

The Glance

NVHC's Quarterly Magazine

Spring/Summer 2022





Members of NVHC visited the Washington, DC Temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints during its open house on June 2, 2022.

On the cover:

Rabbi Holzman and Cantor Caro during our congregational Simchat Torah celebration

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Welcome!

Rabbi Michael G. Holzman
Cantor Susan Caro

Welcome!

We dedicate this issue of the Glance to Welcoming! And we extend that openness to each and every member of our community, newcomers and decades-long veterans alike, full members of NVHC and those just considering joining, those who have raised children and grandchildren in this place, and the youngest faces at Tot Shabbat. We want to say Welcome!

Our vision states, “We are a Spiritual Home where we connect through community, to Judaism that matters.” This is what we aspire to be, and this is how we get there:

Welcome to Our Relationships!

At the heart of NVHC is a series of relationships, some obvious and others less so. We live in a world where the Surgeon General declared loneliness a national epidemic, and where people feel increasingly isolated. So, when we enter NVHC the importance of relationships may feel counter-cultural. That’s the point.

We hope everyone will find friends and peers, acquaintances and “friendlies,” who become familiar and comfortable faces in our times together. Over time, a casual encounter will turn into true friendships, and especially if we help raise our kids together, or if we are teens growing up together, or if we endure through illness or loss together, or if we celebrate a *simcha* together, what was once casual will become essential. The people we encounter here are meant to be fellow travelers through the least casual parts of life.

Welcome to our Values!

When we relate to each other at NVHC, we elevate a certain kind of interaction in this place. We are all working to become better human beings, and to bring a sense of the good into the world. But we know that the pace of life in 2022, and the majority of our interactions are transactional. We are going so fast, doing so much, often relating only through a few words or moments on a screen, that part of our humanity gets subsumed by a tidal wave of communications.

We want NVHC to be a gymnasium for our humanity, a place for us to regain that sense of elevation that can only be described by words like nobility and dignity. We see that everyone has a unique spiritual curriculum of life, and that each person is learning how to better balance the various values that make us human. This is the place where we can learn how to be more patient, where we can take that step of courage, where we can learn how to be humble, and

where we remember to treat creation with honor. Welcome to a place that revives values in the service of building character and virtue.

Welcome to Caring and Change!

As we develop who we are, we also recognize that we are here to take action. And the most fundamental goal of our action is to make the world a better place. We do this in so many ways, large and small, in all of our interactions; however, we have two teams dedicated to broad categories of actions: NVHC Cares, and NVHC Change.

NVHC Cares provides a variety of ways we can serve each other in personal moments – both in need and in celebration. These are some of the most fundamental aspects of community—being present when someone is sick, bereaved, lonely, afraid. Celebrating the joys of life-growing milestones. Our Cares team has opportunities to help once a year or once a week, when life affords a tiny bit of extra energy, or on a consistent, ongoing basis. We imagine NVHC Cares as the mythical Jewish village from centuries ago, when everyone knew everyone, and meals magically arrived at your home whenever hardship strikes, challot or a card to recognize the lows and highs of life. So Jewish. Good news? There is never enough, and we want to acknowledge and celebrate with you when we call or send a card or make your Shabbat even better with a challah. Bad news? Here's Soup! Except now, soup might also be a phone call, a ride to the doctor, a visit, a challah (food for body and soul), or maybe just . . . soup!

NVHC Change is our Social Action Team, and there are too many programs to describe here. But they fall into three general types, and each one appeals in different ways. The first is service, doing direct acts to help those in need. This might be cleaning up our adopted Wiehle Ave or helping to settle our adopted Afghan families. The opportunities are large and small; sign up quickly, because demand is high.

The second type of Change is advocacy where we work at a systemic level, partnering with outside organizations and contributing to efforts that change society. Some of our past projects have saved market-rate affordable housing, eliminated the seizure of drivers' licenses for unpaid court fees, and introduced minority-religious holidays on the local schools' calendars. Lastly, we know that change happens when people change, so the third type is internal. On complicated topics like racism and climate change, we start with ourselves, creating opportunities to learn and reflect, to evaluate our own behavior and to make ourselves, our families and our synagogue more just in a difficult world.

Welcome to a Synagogue!

You might be surprised to see such an obvious statement, but we mean something more subtle in these words. Yes, a synagogue is a place for us to gather and do Jewish things like pray and study, to do the work of caring and making change. And - not but - and a synagogue is an ancient structure that carries a tradition, a set of obligations, a purpose beyond any individual, and a connection to a global community. We are a vehicle to provide content and community, and we are also an institution needing care and upkeep, intention and attention.

This means that synagogue membership is so much more than the old stereotype of financial support. Yes, we need donations because we have expenses, but those donations flow from our agreement that this place is important, that our community serves a key purpose in our lives and in the world. We donate because we take joy in the purpose of this shared endeavor, and we commit to helping the institution and the community meet and even surpass that purpose. This is the essence of *brit*, covenant, and we opt-in to that covenant because we have found something worthy of service and devotion. That is what we understand a synagogue to be.

