



NORTHERN VIRGINIA  
HEBREW CONGREGATION

# NVHC *Glance*

January-February 2018 • 14 Tevet-13 Adar 5778



**Connect through Community**



**A Spiritual Home**



**Judaism that Matters**

1441 Wiehle Avenue, Reston, Virginia 20190  
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## Shared Shabbat — Connecting to the World Around Us

By Rabbi Michael Holzman

Last year, during our 50th anniversary Jubilee celebration, we began with 50 Shabbat Dinners, hosted in congregants' homes. The awesome planning team of Ellen Ranard and Julie Wallick, assembled groups of old and new friends to enjoy a Friday night together, filled with laughter, joy, and great food. The reports and photos we received following the 50 dinners convinced us that this had to be an annual occurrence. So, on January 12, 2018, we are holding "Shared Shabbat," another round of dinners, where congregants will meet, light candles, sip wine (or grape juice) and break challah together. If you have not already signed up to be a host or guest, please do so immediately by emailing [socialaction@nvhcreston.org](mailto:socialaction@nvhcreston.org).

Why is this program so successful? Of course, everyone likes to eat, and meeting new people is always fun, but last year's program received reviews that far exceeded our expectations. There must have been something more than food and friends. Something deeper.

The secret recipe is Shabbat of course. And the centerpiece of Shabbat is the dinner. This is intentional, and it is one of the most special, and misunderstood, aspects of Judaism. People think Judaism happens in the sanctuary, on the bima, but, in truth, when the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed almost 2,000 years ago, the dining room table became the most sacred altar. The rabbis understood that when we eat, we

connect the self literally with the world around us. Eating is the act of physically putting something from the world into our bodies. That connection reminds us of our vulnerability and interdependence. Nobody can be isolated from the world.

And when we eat with friends, we reinforce that interdependence. Not only are we physically connected, but eating with friends and family provides emotional connection which is very powerful—but Shabbat adds something more. When the table is an altar, when we say blessings and eat on Shabbat, we connect that moment with the Creation of the world. We are reminded that on the seventh day God rested from work and noticed that the world is "very good." So Shabbat dinner connects us to the physical world, to our emotional needs, and to an awareness of sacred time. In this way, the dinner becomes something more, a reminder of our humanity and eternity. This is what makes life worthwhile.

If you have never celebrated a Shabbat dinner, make sure to contact us and sign up, because this simple event is amongst the most powerful of Jewish experiences. If you feel nervous about what will happen or you do not know how to host, I strongly encourage you to please contact us, because this is the most empowering and enriching form of Jewish practice. We are happy to teach.

NVHC exists to be a spiritual home, where we connect through community to Judaism that matters. All of that begins with shabbat dinner, an awareness of our spirituality, our connections to each other, and to moments of our lives that really matter. Please sign up and enjoy!

## Sacred Time and Relationship in Our Spiritual Home — Our Annual *Shabbaton*

By Cantor Susan Caro

Shabbat comes as a gift to us each week, a time to reboot ourselves. We may not take advantage of that gift, I know (no guilt!), and often feel pressed for time. Recently, I wrote on our blog about our upcoming *Shabbaton* [<http://www.nvhcreston.org/archives/648677>], about how Shabbat can help us feel restored if we just allow ourselves to step through that gate in time. Our NVHC annual *Shabbaton* provides a framework of extended time to reconnect with ourselves and with our community. I know that might be daunting for some; I encourage you to lean into that unease, for the gift that you will give yourself. Time set aside lets us become more clearly in tune with ourselves, with each other, and with the world.

The framing idea for this year's *Shabbaton* is "Coming Home," allowing us to explore facets of sacred relationships in home and community. Shabbat fosters community; it coordinates non-work time. It makes people stop working not only for 25 hours a week, but for the same 25 hours a week. When, as a community, we share non-work time, when we look up from our tasks, our computers, our smart phones—and start to look into the actual (not virtual) faces of others—we see family, we see neighbors, we see **people**. Not bosses, or employees, or service people—and it is in relationships between people that we forge bonds of a loving and caring community. It helps us to know in our *kishkes* (gut) that each of us is created 'b'tzelem Elohim'—in God's image, which means to view them with *Kavod* (honor and dignity) as divine creations. What good can possibly come from looking at another person and only seeing the flawed, incomplete, earthy creature? How much more beneficial and even true—though quite difficult sometimes—to see a radiant soul?

