THE RECONSTRUCTIONIST PLENUM: OUR VOICE IN MOVEMENT GOVERNANCE: MEMBER COMMUNITIES ASKED TO PROVIDE INPUT ON CRITICAL ISSUE

BY HALLE BARNETT, BOARD PRESIDENT

I am privileged to be Kol HaLev’s representative to the Reconstructionist movement plenum. Plenum representatives serve as conduits of important information between the congregational membership and the movement’s central organization, so that stakeholder communities have a voice in movement governance. It’s a unique body, allowed to set its own agendas and make decisions that afford real influence on the shape of the movement. It’s also a profoundly civil, if vigorous forum, where our democratic tradition is palpable, and difficult issues are discussed with great mutual respect and enthusiastic engagement.

Today I have some plenum business to share with all of you, including one important issue on which we as an affiliated congregation have been asked to provide input to the movement.

At our recent plenum in late November, Rabbi Deborah Waxman, president of both the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC) and the movement at large (Jewish Reconstructionist Communities, or JRC) provided an update on the movement.

Kudos to Ritualwell.org
First, a kvell: Ritualwell.org, a project of Kolot: The Center for Jewish Women’s and Gender Studies of RRC, was selected for coveted inclusion in this year’s Slingshot Guide as a model of innovative thinking in the Jewish Community!

WHAT IS THE PLENUM?
The Jewish Reconstructionist Communities (JRC) plenum is made up of one representative from each affiliated congregation or havurah, as well as some non-voting, ex officio members (Rabbis and chairs of major committees). The plenum:

1. Votes on public positions as recommended by the Tikkun Olam Commission, and internal policies of the Reconstructionist movement
2. Updates congregational representatives on movement priorities and the work of the Congregational Services Committee and the Youth and Education, Movement Growth & Financial Health, Tikkun Olam committees.
3. Discusses emerging budget and program priorities of the central organization.

The plenum holds business meetings at least twice a year, usually by conference call. This year, the plenum is chaired by Abe Clott, a life-long Reconstructionist who has served the movement in a number of volunteer capacities over the years.

A full description of the plenum is available at jewishrecon.org/purpose-and-membership.
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http://www.kolhalev.net

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• Calendar - Peggy Kittila & Kelli Birch
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• Religious Practices – Karal Stern & Elise Hagesfeld
• Holidays – Amy Hogg
• Meditation – Nancy Rubel & Karly Whitaker
• Music – Open
• Security Corps – Open

Learning - Leah Kamionkowski & Glenda Kupersmith-Kopstein
• Youth & Family Education – Sue Pelleg
• Adult Education – Maureen Hack
• Young Families/Tot Shabbat – Rachel Williams & Josh Chefitz
• Child Care Coordinator – Traci Elgart
• Torah Study – Ralph and Selma Gwatkin
• Book Group – Kevin Weidenbaum
• Lunch and Learn – Open

Involved - Karly Whitaker

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: THURSDAY, JAN. 15

January 2015 Page 2 Kol HaLev Happenings
VISITORS BRING SPECIAL LIGHT TO OUR HUMAN RIGHTS SHABBAT

The publication of this month’s newsletter comes at about the midway point between last month’s celebration of Hanukkah and the annual observance of Dr. Martin Luther King’s birthday on the 19th of this month. I feel compelled to write this month about the recent experience our community had with the visit of about 40 members of Elizabeth Baptist Church along with their spiritual leader, Pastor Richard Gibson, which embodied a direct connection to both of these meaningful times in our annual cycle. The visit took place on the day of our observance of Human Rights Shabbat, which fell on the Shabbat during Hanukkah.

This visit was a follow up from having had Pastor Gibson speak to us on Yom Kippur afternoon about the importance of the work that Greater Cleveland Congregations (GCC) was doing for the region of Northeast Ohio. Pastor Gibson and I met together not long after his initial visit to Kol HaLev and we agreed that bringing our two communities together would be an important and exciting thing to do. The fact that it took place during Hanukkah felt significant to me, in part because of the painful and upsetting context of the recent series of young African-American men being killed at the hands of law enforcement under questionable circumstances. Those events and in some cases the responses to them have engendered the distressing re-emergence of the awareness of the long distance we still have to go in our country to achieve true racial equality. Hanukkah can be understood at one level as being about finding ways of generating light at times of great darkness. I had hoped that the coming together of our two communities would feel like just such a moment of light but the actual experience went beyond what I had hoped for. I felt this in the large number of Elizabeth members who were willing to come to an unfamiliar location and sit through an unfamiliar worship service and bring a sense of curiosity and appreciation.