Welcome to Leadership!

As we discover relationships, learn how to cultivate virtue, and apply those to our synagogue, NVHC depends upon people who step forward, sometimes with just a baby step, and sometimes with a giant leap. Everyone is a leader in some way, whether that is simply handing someone a prayerbook or helping organize a group walk around Lake Anne. Sometimes those leadership roles are formalized; a small team is formed, and someone has to manage the email list. There are opportunities to create new programs and opportunities for others, and there are times when we need our more advanced students to become teachers and leadership for classes or worship. And there are formalized structures like committees and the Board, where members can accept organizational responsibility for our policies and priorities. Lastly, our leadership includes professionals like our faculty, staff and clergy team, who bring expertise and full-time labor in our joint endeavor.

All of this happens in a community of people who are incredibly busy, pulled in a million directions. But even the smallest amount of time or attention spent leading, stepping forward, serving others, can be amazingly meaningful. When we lead, we learn, we discover new friends, and we grow.

Welcome to Sacred Partnership

This is how things at NVHC come full circle: relationships lead to values, which lead to action, which depend upon our institutional base, which is built upon the backs of leaders, which weaves a tight fabric of partnership. Nothing can happen in Jewish community without a team, a minyan, a group ready to collaborate and create, to solve problems and to sustain purpose.

Our partnerships here go one step further, because we realize that our human-to-human interactions, our willingness to listen and to speak, to be patient and to take courage, to honor and to challenge, all reach deep into our souls granting us grace and blessing. Our partnership is sacred. Because of the relationships, values, actions, institutional identity and leadership, every act becomes a form of holiness, even when it seems like we are engaged in the most mundane work.



Welcome to Judaism that Matters!

All of Judaism is important and valuable; we dedicate NVHC to Judaism that has an impact on our lives. It matters to us. We are thrilled when a program, sermon, service, song, ritual, or lesson provides a spark of inspiration. That's great. We want everyone to feel welcome to all of those opportunities.

And we want to say, welcome, to the richness and meaning we find with each other, in this sacred space, that inspires us to grow and thrive despite what the world might throw at us. Welcome to Judaism that matters.

Board of Trustees Sets Five-Year Goals

Elizabeth Lacher & Rebecca Trager

We are setting goals to guide NVHC's future! Last fall the NVHC Board of Trustees convened a special task force to establish strategic goals for NVHC. The purpose was to be ready for the next budget cycle with a shared understanding of our mission and goals, and to drive decision making based on those goals. The goals recommended by the Goal Setting Group were adopted and endorsed by the Board of Trustees at the February board meeting.

The Goal Setting Group included several members of the Board of Trustees as well as a few temple members who are not currently in formal leadership roles, as well as our clergy and Executive Director. The process was facilitated by Risa May, our president, and congregant Ellen Goldman, who has professional experience in strategy development and organizational change.

Why do we need goals, anyway? Four years ago, the Board of Trustees adopted "Strategy 2020," which laid out a strategic vision for NVHC that would provide "*direction guidance* to the NVHC community for the next three to five years." That strategy identified the need for focused attention and improvements in five areas:

- Governance and Leadership
- Membership Engagement and Recruitment
- Membership Model
- Pastoral Care
- *B'nai Mitzvah* Preparation

Although some progress has been made in each of these areas, there is still more work left to do to achieve the strategic vision. However, there was a lack of clarity on next steps and who is accountable for taking those steps. Additionally, our current budgeting process is typically incremental with

minor adjustments from year to year. This tends to perpetuate the status quo and makes progress towards a long-term vision difficult.

And then there's COVID. The last two years have presented us with new challenges and opportunities. Pandemic recovery is underway, but we felt a need to reassess priorities as we evolve towards "a new normal" and take a long view of our congregational needs.

How were the goals determined? The goal setting process began by reviewing "Strategy 2020," as well as relevant Pew Studies and other information on current trends in the broader Jewish community and gathering inputs from a variety of lay leaders and others within our community on our needs, ambitions, and vision. There were some clear themes that emerged in terms of areas for improvement and issues to be addressed. These themes led to the identification of goals and short-term priorities.

What are the goals? Each of the goal areas and related activities that were identified are described below.

Develop segment-oriented strategies for engagement. We recognized that within our congregation (and the broader population of potential members) there are many demographic groups, or "segments," each with particular needs and interests. Some examples include young singles, young families, empty-nesters, adults with no children, and older adults. We recognized that if we are going to be successful at recruiting and retaining members, we need to be able to address the needs of individuals based on their life stage and other characteristics.

A one-size fits all approach would end up serving no one well. In the next year, we will be focused on defining our segments, assessing their current size within our congregation, and our current strengths and shortfalls in addressing the needs of each

segment. As we better understand the needs of each segment, we'll establish priorities and further refine our engagement strategies.

Define an effective contemporary financial model.