These ideas and more will be part of our exploration at our upcoming *Shabbaton*, **Saturday February 3, 9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.** Our gathering will include baking and eating challah, time for prayer and various learning experiences, and LUNCH! (for breaking bread together is essential in experiencing the sacred nature of relationships and connecting to others), ending the afternoon with marking the end of our time through *Havdalah*. Save that date, giving yourself the gift of time and space to explore what it means for you to "come home" to a place of human dignity and honor.

## Giving Unto Others — Sacred Service Learning

By Rabbi Jessica Wainer

One of the greatest strengths of our community is our compassion for others, and the ways in which we give back to the public. This year in Kehillat Limmud, we have begun to incorporate various *tikkun olam* (social action) activities into the weekly curriculum for our older students. This has begun a process of educating students as to ways in which they can help to serve the community. This year our students have learned about Kiva, an organization dedicated to providing micro-loans across the globe. In October, our students learned about the concepts of micro-lending and, in small groups, chose different individuals or groups to lend money to. These loans went to helping farmers buy better farming tools or to store owners to buy more inventory or to artists to buy more supplies. Some of our students also created Hanukkah cards for American servicemen and women who are stationed abroad. Throughout the remainder of the year, our students will, in part, help to pack bags for our Forest Edge program and make fleece blankets for a homeless shelter. This is just one of the many ways which our students are learning to integrate their Jewish values into activities both inside and outside of the congregation.

Coretta Scott King once said, "The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members." This year, on the Sunday of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day weekend, we will have the opportunity to, once again, show this compassion for others. We will be participating in a day of *Avodat HaKodesh* (sacred service learning). Sacred service learning involves opportunities for both meaningful service and reflection. Throughout the morning, families will engage in a variety of projects, each set up to learn about and give back to a different part of our Northern Virginia community. There will be activities for families with students of all religious school ages. It is our goal, that through family service learning, each of our families will not only learn about the Jewish values reflected in the actions that are being taken, but that each family will also be able to take this service model home with them to use for ongoing family sacred service learning.

# From the President

By Andy Cohen, NVHC President

As we begin 2018, I am deeply heartened by our community's determination and optimism to fulfill our mission. So many members have joyfully embraced our calls for renewed engagement. It's been wonderful to see individuals and families across all generations building and deepening their connections and friendships through new and ongoing programs—Shabbat Dinners, Coffee Connections, Clergy Lunches, Chavurot, Lifelong Learning, Social Action, Sisterhood, Brotherhood, Kehilat Limmud, Tamid, Torah Corp, Early Childhood, Silver Line, our recent congregational trip to Israel, and more!

Through meaningful engagement, we are strengthening our foundation and achieving progress toward realizing our strategic goals. We are actively working on developing and executing action plans for each of the areas of focus of our recently announced plan—governance, member engagement and recruitment, covenantal membership model, pastoral care, and B'nai Mitzvah.

*NVHC is our spiritual home where we connect through community to Judaism that matters.*

Thinking about our mission brings me back to one of my closing thoughts in my remarks to you on Yom Kippur, “connecting through community” means not just occasional greetings, but meaningful relationships through shared moments of vulnerability, joy, fear, and hope. And it means that we welcome, cherish, include, and support each other, in times of celebration, in sorrow, and everything in between. That is how we strengthen our community and ensure that it not just survives, but thrives to provide meaningful support as a spiritual home for everyone around us, for our children, and for their children. So, as I asked then, I hope that you still ask yourself as I ask myself, “What can I do to help make NVHC stronger as a spiritual home for myself and for others, and to connect through community, to Judaism that matters?” To those who have stepped up, you have my deep appreciation. And to those who are looking for a way forward, call me and let's talk.