I felt it in the openness that people within our two groups had for one another which was manifest in the service and also as we sat together at the Kiddush afterwards and began to learn about one another’s lives and religious traditions. Pastor Gibson gave a short sermon before we recited the Aleynu prayer in which he suggested that relationships like the one we are wanting to foster between our two communities are most powerful if they are grounded in a long-term commitment to know one another better rather than simply as a response to a particular moment of crisis in our country. My strong sense was that most, if not all the people who attended the service that day felt that something special and powerful had taken place. Next, it will be our turn to pay a visit to their church which is tentatively set for mid-March.

Please watch future newsletters and updates for more details on this visit and please consider participating in the delegation from Kol HaLev that will move us to the next stage of connection.

Rabbi Steve

Rabbi Steve is available to meet with Kol HaLev members on a range of issues by appointment on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings. Contact him at 216-320-1498 or at rabbisteve@kolhalev.net.
New Staff to Help Growing Congregations
On to business, Rabbi Waxman noted that many JRC-affiliated congregations are struggling, and to help provide support, the JRC plans to hire a staff member to assist congregations with growth and marketing issues. The movement itself is experiencing some financial stress due to a decline in movement dues (monies each affiliate pays the movement for the benefits of membership; read more at jewishrecon.org/member-benefits-snapshot).

New Department of Community Engagement
Nonetheless, the movement’s commitment to community engagement and service is strong, and Rabbi Deborah Glanzberg-Krainin (Vice President for Community Engagement) and Tresa Grauer (Director of Affiliate Support) reported on the newly-formed department of community engagement and its priorities for the coming year.

New Board of Governors
We also ratified the slate for the new Board of Governors, which includes Kol HaLev’s own Greg Selker, who recently began a three-year term. Greg has played an instrumental role on the Movement Advisory Committee since the merger of the (former) Jewish Reconstructionist Federation with the RRC.

Proposed Policy Change
Finally, we heard a presentation from Elsie Stern, RRC’s Vice President for Academic Administration, on a proposed change to RRC’s admission and graduation policy. Much like the policies of our sister denominations’ seminaries, RRC’s current admissions policy states that the College “does not ordinarily admit or graduate as a rabbi a student married to, or in a committed relationship with, a non-Jew.” Amid an intensive Values-Based Decision Making process, the RRC faculty is now considering a proposal to eliminate that policy, believing that it no longer supports the Reconstructionist mission and values of RRC.

The College does not ordinarily admit or graduate as a rabbi a student married to, or in a committed relationship with, a non-Jew. . . . The RRC faculty [believes] this policy . . . no longer supports the Reconstructionist mission and values of RRC.

Enrollment and graduation is down in most Jewish seminaries, and RRC, among other ordination programs, was specifically tasked by its accrediting agency (Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools) to review barriers to admission. While the faculty has full jurisdiction over all decisions regarding admissions and graduation requirements, they also fully understand the broad implications of both the current policy and potential changes, and have asked for feedback from the broader movement membership.

The proposed policy change has won preliminary passage, meaning, after much discussion and deliberation, the faculty is inclined to make the change. But an essential part of their process involves gathering stakeholder feedback that will figure prominently in a second round of deliberations. It is important to understand that preliminary passage does not guarantee final passage, and that feedback will be taken seriously.

The post-plenum FAQ states: “The faculty vote for initial passage is grounded in the conviction that the change aligns with the core Reconstructionist perspective that puts “belonging, behaving and

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We send wishes for a refuah shleyma, a complete and speedy healing, to Abe Chasin, Fred Chenin, Dorinda Gershman, Sam Kelman, Frank Maris, Jean Miller, Pauline Raymond and Roberta Tonti.

Thanks to Jane Arnoff-Logsdon who was the Monthly Coordinator in December, another busy month for the Hesed Committee. This month, members provided meals, rides and shopping trips, and we thank all who extending themselves to support members with special needs.