All across the United States, Jewish congregations are re-thinking their approach to how membership is defined, and how contributions are solicited from the membership. The "dues" models of past generations no longer resonate. Instead, NVHC has transitioned to a "voluntary contributions" model, which means that members are asked to contribute at a level that is meaningful and affordable for them. However, many members are unsure what this means and what is expected from them in terms of financial support to the congregation.

In the next year, we will be focused on clarifying our "voluntary contributions" model and developing simple, clear policy statements around voluntary giving. Additionally, we'll be reviewing and updating our communications around giving to ensure that pledging and giving to NVHC is easy. That includes, for example, revamping our website, developing new member packets, and updating financial statements that we send to members. We'll also be putting processes in place to enable better tracking of annual giving pledges and our progress towards our financial goals.

Appropriate technology support for communication and engagement.

The pandemic has taught us a lot about the use of technology. Many of us learned how to use Zoom and YouTube, and we learned to pay closer attention to our email for the latest news about what was happening at NVHC. Clearly, technology options are going to continue to change and improve, and if we are going to stay relevant, we must continue to take advantage of the latest tools for communication and engagement.

In the next year we'll be integrating appropriate use of technology in our segment engagement strategies. Sometimes that may mean exploring

new types of social media. Other times it may mean relying on old and familiar technology like postcards, pamphlets, and emails.

Alignment of human resources and organizational processes. Ultimately, NVHC is about people: those who make up our membership, those who volunteer and make things happen, and our clergy and staff. To reach our goals, we need to make sure that our people are set up for success and that we have the right individuals working on the right things. That may mean we need to adjust responsibilities among our staff, create task forces to address specific needs, or even dissolve some organizational structures or activities that are no longer serving us.

In the next year, we will focus on looking for opportunities to help our staff work more efficiently and better meet the needs of our community. We'll also be looking closely at our committee structures and volunteer opportunities, and how they can support the execution of our goals.

This all sounds like good stuff... but what changes can we expect? Ultimately, we expect that all of this analysis and organizational improvements will lead to a better understanding of member needs:

We believe this new understanding will help us engage and deepen relationships with all congregants, which in turn, will help our community grow.

Our strength as a community depends on engaged members who feel inspired to support NVHC in many ways. We recognize that to sustain a thriving congregation and meet future challenges, we need to be open to change and look beyond what worked well in the past.

Our Afghan Family

Nell Hirsch

Many of us have family stories that include escapes and immigration, histories of starting over as strangers in a new and unfamiliar land. As Jews, we share a common heritage of exile. Every spring at Passover, we read in the Haggadah that “in each generation, everyone must think of himself or herself as having personally left Egypt.”

Perhaps that is why NVHC has stepped up with such generous enthusiasm through our Social Action Committee to welcome our Afghan family, fresh from the military airlift out of Kabul. This multi-generational family (mother and father with one high school aged daughter and one college aged son, plus two married adult daughters with husbands and children) left Afghanistan in separate groups and landed on different military bases in the US. They managed to reunite here in Northern Virginia, living with very little in a two-bedroom apartment, where we went to work setting them up for their new lives. NVHC teamed with NOVA RAFT (Resettling Afghan Families Together), a grassroots coalition with the experience and expertise that we needed for a quick start.

Much of our work has been administrative and time-consuming: obtaining identity documents, registering for benefits, enrolling in plans for medical and dental care, registering for school and ESL classes, setting up bank accounts, getting routers and WI-FI set up, working out transportation, and more.

In addition, NVHC’s Afghan Team began to request donations, and the generosity poured in from more than 90 NVHC donors and over 25 of our friends and neighbors. Our community gave vans and truckloads of beautiful new and gently used items, \$4,200 in gift cards and over \$16,000 in cash (which we never even requested). Our community has even donated

two used cars to the family (but they could still use an additional car). The Social Action Committee is filling in gaps with funding from the annual Tikkun Olam Campaign.



Donations from our community filled the lobby.

Ken and Kathy Laskey, co-leads of the core team, said, “A team approach sounds great, but it only works if people step up to lead the teams and help with the legwork to get things done. The outpouring of volunteers providing countless hours of their time has been and continues to be phenomenal and is making a positive impact on the family. We’d also like to thank the dozens of congregants who have donated new and gently used items and gift cards that enable the work of the teams. There is much more that needs to be done but the outpouring to date gives hope that the impossible can be accomplished.”

As the team delivered donations and helped with tasks, the family welcomed our volunteers warmly with tea and overflowing gratitude. They unloaded vehicles, carried boxes up three flights of stairs, and even cleaned up the cars afterwards. Over the course

of additional visits, the family shared photographs of their lives and stories about their harrowing escape. Part of the family was present during the bombing at Kabul airport. They left behind immediate family members, comfortable homes and gardens, and successful careers. Ongoing security concerns preclude our sharing their names or printing pictures showing their faces.

Even as we congregants stepped up and gave from our hearts, we found great fulfillment of our own. We heard that from a number of folks, including one who wrote: "This is what I love about Judaism and NVHC. It feels great to be part of such a wonderful community that's actually DOING something to help people. I look forward to getting more involved in the future with the committee. Words can't express how thankful I am for the Afghan Team's dedication and your leadership."