## December Dilemma 2017 The Elf on the Shelf or the Mensch on the Bench — Again

By Cindi Drake, Director, Early Childhood Education

It's that time of year again. You know, the one between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. The time of year when many Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, etc., struggle with identity and the desire to be part of festivities and rituals that are not their own. Christmas is a holiday filled with lights and music, parties and presents. And routinely celebrated publicly. It is a joyous time that any child would want to be a part of.

So how do we address this with our children? Well, for one thing let them enjoy the festivities with their Christian friends. Enjoy the tree and music and lights. Explain to them that they cannot have them in your home because this is their holiday not yours. At a friend's birthday party, we explain to our children that they can't have the presents and that they can have their own party another time. This just is not their party. Similarly, we can explain to our children that Christmas is not our party. But most important, make Hanukkah a celebration to remember. Let your child help grate potatoes for latkes. Hold their hand as they light the candles. Introduce them to jelly donuts (*sufganiyot*)! And remember...Hanukkah is the Festival of Lights so enjoy it!



## A Synagogue for Teenagers

By Adam Zemel, Youth Activities Coordinator

There is substantial research that suggests that adolescence is as formative and transformative a stage of human development as the stage from 0-3. As teenagers become aware of their life in relation to the world around them, they also begin to develop their internal relationship with themselves. While we might all remember these years as equal parts eye-opening, challenging, emotional, and magical, the evidence tells us that the way we spend the days of our adolescence will echo through the rest of our lives.

I try to remember this every day that I come to work at NVHC. Our teens are not in a holding pattern while they wait for adult life; they are in the process of becoming. They will likely change more over their four years of high school than any subsequent stretch of their lives. What, then, is NVHC's role in contributing to this growth? For teenagers, what should—what could—a synagogue be?

Teen engagement at NVHC and elsewhere is a challenge built around an inherent tension: should we prepare these students for the world as it is, or should we create space for them to imagine the world as it could be? The answer can't be just one or the other. Finding the right balance varies from student to student and from moment to moment. I am no expert, instead I try to follow their lead in finding that balance.

With that in mind, here are two upcoming events that speak to the central challenge:

The world as it is: In the last weekend of January, ten of our students (Confirmation-aged and older) will be participating in the Religious Action Center's L'Taken Seminar. They will join hundreds of teens from across the country in learning about the intersection between Judaism, justice, and public policy. This will culminate in a day spent on Capitol Hill, when our teens will have to opportunity to meet with staffers for their Representatives and Senators and advocate for a policy position that speaks to their own individual passion. The world as it could be: In February, our teen students will be invited to attend the Winter Planning Meeting of the Teen Leadership Council, our engagement initiative that encourages students to take an idea for a project (service, social or otherwise) through the stages of visioning, planning, and execution in a collaborative process. The idea is

1. for them to learn about their strengths and passions, and
2. to see something that begins in their head take shape in the world.

## NVHC Memory — A Table for the Temple

By Bob and Judy Amdur

Our new building had been recently completed, but was not quite adequately equipped for worship services. We were determined to hold services in the new building, but we didn't have a table for the pulpit. Ever resourceful IBM engineer Bill Rosenbluth looked around and found a piece of plywood outside that could be suitable for a table top, but we still needed legs. Bill and I went to the hardware store (Yes, Reston had a hardware store then.) and found some pipe that would work for legs and the rest of the hardware needed, and we had ourselves a table. The sisterhood made a covering, and that table and its cover served the congregation for years to come.

## Announcements

**Don't be "The Last Jew-di" to chant some *Megilat Esther* — the story of Purim!**

On Purim, it is a *mitzvah* for us to hear and recall the story of Esther, chanted with a special cantillation. YOU can learn a verse! I will provide materials, help, coach AND give one of my homemade *hamantashen* to whoever learns a verse to chant at our

**Purim Megillah reading on  
Wednesday, February 28th at 7:00 p.m.**

Please be in touch with me soon so we can get started!