We would like to periodically share reflection by members who have been impacted by our Hesed work, both as recipients and as supporters. This month, Maxine Collins shares her thoughts:

**Kol Halev Hesed: A Labor of Love that Offers Mutual Reciprocity**

*With all our dialoguing and talking and learning about good deeds as Jews, the reality is that there is no truer mitzvah in our world than to actually PERFORM good deeds rather than just talk about them.*

*And that is what I learned during my month as Hesed Coordinator for November, with the help of the amazing guidance and tutelage of Robin Holzman, Martha Schubert, and Jane Arnoff-Logsdon.*

*For me, what appeared on the surface to be an obligation to help has been transformed into an amazing sense of gratitude -- gratitude for the opportunity to serve and to reap the rewards of service. This is truly work that makes the world a better place, one mitzvah at a time. Every Kol Halev Member who volunteers as an active member of Hesed— whether as a monthly co-coordinator or as the person who delivers a meal, provides transportation, visits the sick or does someone's shopping— is both giving AND getting. They're giving of themselves and in return, they're gaining the most gratifying intangible which humans can experience: The feeling of doing good, of doing the right thing, of receiving a smile that emanates from the soul because it reflects the gratitude of our members in need. In short, to perform an act of Hesed is to perform a labor of love that returns its favor many times over.*

*My heartfelt thanks for both the opportunity and the support I have received along the way. If you haven't experienced the profound, soul-satisfying work of Hesed, there is no time like the present— just contact Robin or Martha. Experience this mutual reciprocity for yourself; I guarantee you will LOVE it!*

If you are able to participate in the work of the Hesed Committee, or if you know of anyone who may need the support of our committee, please contact Rabbi Steve or Robin Holzman (robinholzman@gmail.com) and Martha Schubert (marthaschubert@mac.com), Hesed Co-chairs.
CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS FOR THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Kol HaLev nominating committee plays an important role in finding volunteers to serve on the Kol HaLev's board of directors. Our nominating committee is made up of at least five members, 3 of whom are current board members and at least two are general members in good standing. In preparation for our next election, in June 2015, we will need to find candidates for three open board positions: A Welcoming Values Team Leader and two Members-at-Large.

If you haven’t participated in our community leadership, we encourage you to join a committee which interests you. A list of committees can be found on page 2 of this newsletter, and other members (including membership committee chair Peggy Kitilla and member Leah Kamionkowski) can help you find the right committee for your interests and abilities.

If you are interesting in serving on either the nominating committee (which meets in the spring) or the board of directors (a two-year term), please contact Sue Pelleg (suelisw@aol.com) or Barb Truitt (barb.truitt@gmail.com).

IN JANUARY, A "PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY" LUNCH & LEARN SERIES

There are five Megillot (scrolls) which we read on different holidays: Esther, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, and Ecclesiastes. As part of last year’s “philosophical inquiry” series, we studied Ruth.

In the next four sessions—Saturday, January 10, 24, and 31, from 1:00-2:45 p.m.—we will focus on Esther and, if there's time, move on to Song of Songs. Once again, we'll use the "philosophical inquiry" approach, a rich combination of teaching and group-directed inquiry, facilitated by Bill Scher-Marcus. No prior experience of the texts or the method is necessary.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: UPDATE ON KIDDUSH CONVERSATIONS

The Membership Committee thanks everyone who participated in the recent Kiddush Conversations. Between the two meetings that we held, emails, and phone calls, we have received feedback from over 40 members, and we deeply appreciate all the perspectives and ideas we have heard. The Membership Committee will be meeting on January 11 to debrief on this feedback and to determine how to proceed. Please be in touch with Miriam Geronimus (mgeronimus@gmail.com) if you have any questions, ideas, or concerns.
believing” at the center of Jewish identity. The vote for preliminary passage is also grounded in the faculty’s awareness that our current policy is preventing us from admitting students who we think will be excellent rabbis who will contribute robustly to the vitality and continuity of the Jewish people.”

Opposition to the policy change was respectfully presented by Rabbi Les Bronstein, who posited that the change will redefine both what a rabbi can be, and the value of in-marriage.

Surely your minds and hearts are awhirl with questions: Would the proposed change affect the role or standing of Rabbis, in our individual communities? In the movement? In the eyes of the Jewish world? Could it affect the perceived value of in-marriage? Does the proposed change align with a broader notion of inclusiveness in peoplehood? Could it help us better attract and support interfaith families? Will it necessitate change in the hiring practices of individual congregations? Are other Jewish seminaries / movements considering the same action, (yes, some are) and what are their important criteria? Are there other ways to attract students who could become excellent rabbis, without making this policy change? Could the policy change alter what it means, writ large, to be a Jewish People? How do we define “non-Jew?”