Team Afghan and the family are overwhelmingly grateful to all the NVHC folks who have donated, contributed, and stepped up to offer hands-on help. We can't name everyone, but here are some highlights:

- Karen Singer, Ellen Goldman, and Karen Forman for sorting the donations that arrived daily in the temple lobby.

- Cheryl Gedzelman, Robyn Mehlenbeck, Mary Ann Ressin, Sam Ressin, Andy Lacher, and Jim & Michelle Kranzberg, for hauling loads of donations.
- Eric Forman for introducing the family to shopping at Costco.
- Melanie Meren, for organizing a baby/kids donation drive among Facebook friends and neighbors, and for making a successful connection to an employer for a family member.
- Michael Schwartz, for helping enroll the five-year-old in kindergarten.
- Rachel Ingber, for taking the women on a Target shopping spree.
- Bruce Johnson for spending hours setting up new routers and Wi-Fi for the three households, and John Lertzman for setting up a laptop for each family.
- Don Moyer and Steve Cristofar, for driving the families to medical appointments.
- Ruthie Dearson and her daughter, Maya, for connecting the teenager to an FCPS high school teacher formerly from Afghanistan.
- Adrian Carpio for researching DMV rules and insurance.
- Karen & Marvin Singer for providing one-on-one ESL tutoring to our family.
- Two wonderful anonymous congregants, for donating two much-needed used cars to the family.



Members of the family joined us to celebrate Lag B'omer.

“Our” Afghan family demonstrates their resilience and determination all along the way. Education is a priority for them. The young father’s joy at his five-year-old’s successful first day at kindergarten (where she was welcomed by a banner celebrating her arrival!) brought tears to one volunteer. Two of the young men studied hard to pass the written VDOT driving test, followed by the road test. The women have never held licenses but are now studying for the written test.

Family members began working almost immediately at Walmart and Panda Express. One has earned two promotions and is now a team lead at Walmart. With our help and connections, the other left Panda Express and secured an entry-level position at Wells Fargo, and a third took a very good position at an events production agency. We continue to help them look for better jobs in their fields.

Our volunteers help smooth the way through the school system and ESL classes and assist with navigating the bureaucracy to find missing paperwork. Improving their English is a priority, and the family will need ongoing assistance with the day-to-day challenges to adjusting to life in a new culture. But they are well on their way toward independence and creating new lives for themselves. They are an inspiration to watch.

Torah teaches, 36 times for emphasis, that we must welcome the stranger, for we were once strangers in the land of Egypt. The whole extended family joined us for dinner and our *Erev Shabbat* service at NVHC as we celebrated Lag B’omer. The warmth of gratitude and shared community among us was even brighter than the parking lot bonfire afterwards. As the Omicron variant retreats, NVHC members will have many more opportunities to offer that welcome and to spend time safely with our new friends. We have much to learn from and contribute to each other.

The Afghan Team welcomes more participation – get in touch with NVHC Change Chair, Ellen Ranard at SocialAction@nvhcreston.org and find your own place in this amazing story.

Special Thanks to Our Core Team:

Co-leads: Ken & Kathy Laskey

Benefits & Identity Documents: Susan Trivers

Communications: Ellen Ranard & Nell Hirsch

Education - ESL: Frank Newman

Education - High School: Latham Schweitzer (RAFT volunteer)

Education & Children’s Activities & Collection Drive: Rachel Ingber & Michael Schwartz

Finance & Banking: Mort Goldstrom & Andy Lacher

Housing & Collection Drive: Joanne Schamest & Ellen Ranard

Jobs: Jim Rose

Medical/Dental/Mental Health: Amy Becker, Eric & Bess Eisenstadt, & Robyn Mehlenbeck

Transportation: Eric & Bess Eisenstadt

***Tzedakah* at NVHC**

Susan Trivers

I often come away from a class taught by Rabbi Holzman feeling that my head is about to explode. So much to take in! New ideas, and new ways of thinking about familiar ideas.

New ways of thinking about familiar ideas have stayed with me since our Ethics class began studying *tzedakah*. Rabbi Joseph Telushkin devotes 100 pages of his book, *A Code of Jewish Ethics*, to *tzedakah*. The reason is in the first sentence of the chapter: “Charity is equal in importance to all commandments combined.” (Talmud, *Bava Bathra* 9b)

I’ve asked myself what this means to me? And I’ve been thinking about *tzedakah* at NVHC.

What it means to me is that I don’t appreciate the importance of *tzedakah* nearly enough.

I think we at NVHC have a huge untapped opportunity to bring *tzedakah* to the forefront of our minds.

Our children learn about giving to charity in our religious school and that's great. But since *tzedakah* is equal in importance to all commandments, we are obligated to do much more. I've come to believe that *tzedakah* should permeate our congregation; in our conversations, in our asking for money, and in our discussions about how we spend our money.

