Contact Jill Goldberg for prices and details.
jgoldwater@shaaretefila.org
301-593-3410 X 101

MEET THE NEW OFFICERS

Stuart Carrol
President

Cathy Plotkin
Admin VP

Stacey Lynch
Membership VP

Bess Teller
Recording Sec’y

Michael Auerbach
Treasurer

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Wendy Abraham
Judy Bresler
Stephanie Buckberg
Charlie Futrovsky
Karen James
Josh Lansky
Ethel Levine
Eric Marshall
Shawn Miller
Perry Sandler
Elaine Silver
Phil Temkin

Hyman Grosberg,
Past President
David Ronis,
Past President

Sisterhood Rep
Fran Kensky
Men’s Club Rep
TBD

MEE T H E N E W O FF I C E R S

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Elaine Silver
Phil Temkin

Hyman Grosberg,
Past President
David Ronis,
Past President

Sisterhood Rep
Fran Kensky
Men’s Club Rep
TBD

Installation of Officers

JOIN US ON JUNE 3RD FOR SHABBAT SERVICES, OUR ANNUAL BAR-B-Q, AND THE INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS.

NEED ASSISTANCE?
IF A FAMILY MEMBER OR ANOTHER CONGREGANT IS HOSPITALIZED OR NEEDS HELP FROM THE SHAARE TEFILA COMMUNITY, PLEASE NOTIFY THE OFFICE OR RABBI LAYMAN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Contact the office or Rabbi Layman
(301) 593-3410
Click [here](#) for our Calendar

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**The Shofar**  
Shaare Tefila Congregation  
301-593-3410  

[www.shaaretfila.org or info@shaaretfila.org](#)  

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<td>Rabbi Emeritus</td>
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<td>Cantor Emeritus</td>
<td>Gershon E. Levin, z&quot;l</td>
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