You will have the opportunity to discuss these kinds of issues vis a vis the proposed policy change at an upcoming Kol HaLev community meeting in February or early March, which will be designed to provide Kol HaLev’s feedback to the RRC by April 1. A meeting date will be forthcoming.

The full Partner Status Policy overview (including the origins of the current policy, and arguments for and against the proposed change) as well as other plenum-related documents are available for your review at http://www.jewishrecon.org/plenum-documents; I encourage you to engage with them. Then, in preparation for our community discussion, please consider your thoughts on the following specific questions from RRC:

1. What consequences (positive and/or negative) are likely or possible if RRC eliminates the prohibition?
2. What consequences (positive and/or negative) are likely or possible if RRC maintains the prohibition?
3. Are there important values that a policy change would/would not honor?
4. How would eliminating or amending the policy affect your feelings about Reconstructionist Judaism or your feelings about identifying as a Reconstructionist Jew?
5. Can you imagine your community hiring a rabbi who is married to or partnered with a non-Jew? Can you articulate why or why not?

We will also be provided with additional materials to review, from Reconstructionist rabbis who represent various viewpoints regarding the proposed policy change, “to stimulate thinking and enhance communal conversations” (www.jewishrecon.org/files/Report%20back%20to%20plenum%20FINAL.pdf).

What an incredible opportunity we have been given to engage with these pivotal ideas! Mindful of the moment in our evolution as a civilization, I offer you thanks in advance for your willingness to lend your ears and your voices.
The board of trustees met on December 8 at the home of Kirby Date. Rabbi Steve led the Board in a Bracha and Kirby offered a D’var Torah before the board unanimously approved the minutes from the November board meeting.

**Treasurer’s Report:**
Bruce reported that the total of checking, savings, and related accounts was approximately $178,000. As of December 3, dues commitments were $163,000. This is 10% above the commitments last year at this time but approximately $8,000 below the projected amount in the FY15 Budget.

Dues collections are at $99,000, including both FY15 dues and dues in arrears from FY14. While new accounting practices make comparisons to last year difficult, Bruce estimates that our dues collections to date are consistent with last year at this time. The efforts of Board members in contacting member households have helped reduce the number of outstanding commitments. Twenty households have not responded and there was a brief discussion about possible issues raised by this lack of response. The issue will be explored further by the Value Team Leaders (VTLs) and at the board retreat in January.

Value Teams and committees should begin preparation for submitting budget projections for FY16. In anticipation of the budget discussions scheduled for the March board meeting, Bruce encouraged VTLs to look at what is currently being spent, what is anticipated and what each team would like to spend. To provide guidance for this process, Bruce will lead a brief meeting for VTLs (and any others who would like to attend) at 6:45 pm prior to the January 12 board meeting.

**Mock Trial:**
Halle reported on the mock trial, People Vs. Joseph’s Brothers. It was well received, though attendance was down from previous years. Gross funds raised were approximately $19,000. Last year’s net profit was approximately $15,000; this year’s net is still TBD but we expect at least $12,000.

**2nd Torah Scroll update:**
Rabbi Steve reported on continuing arrangements for the purchase of our second Torah Scroll from Cedar-Sinai Synagogue. Cedar-Sinai has asked us to prepare a contract or bill of sale, but board members felt that this should originate from Cedar-Sinai as the seller. Rabbi Steve will continue this discussion and address insurance coverage, maintenance of the scroll prior to KHL possession, and a future celebratory event to be planned by VTLs.

**Membership Commitment /Relational Judaism/Board Retreat topic:**
Halle expanded upon the issue of membership commitment and what it means to belong and help to build sacred community. The Executive Committee has continued the discussion about participation that began at last month’s board meeting and there's consensus that the board needs to think about membership not simply an operational function of a congregation but a relational one as well. This issue will be a major focus of the January Board retreat.

In the spirit of this undertaking, Leah offered a brief overview of some of the related issues raised by Ronald Wolfson, author of Relational Judaism and the leader of an all-day workshop in October attended by Leah, Robyn, Halle, and Rabbi Steve. In essence, people’s feelings of connectedness, rather than an understanding of opportunities and expectations, makes the difference in their decisions to affiliate and become active in congregational life, and Leah challenged us to reframe some of our thinking about how we interact with members, particularly new members.

**Movement Plenum Report:**
Halle provided a brief overview of a policy change being explored by the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC). The issue is whether to reverse a policy that does not allow admission or ordination of people with non-Jewish partners. For more information, read "From Our President," starting on page one of this newsletter.