I've imagined what that would look, sound, and feel like.

- We would talk about *tzedakah* every day. Instead of pledges and dues and High Holy Day appeals, we would frame these occasions as opportunities to fulfill the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah*.
- Our *Tikkun Olam* campaign would request *tzedakah* to fulfill our obligation to the poor and needy among us.
- Our *Nitzavim* campaign would speak about giving as an act of *tzedakah*, a commitment to the preeminent commandment. *Tzedakah* will ensure the endurance of our community and the Jewish people.
- Every time we thank a donor, we'd do it using the language of *tzedakah*.
- And we'd thank people profusely, so they know the joy of giving.
- Our Membership pages would speak about *tzedakah*.
- Our holidays and life-cycle events would be occasions for giving *tzedakah* to NVHC.

- When we discuss the NVHC budget we'd ask, "Have we budgeted enough?" rather than "How little can we get by spending?" We'd practice "preventive *tzedakah*, not crisis *tzedakah*."
- When our trustees ask for our vote, we'd recognize their leadership and hard work as a gift that allows us to fulfill the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah*.

Tzedakah is usually defined as "charity." What is charity? Telushkin writes that it's a tangible expression of justice and love. These are clearly the opposite of transactions. In a transaction, you give money, and you get something in return. Giving *tzedakah* means someone else gets something. You get the satisfaction or the spiritual reward of giving for the sake of justice or out of love.

What this means to me personally is that the *tzedakah* I give contributes to the endurance of the Jewish people, from generation to generation. When I do this one commandment, I make all the others possible.

I believe that's valuable, that your soul feels good when you give. That you always have that money, because the difference that you made with your contribution is always yours.

In a day and time when people connect money to getting something back, to Return on Investment, *tzedakah* is the opposite. We get the satisfaction of knowing that we did the right, Jewish, thing.

Celebrating, Learning, Giving



The Women of NVHC are excited to be kicking off another year of creating connections and memories with all our members!

You may have noticed that we recently had a name change! We have voted to change our name from Sisterhood to Women of NVHC. We welcome and encourage all the Women of NVHC to join our vibrant and energetic group! We think that the connections you make and the support you receive will inspire you, and wrap you in the feelings of warmth, acceptance, and belonging. We may have changed our name, but we encourage all Women of NVHC to become a thriving member of our loving community!

Our membership drive kicks off in August, but we welcome new members throughout the year. Whether you are new to the community or a long-time member, we welcome you to join us. We are an inclusive community for all NVHC women – married, partnered, single, divorced, or widowed – with or without children – Jewish and non-Jewish – we want to welcome you all to our thriving group! We hope you'll take advantage of all we have to offer and become an integral part of our vibrant and supportive community. And, if you are a new NVHC member, we welcome you with one year of free membership to Women of NVHC! Look for our Membership Packets in your mailbox in August.

If you join us as a member this year, you will receive our weekly emails on Monday mornings and learn about our activities.

We look forward to having more in-person activities during the year, but will also continue with some Zoom programming. Our usual programs are listed below, in addition to a variety of special activities and events!

- Chocolate & Champagne membership fall event -Not to be Missed!
- Book Discussions and a Mah Jongg Tournament
- Chanukah Celebration and Membership Gatherings (winter and spring)
- Cooking Up Camaraderie Fundraiser (small gatherings in members' homes)
- Women's Seder
- *Tikkun Olam* Projects (e.g., volunteering at Women Giving Back)
- Rummage Sale (June)

You get all this and more for a one-time dues payment of \$36! Our funds go to subsidize our activities and to support NVHC through donations (e.g., camp scholarships, early childhood programs, and congregational engagement such as Dueling Pianos). We invite all of you to join us to further our mission of promoting camaraderie, esprit de corps, spirituality, and participation in *tikkun olam*. We support one another, our temple, and our extended community through a variety of activities. We are always looking for innovative ways to offer opportunities and events that will encourage celebrating, learning, and giving to all Women of NVHC. Please do not hesitate to contact me with an idea, an interest, or a new way to make connections; we welcome your thoughts and help in developing new opportunities.

We have a dedicated Board and group of committee Chairs, who are creating a dynamic calendar for the upcoming year. Join the Women of NVHC; make deep and lasting connections and feel the warmth and support of belonging to this great group of women. Questions? Email Peggy Nelson, President, at WomenofNVHC@nvhcreston.org

NVHC Cares

NVHC Cares is our communal program which recognizes the community responsibility of connecting with and caring for one another as we fulfill the mitzvah of *G'milut Chasadim* – performing acts of loving kindness. Below are stories from volunteers and congregants about what NVHC Cares means to them.

If you have a need for support from our community, please contact Cantor Caro at cantorcaro@nvhcreston.org or the NVHC Cares Team Lead at nvhccares@nvhcreston.org

What does NVHC Cares do? We...

- Call you to check in.
- Send you a card to bring you a smile.
- Offer meals for when it is too difficult to make them yourself.
- Give you a ride to events at NVHC.
- Bring over a challah so you can still celebrate in our traditions.
- Help you with any funeral coordination.
- Organize events for our older community.