CantorCaro@nvhcreston.org

# SOCIAL ACTION

## Forest Edge Food Packing Program

By Annie Rose Greenman, NVHC Tamid student

I am involved in the Forest Edge food packing program because I want to make a difference in the world, and I know it starts with small steps. I feel so lucky to be able to bring smiles to children's faces and thank NVHC for this opportunity. It is very important for others to be involved in the program too because even though it is good to do some "me" stuff, helping others is part of having a good moral character. It will make others happy—and it will make you happier too—knowing that someone out there can eat because of you.



## Life-Cycle Events

### Mazel Tov

To Al and Lynne Groff, on the birth of their grandson, Nathan Groff Brenner, born November 2, 2017

### Condolences

To John Wilcock, on the death of his mother,  
**Wendy Wilcock**

To Norm Reich, on the death of his mother-in-law,  
**Norma Lehman**

To Robin Dulman, on the death of her grandmother,  
**Cindy Carpp**

To Beverly Patz, on the death of her aunt,  
**Naomi Rosenberg**

To Robin Cohen, on the death of her mother,  
**Marion Cohn**

To Patty Aston, on the death of her father,  
**Sydney Stillman**

To Andrew Ortiz, on the death of his father,  
**Steve Ortiz**

To Cora Rudolph, on the death of her mother,  
**Syd Shana**

To Don Copley, on the death of his mother-in-law,  
**Leah Rubin**

To Marvin Singer on the death of his father,  
**Nat Singer**

To Jon Groisser on the death of his mother,  
**Lilah Groisser**

To David Fishman on the death of his mother,  
**Myra Joy Fishman**

## 2018/5778 B'nai Mitzvah

### January

Bar Mitzvah January 20th  
Cody Weitzman  
Mitzvah Project: TBD

Bat Mitzvah January 27th  
Lauren Lieberman  
Mitzvah project TBD

### February

Bar Mitzvah February 10th  
Reilley Lin  
Mitzvah Project: To help children overseas by planning to hold bake sales and other fundraisers on a continuing basis to donate to orphanages that Touching Heart is in contact with.

Bar Mitzvah February 24th  
Tobin Wilson  
Mitzvah Project: Coordinating a food drive to collect non-perishable food donations for needy families in Fairfax County as part of the annual Scouting for Food drive.

## New Members

We extend a warm welcome to these NVHC newcomers who have recently become part of our family. Please add their information to your membership directory, and be sure to make them feel at home when you meet them.

### John & Karen Wilcock

510 Gibson Drive, SW  
Vienna, VA 22180  
703-239-4412  
kgwilcock@yahoo.com

## Membership Directory Corrections

The following members have a change of address, phone, or email:

**Caren & Kristin Mintz**  
42510 Meridian Hill Drive  
Ashburn, VA 20148

**Submit your life-cycle events by phone to:  
703-437-7733, or email to:  
mozelle@nvhcreston.org.**

# **TZEDAKAH WE THANK OUR GENEROUS CONTRIBUTORS**

## **Adam Levine Camp Scholarship Fund**

Jim and Michelle Kranzberg in memory of Jackie Lugo  
Mitch and Abbe Pascal in memory of Martin Schwartz  
Alan and Susan Shapiro in memory of Morton Milesky,  
Jennie Fish, Florence Milesky

## **Cantor's Discretionary Fund**

Paul & Geraldine Hess in honor of Robin's Bat Mitzvah  
Al and Janice Nagell in memory of Anna Goodman  
Nate Rosen in memory of Murray Rosen

## **Choir & Music Fund**

Craig and Nina Falci in memory of Joan Lansky  
Rich and Cindy Michelson in memory of Marcia Lederer  
Diane Preece in memory of Edith Wright  
Henry and Irene Schiffman in memory of  
Henrique Rosenfeld