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Members of Kol HaLev will mark the following yahrzeits during the next month:

- Joseph Peter Vainner—father of Joseph Vainner
- Jerome Pincus—father-in-law of Joyce Goldstein
- Charles R. Friedman—father of Joyce Wolpert
- Alfred Rosenberg—father of Sue Biagianti
- Julius Kelman—father of Sam Kelman
- Eli Samplin Marks—father of Phyllis Maris
- Mollie Flax May—paternal grandmother of Chip May
- Aida Bound—grandmother of Miriam Geronimus
- Herman Gordon (Haim Ben)—father of Margy Weinberg
- Jacob Hochman—maternal grandfather of Chip May
- Karen Clark—grandmother of Miriam Geronimus
- Sophie Weidenbaum—mother of Kevin Weidenbaum
- Ruth Armin—wife of Mike Armin
- Shirley Korman—mother of Neil Korman
- Jacob Festinger—father of Anna Kelman
- Sol Fink—father of Judy Harris

Kol HaLev members may include the yahrzeit of family members in *KHL Happenings* by submitting the name of the deceased, the relationship to the member, and the date of death, including the year, in either the secular or Jewish calendar to kelli@kolhalev.net. (Please specify whether you're observing the secular or the Hebrew yahrzeit date. You can find a calendar converter at http://www.hebcal.com/converter/).

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**CONTRIBUTIONS**

Kol HaLev gratefully acknowledges contributions from:

- **Pam and Greg Millas**, in memory of Greg’s father, Alan Miller, and in appreciation of the services of Bill Scher-Marcus at Alan’s memorial service
- **Sharon Agopian**
- **Irwin Weinberger and Meg Manny**, in honor of Rabbi Steve
- **Arthur Lieberman**, to Rabbi’s Discretionary Fund
- **Juanita Fish**

_Make a donation to Kol HaLev in honor of a simcha, in memory of a loved, or for any reason you’d like by check or online -- whichever is more comfortable and convenient for you! You can also pay for dues, Hagiga tuition, Mishloach Manot and many other things online as well as by check._

**♦ Pay by check.** Just drop a check in the mail to: Kol HaLev | 2245 Warrensville Center Road, Suite 215 | University Heights, OH 44118 You'll receive a confirmation that your payment was received.

**OR**

**♦ Make an online donation.** You can pay safely and securely by credit card or electronic check at Kol HaLev's PaySimple page at http://kolhalev.net/pay_simple. (Note: Kol HaLev pays a small fee for transactions processed through PaySimple).
The January book group meeting will be Thursday, Jan. 29, at the home of Ruth Ness. We will discuss *The Marrying of Chani Kaufman* by Eve Harris (385 pages, a Kindle version exists). Please note that this is the FIFTH Thursday of the month.

A brief book description from Amazon: Perhaps the most surprising and intriguing novel on the Man Booker Prize longlist [for 2013], *The Marrying of Chani Kaufman* is a debut originally published by a small independent Scottish press that is already garnering significant attention worldwide.

London, 2008. Chani Kaufman is a nineteen-year-old woman, betrothed to Baruch Levy, a young man whom she has seen only four times before their wedding day. The novel begins with Chani standing “like a pillar of salt,” wearing a wedding dress that has been passed between members of her family and has the yellowed underarms and rows of alteration stitches to prove it. All of the cups of cold coffee and small talk with men referred to Chani’s parents have led up to this moment. But the happiness Chani and Baruch feel is more than counterbalanced by their anxiety: about the realities of married life; about whether they will be able to have fewer children than Chani’s mother, who has eight daughters; and, most frighteningly, about the unknown, unspeakable secrets of the wedding night. As the book moves back to tell the story of Chani and Baruch’s unusual courtship, it throws into focus a very different couple: Rabbi Chaim Zilberman and his wife, Rebbetzin Rivka Zilberman. As Chani and Baruch prepare for a shared lifetime, Chaim and Rivka struggle to keep their marriage alive—and all four, together with the rest of the community, face difficult decisions about the place of faith and family life in the contemporary world.

The book for February is *Jewcentricity: Why the Jews Are Praised, Blamed, and Used to Explain Just About Everything* by Adam Garfinkle.

All KHL members are welcome to attend these meetings. For more information about the group including a calendar of the book selections for this year, look at our web page [www.kolhalev.net/book_group](http://www.kolhalev.net/book_group) and contact Kevin Weidenbaum ([KJW@oberlin.net](mailto:KJW@oberlin.net)) to be added to the group’s e-mail list.
The last GCC General Assembly was held on November 20 at Antioch Baptist Church. Several Kol Ha Lev members were among the 200+ people who attended to hear reports from various committees and to learn about a campaign to raise funds for GCC's continuing work.