When congregant Rachel Charlton was recovering from major surgery, NVHC Cares provided meals to help her family while they cared for her. About that experience, Rachel said: "Each and every day, for 10 days, pure love was delivered directly to my doorstep thanks to NVHC Cares. My 73-year-old mother was able to make the trip from New Jersey to care for me, and my boyfriend came over each day before and after work for medication management and wound care. Both my mother and boyfriend were so exhausted! Words cannot express how much receiving the delicious meals supported my recovery. Each meal was prepared with love and provided us nourishment for dinner (and often lunch the following day). Some folks added desserts and little cards – so meaningful! NVHC is one big family and we take care of each other. As members of NVHC, we are never alone. All we need to do is ask for help."

"*Nihum Avelim* (comforting mourners) is considered one of the classic forms of kindness in Jewish tradition. All of us have or will experience a loss of a loved one. Being there for others is something to which we all can relate. It warms my heart to see how the NVHC community comes together at a time of loss. When I talk with congregants about the NVHC community and what makes it special, frequently they refer to a time of loss in their lives when scores of others came together to support them with *shiva* leaders, *minyán* attendees, and calls of comfort. Honoring a decedent is a favor that can never be returned, making it devoid of ulterior motive, thus a laudable *mitvah* often referred to as a *Chesed Shel Emet* The truest act of kindness."

– Andy Lacher, *Chebra Kadisha*

"NVHC Cares offers a challah to families in cases of death, serious illness or surgery, birth or adoption, or, more recently, conversion. When a family accepts the offer, an NVHC Cares volunteer delivers the challah, making it easier for the family to observe Shabbat in their home. The delivery also creates a connection between the volunteer, as a representative of the NVHC community and the recipient, producing 'warm feelings of empathy' in both. As volunteer baker, Fay Gubin, noted, 'A gift of challah is an expression of a community that cares.' Gail Dezube echoes Fay to say that 'this *mitzvah*... acknowledges life events while connecting members to Judaism in general and NVHC in particular.'"

– Bess Eisenstadt, Challah Team

"I have been leading the Cards Team for NVHC Cares from the very beginning. Sending a card is such a meaningful yet simple thing to do to bring someone comfort or joy. I love it when I find the perfect card for a particular situation.

I also volunteer for a shift with the Calls Team. Both positions let me connect personally with members of our community. My family has received a lot of support from NVHC over the years, and it's nice to be able to give back."

– Nicki Halterman-Mitchell, Cards Team

"Gathering with fellow Jews is integral to Jewish life. We gather for life cycle events, holidays, and Shabbat. I love making sure that those at NVHC who want to share sacred space with other Jews are able to do so even if they can't drive themselves. It is thrilling to see congregants greet them as they arrive after being picked up by a Rides volunteer. A simple thing like a ride to and from the temple provides long-lasting warmth to those we help."

– Susan Trivers, Rides Team

"Especially during these last two (actually going on three!) long COVID years, things have seemed impossibly out of control. Yet one of the things I know I do have control over is deciding how I spend my days. Embracing the concept that "I got this," "this one's on me" is what keeps me moving forward. I think I can speak of this truth for my amazing team of 31 other volunteers as well. Within this mindset is renewal and empowerment. Our commitment to the NVHC Cares Calls Committee is where we choose to put some of our time and energy. And with that choice comes the knowledge that what we do makes a difference. We know because we hear it over and over again: the one-on-one connection we offer helps to strengthen NVHC's amazing sense of community."

– Steffanie Bergman, Calls Team

Thank You Cantor Caro

Rachel Charlton

In mid-October, I was diagnosed with a very serious illness. The doctors ordered many tests to develop a prognosis and subsequent treatment plan. Everything was moving so quickly. I was petrified and didn't know what to do or where to turn.

Thankfully, I reached out to Cantor Caro, who responded immediately with support. We met outside at Lake Anne and talked for quite a while to develop my spiritual plan. Until that moment, I didn't even know what a spiritual plan was, but it truly altered my life.

Like each of you, I love Cantor Caro's beautiful voice. So, I asked if she would record a morning and afternoon prayer for me, which she did. Each morning, I walked around Lake Anne listening and at night before bed, I listened as well. Cantor Caro offered to accompany me to Adas Israel in Washington, DC for a healing *mikvah*, which she did. The *mikvah* experience instantly took me from fearfulness to peacefulness and brought me closer to both G-d and Judaism.

Cantor Caro shared a variety of resources and a menu of options for support, including meal delivery from the NVHC Cares Committee. Ten days of dinner, made and delivered by members NVHC, was a true gift of love that filled the bellies (and hearts) of my mother and boyfriend, who together provided around-the-clock care after my December 1 surgery.

As I continue to heal from the first surgery and prepare for my next surgery, Cantor Caro has frequently reached out to me to offer support, reminding me she is happy to help. I am full of gratitude to be part of the NVHC family and the Jewish community and, of course, for Cantor Caro!