## **Ellen Reich Early Childhood Teacher Education Fund**

Stephen and Janet Braverman in memory of  
Norma Lehman  
Margaret Cotroneo in memory of Norma Lehman  
Jeff and Elaine Isser in memory of Norma Lehman  
Michael and Candy Kleinrock in memory of  
Norma Lehman  
Allan and Barbara Ratner in memory of Norma Lehman  
George Viener

## **Library Fund**

Bruce Johnson and Janis Linkov-Johnson in memory of  
Kendrick Johnson

## **Louis Gold Children's Music Fund**

Robert and Lorraine Lavet in memory of Leonard Shor  
Leslie and Marcia Platt in memory of Ethel Berman

## **Memorial Plaque**

Jon Groisser and Hana Newcomb in memory of  
Leon B. Groisser  
Allan and Barbara Ratner in memory of  
Beatrice Goldrich

## **NVHC Cares (Caring Committee)**

Robert and Gail Dezube in memory of Mitchell Dezube  
Isabel Einzig in memory of Robert Einzig

## **NVHC Fund**

Tom and Cindi Drake in memory of Claire Posner,  
Al Posner  
Warren and Evelyn Katz in honor of Shalom Chaverim

## **Oneg Fund**

Lou and Sara Moore in honor of her special birthday

## **Prayer Book Fund**

Leslie and Marcia Platt in memory of Benjamin Berman

## **Rabbi's Discretionary Fund – Rabbi Holzman**

Alan Dappen and Sara Scherr in memory of Arthur  
Dappen  
Paul & Geraldine Hess in honor of Robin's Bat Mitzvah  
Chuck and Barbara Leven in memory of Herman  
Lembersky, Ida Leven  
Robin Miller in memory of Dennis Goldstein  
NVHC Golf League  
Paul Pribish and Fredda Weinberg Pribish in memory of  
Morris Sussman

## **Rabbi's Discretionary Fund – Rabbi Wainer**

Paul Harmon  
Paul & Geraldine Hess in honor of Robin's Bat Mitzvah

## **Religious School Fund**

Bruce and Brandy Goldfeder in memory of Stanley  
Goldfeder

## **Seldon and Ruth Kruger Fund for Adult Learning**

Dwayne and Donna Archer  
David and Francine Beifeld in honor of Doris Weisman's  
birthday  
Bruce Friedman and Michaela Madsen in honor of  
Doris Weisman  
Alice Nerestone in honor of Doris Weisman's birthday  
Ruth Ruttenberg in honor of Doris Weisman's birthday  
Seymour and Linda Samuels in memory of Leon Berg  
Jim and Barbara Tombros in memory of Sid Lehmann  
Rita Way in honor of Doris Weisman's birthday

## **Social Action Fund – NVHC Change**

Victor Ronin and Olena Bilyk in honor of Danila Ronin

## **Social Action Fund – Forest Edge Backpack Program**

Don Copley in memory of Evelyn Copley  
Marc and Rinna Cortes in memory of Cristobal Cortes  
Brad and Risa May in memory of Ian Lasher  
Howard and Heidi Mitnick in memory of Fanny Schenker  
Alan and Susan Shapiro in memory of Lois Milesky,  
Sam Fish

## **Speaker Series**

Robert and Shirley Finkelstein in memory of Morris  
Finkelstein  
Suzi Stone

## **Youth Group Fund**

Justin and Andrea Hayes in memory of Denise  
Steinberger

## **High Holy Day Appeal 2017**

Our sincere gratitude goes to the following contributors,  
who made donations to our High Holy Day Appeal.

Al & Lynne Groff  
Michael Lipsky & Mariette Newcomb  
Howard & Heidi Mitnick  
Larry & Lisa Schwartz

 Northern Virginia Hebrew Congregation

 @nvhcreston



## UPCOMING EVENTS

# 2018

### **Distinguished Speaker's Series**

Thursday, January 11th

Michael Kazin

American historian and professor at Georgetown University; Co-editor of Dissent magazine.

### **Shared Shabbat Dinner**

Friday, January 12th

### **Shabbaton - Coming Home**

Saturday, February 3rd

### **Adult Purim Comedy Night**

Saturday, March 3rd