**GCC Education Team:** At the Delegate Assembly on Nov 20, Principal Ariel Hayes from Michael R White School talked about the importance of Issue 4, the CMSD Bond Levy Renewal. She thanked the GCC for our work in getting this issue passed and reported that the work to transform our schools can begin! Michael R. White School is one of the schools which will benefit from Issue 4.

**Criminal Justice:** Meetings continue with County Prosecutor Tim McGinty to discuss parity in trying and sentencing citizens of Cuyahoga County. There is a move to add an additional judge to the Drug Court to increase the number of cases which can be diverted to this special court.

**Do Not Stand Idly By:** We are continuing to get city, county and suburban mayors to support a request for RFPs to gun manufacturers for sales of safer guns to government entities. This work ties into the national Do Not Stand Idly By campaign, which has signed on close to 70 local government officials nationwide in support of this program. Locally, we continue to work vigorously on getting more mayors signed; our own Donna Weinberger is very active on this committee.

All three of these committees are looking for people to come to committee meetings and work on the local campaigns. If you are interested in becoming more active in GCC, please contact Sue Pelleg, Karly Whittaker, or Donna Weinberger for more information.

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**GCC Criminal Justice Teach-Ins**

We invite you to join us for at least one of three GCC teach-ins to be held during January in our member congregations. They are scheduled for 7 p.m. at these times and locations:

- **Antioch Baptist Church in Cleveland on January 13**
- **West Shore UU Church in Rocky River on January 29**
- **Trinity Cathedral in Cleveland on February 3**

The Department of Justice (DOJ) report released December 4, 2014 revealed systemic deficiencies in the Cleveland Division of Police and is the second report in the past 10 years call for comprehensive reform of Cleveland PD's use of excessive force.

These teach-ins will:

1. Present the findings of the 58-page DOJ Report;
2. Update and advance the work of the research teams doing case studies of other cities;
3. Further develop our plans for a public action to move the city of Cleveland toward comprehensive, systemic law enforcement and criminal justice reform.

Following our field research and teach-ins, we will go public with a large assembly, held at a strategic moment, detailing our plans to hold our public officials accountable to the DOJ report's findings.
In our year of Mordechai Kaplan’s 4 Bs of Reconstructionism, we are excited for this opportunity to experience “Belonging” by celebrating Shabbat as a community.

Each of the three Hagiga cohorts will meet and break bread together. The cost of Shabbat dinner will be subsidized by a generous grant from the Jewish Education Center of Cleveland.