When you are not sure what to do or where to turn, remember that you are not alone.

Good health to you and yours and please remind your loved ones to stay current with preventative medical screenings.

Meals with Love

Karen Forman

Growing up in a Jewish household, food was always important to me. Food was an important part of any holiday celebration or comfort to those in need. I come from a large family and when we would gather there was always lots of food and fun. Even though my mom worked full-time, she always had dinner on the table, but she never asked much of me in the kitchen except to go to the corner bakery and buy a seeded rye, sliced.

It wasn't until I got married that I really learned how to cook and bake. I have a husband who loves whatever I make, so it is a joy to be in the kitchen. I associate food with love and comfort. When my family grew, it was important for me share my love of cooking and baking. I enjoyed sharing my traditions surrounding food and making new ones with my grandkids.

Since food has been so important in my life, it seemed a natural progression to become head of the meals program as part of the NVHC Cares Committee. I organize meals for our congregants in need.

I have a wonderful group of volunteers who, like me, want to do a *mitzvah* and bring a meal to help comfort a congregant in need. Some volunteers don't have time to cook so they buy a meal to give to a family. It really doesn't matter if you cook or buy a meal. You get the same feeling of joy and love when you are helping a congregant and their family. We would love for you to join our list of exceptional volunteers!

We give a warm welcome to new members:

Allan and Esther Berg
Jack Bonatakis and Marissa Kardon-Weber
Ben and Stephanie Donchin
Joseph Hyman and Monica Iturbide
Melvin Kline and Esther Iseman
Erica Livingston and Edward Gordon
David Lynch
Ellyn Krause-Pontell and David Pontell
Gideon and Jessica Mahn
Meryl Ram
Ariela Rosenstein
Mark Tauber
Lesley and James Thorne
Kristina & Michael Wheatman



We extend our sincere and heartfelt condolences to

Hal Mann, on the death of his father, Harold W. Mann
Erin DiManno, on the death of her mother, grandmother of Arden and Cole DiManno, Nancy Price
Chris Watanabe, on the death of his father, Kenneth Watanabe
Sandee Byrne, on the death of her son, Daniel Smith
Judi Ornoff, on the death of her sister, Rosalyn Schneider
Elizabeth Lacher, on the death of her brother-in-law, Jon Thompson
Rebecca Krasnegor, on the death of her cousin, Joel Selig
Michael and Tanya Langlois, on the death of their dear friend, Bob Wright
Rebecca Krasnegor, on the death of her brother-in-law, Harvey Krasnegor



Mazel Tov to ...

Matt Carlin and Sarah Rose, proud parents of Nathan, born March 12, 2022

Thank you to all our generous donors!

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Ingrid Small and John O'Connor...in memory of Marvin Small
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Ben Galison and Sabrina Hollander...in honor of Emmett's *B Mitzvah*
Steve and Linda Gordon...in appreciation of Mindfulness classes and for Cantor Caro's support
Bill Holtzman and Juliet Goozh...in memory of Phyllis Holtzman
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Jeremy and Regina Krasner...in honor of Ava's *Bat Mitzvah*
Kevin and Vicki Luman...in honor of Addison's *Bat Mitzvah*
Leslie and Marcia Platt...in memory of Ann Platt

Kris Rose...in thanks for making my public declaration so special
Marvin and Karen Singer...in appreciation of Cantor Caro's inspirational teaching
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Larry Snowwhite...in memory of Deede Snowwhite, Ken Kaplan
Bob Wein...in memory of Mimi Arnstine
Jonathan and Hilary Wilkenfeld...in appreciation for Cantor Caro's support
Ed and Sandee Byrne...in memory of Daniel Smith
Debbie and Scott Felder...in honor of Josh's *Bar Mitzvah*
Norman Reich and Margaret Cotroneo...in honor of Marvin Singer's special birthday

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Don and Nell Hirsch...in gratitude to Mike Langlois, for his leadership and the music he shares with us
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Leslie and Marcia Platt...in thanks to the NVHC Caring Committee, with special thanks to Karen Singer, Karen Forman, Fay Gubin, Ellen Rugel, and Bess Eisenstadt
Karen and Marvin Singer...in memory of Jennie Ankeles