**ZORIM (Kindergarten-Grade 2): January 23**

**BONIM (Grades 3-5): February 27**

**MAGSHIMIM (Grades 6-8): March 27**

**SAVE THE DATES!**

**GUESS WHO’S COMING TO SHABBAT DINNER?**

Questions? Please contact Robyn at robyn@kolhalev.net or 216-320-1498.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sat., Jan. 3</td>
<td>9:15-10:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Philosophical Inquiry with the Parsha</td>
<td>Ratner Art Room, for 5-7 grade Hagiga students. Light breakfast will be provided. Please be prompt.</td>
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<td>9:30-10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Torah Study</td>
<td>Ratner Library. Parsha: Vayechi. Discussion Leader: Art Lieberman</td>
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<td>10:30-12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Shabbat Service</td>
<td>Ratner Chapel. Vayechi; Service leader: Rabbi Steve and Nancy Dudwick; Kiddush sponsors: Halle and Benjamin Barnett in honor of Halle's milestone birthday; Chris Sklarin and Alexis Abramson</td>
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<td>10:30-12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Hagiga</td>
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<td>10:45-11:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Tot-Parent Shabbat</td>
<td>Ratner rooms 113/114</td>
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<td>Sun., Jan. 4</td>
<td>10:30-12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Magshimim Social Event: Bagels and Hot Chocolate</td>
<td>Juma Gallery Coffee House, 20100 Chagrin Blvd. RSVP to Alexis Abramson (<a href="mailto:alexis.abramson@gmail.com">alexis.abramson@gmail.com</a>)</td>
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<td>Mon., Jan. 5</td>
<td>7:30-8:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Executive Committee Meeting</td>
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<td>Thurs., Jan. 8</td>
<td>7:30-9:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Schein Event/Fundraiser Meeting</td>
<td>at the home of Leah Kamionkowski</td>
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<td>Sat., Jan. 10</td>
<td>10:30-12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Member-led Shabbat Service</td>
<td>at Ratner. Shemot; Service leader: Larry Solomon and Kevin Weidenbaum. Kiddush sponsors: Karal Stern: Leah Gilbert in honor of her son's 21st birthday</td>
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<td>12:30-2:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch and Learn</td>
<td>facilitated by Bill Scher-Marcus. Four sessions focused on The Book of Esther. More info on page 6</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3:30-5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Torah Study</td>
<td>at the home of Leah Kamionkowski. We begin our study of with history of the Second Temple Period as described in the Books of Nehemiah and Ezra. Discussion leader: Fred Chenin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun., Jan. 11</td>
<td>9:30-12:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Nesiya</td>
<td>at Ratner</td>
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<td>10:30-12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Bridges Over Troubled Waters: How to Discuss Controversial Subjects to Reach Understanding</td>
<td>at Congregation Shaarey Tikvah, 26811 Fairmount Blvd. First of a 4-part series for the Cleveland Jewish community, held jointly with other participating congregations. Participants will learn how to have civil, connecting conversations on issues that have been difficult for our community to discuss. As a bonus, these techniques can be used to deal with issues in your personal relationships. Topics we will learn to dialogue include Israel, Democratic/Republican perspectives, and different views of Judaism across denominations. You will learn about Jewish and secular approaches to dialogue, watch panel demonstrations, and participate in dialogue with other participants</td>
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<td>3:00-4:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Membership Committee Meeting</td>
<td>location TBA. Contact Peggy Kittila (<a href="mailto:pkittila@gmail.com">pkittila@gmail.com</a>) for more information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon., Jan. 12</td>
<td>7:30-9:00 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Board Meeting</strong> at the home of Leah Kamionkowsi. All members welcome</td>
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<td>Tues., Jan. 13</td>
<td>7:00 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>GCC Criminal Justice Teach-In</strong> at Antioch Baptist Church, 8869 Cedar Ave., Cleveland, OH. See the full description on page 11 and contact Peggy Kittila (<a href="mailto:pkitilla@gmail.com">pkitilla@gmail.com</a>) for more information</td>
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<td>7:00-8:30 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>HaMakom: A Taste of Mussar</strong> at the JCC. Facilitated by Nina Piken Yarus and Mark Davidson. First of six sessions. This class will focus on an Intro to Mussar through text study, conversation with a study partner, and meditation. Contact Jan Rutsky at 216-831-0700 ext. 1348 or <a href="mailto:ideas@mandeljcc.org">ideas@mandeljcc.org</a> to register. $25 for Mandel JCC members and supporting institutions (Kol HaLev is a supporting institution), $40 for community members</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat., Jan. 17</td>
<td>9:15-10:15 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>Philosophical Inquiry with the Parsha</strong> in the Ratner Art Room, for 5-7 grade Hagiga students. Light breakfast will be provided. Please be prompt</td>
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<td>9:30-10:30 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>Torah Study</strong> in the Ratner Library. Parsha: <em>Vaera</em>. Discussion leader: Rabbi Steve</td>
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<td>10:30-12:30 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Shabbat Service in the Ratner Chapel. Vaera</strong>; Service leader: Martha Schubert and Rabbi Steve. Kiddush sponsors: Michal and Bill Marcus; Brenda and Bruce Goodman in honor of Naomi’s 18th birthday</td>
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<td>10:30-12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Hagiga</td>