Steve and Linda Gordon...in memory of Beverly Spencer,
Jean DeBuyser
Norman Reich...in memory of Ellen Reich, Dorothy Reich
Joanne Schamest and Ron Wallos...in memory of Marion
Schamest
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Lenny Z "Luchshen" (noodle) Rubinoff; in memory of
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Rabbi Deborah Prinz and Rabbi Mark Hurvitz...in honor of
Rabbi Gold's many years of rabbinic leadership at NVHC
and the CCAR, and most especially in appreciation of
decades of friendship
Larry Snowwhite...in memory of Deede Snowwhite
Marvin and Karen Singer...in appreciation of Rabbi Gold's
inspirational teaching
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Marsha Sheinman...in memory of Joseph Sheinman
Marvin and Karen Singer...in memory of Rosalyn Schneider; in support of Ukrainian evacuees
Helen Smith
Ted Smith and Rosalind Gold
Larry Snowwhite...in memory of Ann Zeitz
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Ron Wallos and Joanne Schamest...in support of Ukrainian evacuees
Chris and Lauryn Watanabe
Melvin K. Weber...in honor of Felicia Katzman's *Bat Mitzvah* in Poland
Jessica and Robert Weiner...in honor of Steffanie Bergman
Mark and Nancy Weinstein...in memory of Daniel Smith
Doris Weisman...in memory of Daniel Smith
Henry White...in honor of Felicia Katzman's *Bat Mitzvah* in Poland
Stu Williger
Sam and Evelyn Wilson
Faraz Yusufi...in honor of Felicia Katzman's *Bat Mitzvah* in Poland
Monica Sanders...in honor of Felicia Katzman's *Bat Mitzvah* in Poland

Speaker Series

Jane Anthony
Francine Beifeld...in memory of Cynthia Hausdorff
Harvey and Janice Berger
Steffanie Bergman...in honor of Betty Schatz
David and Ellen Brewer...in memory of Sol Brewer
Alex and Clara Bulux
Jeff and Tracy Dlott...in memory of Brian Cohen
Robert and Gail Dezube...in memory of Deede Snowwhite
Jason and Vera Feig...in memory of Stanley Feig
Michael and Carol Flicker...in memory of Warren Katz,
Beverly Spencer, Jean DeBuyser, Barbara Gwertzman,
Nancy Green
Eric and Karen Forman...in memory of Murray Blume, Leon Forman, Ken Blume

Michael and Cheryl Gedzelman...in memory of Bert Gedzelman
 Rob and Nora Gutcho
 Steve and Louise Hershkowitz...in memory of Joseph Wittenberg, Simeon A. Wittenberg, Naomi W. Wittenberg, Emanuel Hershkowitz, Ruth P. Hershkowitz
 David and Carla Heymsfeld
 Don and Nell Hirsch...in memory of Shirley Hirsch
 Carol Isaacs
 Ken and Kathy Laskey
 Steve and Ruth Lipson...in memory of Maurice Lipson, Louis Rzepka; in memory of Rita Lipson
 Neil and Deborah Meland
 Howard and Heidi Mitnick
 Mariette Newcomb and Michael Lipsky
 Mark and Judi Ornoff...in memory of Betty Schatz
 Leslie and Marcia Platt...in memory of Harold Platt
 Norman Reich...in memory of Nathan Reich
 Ruth Ruttenberg...in memory of Charles Herbert Wechsler, Beatrice Wechsler; in memory of Bessie Spitz, Alan P. Spitz
 Seymour Samuels
 Henry and Irene Schiffman...in memory of Nora Rosenfeld
 Marvin and Karen Singer...in honor of Eric Forman; in memory of Nat Singer, Miriam Singer
 Larry Snowwhite
 Mark and Nancy Weinstein...in memory of Melvin Edinberg, Jeffrey Edinburg
 Howard and Carolyn Wesoky
 Samuel and Evelyn Wilson...in memory of Milly Boehm, Frank Boehm
 Jane Anthony
 Ed and Sandee Byrne...in memory of Miriam Chernow
 Andy and Susan Cohen
 Don Copley...in memory of Isaiah Copley
 Robert and Shirley Finkelstein...in memory of Rebecca Silbovitz, Deborah Finkelstein
 Michael Hendler
 Carol Isaacs
 Brad and Risa May
 Allan and Barbara Ratner
 Andrew and Barbara Rudin
 Robert and Ellen Rugel...in memory of Rosalyn Schneider
 Ed and Bernadette Saperstein
 Oliver and Joyce Schueftan...in memory of Sylvia Gasperow
 Marsha Sheinman
 Stacy Skitol
 Phyllis Stein... in memory of Robert Stein
 Andrew and Ellice Stern...in memory of Anita Rosenberg
 Don and Edna Weitzman

Torah Fund

Kevin and Vicki Luman...in memory of Mimi Arnstine
 Ted Smith and Rosalind Gold...in memory of Ladislav Mares
 Patrick and Kristen Towbin...in memory of Judith Towbin

Worship Fund

Don Copley...in memory of Michael Rubin

Youth Group Fund

Patrick and Kristen Towbin...in memory of David Towbin
 Isabel Einzig...in memory of Jacob Pyles



Spring has sprung and NVHC is once again doing its part at *Tikkun Olam*. Even the flowers are happy that we've cleaned up our stretch of Wiehle Avenue just north of NVHC!



NORTHERN VIRGINIA
HEBREW CONGREGATION

1441 Wiehle Ave | Reston, VA 20190



Upcoming Holidays

Tisha B'av - August 6-7

Selichot - September 17

Rosh Hashanah - September 25-26

Yom Kippur - October 4-5

Sukkot - October 9-16

Shmini Atzeret - October 17

Simchat Torah - October 18