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<td>10:45-11:15 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>Tot-Parent Shabbat</strong> in Ratner rooms 113/114</td>
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<td>12:30-1:30 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Camp Wise</strong> promotional visit. Check the Weekly Update for more info</td>
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<td>Sun., Jan. 18</td>
<td>9:30-12:15 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Nesiya</strong> at Ratner</td>
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<td>10:30-12:00 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Bridges Over Troubled Waters: How to Discuss Controversial Subjects to Reach Understanding.</strong> Location TBD. Second of a 4-part series. See entry for Jan. 11 for more info</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues., Jan. 20</td>
<td>7:00-8:30 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>HaMakom: A Taste of Mussar</strong> at the JCC. Facilitated by Nina Piken Yarus and Mark Davidson. Second of six sessions. This class will focus on <em>Anavah</em> - Humility, through text study, conversation with a study partner, and meditation. Contact Jan Rutsky at 216-831-0700 ext. 1348 or <a href="mailto:ideas@mandeljcc.org">ideas@mandeljcc.org</a> to register. $25 for Mandel JCC members and supporting institutions (Kol HaLev is a supporting institution), $40 for community members.</td>
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<td>Wed., Jan. 21</td>
<td>7:30-8:30 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>Rosh Chodesh: Rhythm of the Months Walking Meditation</strong> at Horseshoe Lake in Shaker Heights (meet on the bridge at the lake outlet - west end of the lake.) For more information contact Kirby Date. Free, no pre-registration required.</td>
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<td>7:30-9:00 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>GCC Core Team Meeting.</strong> Contact Allen Binstock for more information</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Time</td>
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<td>Fri., Jan. 23</td>
<td>6:00-8:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Kabbalat Shabbat and Potluck at Ratner.</td>
<td>Service leaders: Rabbi Steve and member musicians; kiddush sponsor: Sharon Agopian. The dishes should be vegetarian/dairy or pareve and SHOULD NOT CONTAIN NUTS. Please bring enough for 8-10. In keeping with our goal of becoming a more sustainable community, we encourage members to bring their own reusable plates, cups, utensils and napkins to our potluck. A-H - Main Dish I-P - Appetizer or Salad Q-Z – Dessert or Drink</td>
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<td>Zorim Shabbat at Ratner.</td>
<td>More info on page 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat., Jan. 24</td>
<td>10:30-12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Musical Shabbat at Ratner.</td>
<td>Parasha: Bo; Service leader: Rabbi Steve and Isabel Klein. Kiddush sponsors: Kirby Date and Richard Litwin; Allen Binstock</td>
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<td>12:30-2:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch and Learn facilitated by Bill Scher-Marcus.</td>
<td>See description for Jan. 11</td>
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<td>3:30-5:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Bonim-Havdallah/Game Night at the home of Robin Shell.</td>
<td>Havdallah/games/snacks. RSVP to <a href="mailto:janealogsdon@gmail.com">janealogsdon@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Sun., Jan. 25</td>
<td>9:30-12:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Nesiya at Ratner</td>
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<td>10:00-4:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Board Retreat. Location TBA.</td>
<td>A day of learning and planning for board members and committee chairs</td>
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<td>Mon., Jan. 26</td>
<td>7:30-8:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Leadership Taskforce sub-group meeting at the Kol HaLev offices</td>
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<td>Tues., Jan. 27</td>
<td>7:00-8:30 p.m.</td>
<td>HaMaKom: A Taste of Mussar at the JCC.</td>
<td>Facilitated by Nina Piken Yarus and Mark Davidson. Third of six sessions. This class will focus on Ka’as - Anger. See entry for Jan. 20</td>
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<td>Wed., Jan. 28</td>
<td>7:00-8:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Mindful Jewish Practice at the office of Nancy Rubel.</td>
<td>Begins with a 10 minute sit, then a member of the group will offer a brief kavannah (intention) before a longer 30-40 minute sit. Those who wish may then remain for an option check-in and schmooze until 8:30 p.m., while those who prefer not are welcome to leave at 8 p.m.</td>
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<td>7:30-9:00 p.m.</td>
<td>High Holy Days Debrief Meeting, location TBA. VTLs and key players in HHD planning will meet to discuss what worked this year, what didn’t, and what we want to recommend for next year</td>
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<td>Thurs., Jan. 29</td>
<td>7:00 p.m.</td>
<td>GCC Criminal Justic Teach In at West Shore Unitarian Universalist Church, 20401 Hilliard Blvd., Rocky River, OH. See entry for Jan. 13</td>
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<td>7:30-9:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Book Club Meeting, at the home of Ruth Ness. Discussing The Marrying of Chani Kaufman by Eve Harris. More information on page 10</td>
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<td>Sat., Jan. 31</td>
<td>10:30-12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Shabbat Service in Ratner Chapel. Beshalach; Service leaders: Irwin Weinberger and Rabbi Steve; Musical Co-leader: Irwin Weinberger; Kiddush Sponsor: Sue Wolpert</td>
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<td>12:30-2:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch and Learn facilitated by Bill Scher-Marcus. See description for Jan. 11</td>
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For members’ addresses or contact info, log into the website or check the Weekly Update.

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Kol HaLev Happenings
The Newsletter of Cleveland’s Reconstructionist Jewish Community

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University Heights, OH 44118
216-320-1498