



ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AGENDA SUNDAY, JUNE 23, 2024

10:00 - 10:30 a.m.: Greetings and Opportunity to Review Reports

10:30 a.m.: Meeting Called to Order

- 1) Blessing and Kavanah: Rabbi Steve Finley
- 2) Welcome, State of the Congregation: Jan Chernoff and Rabbi Steve.
- 3) Financial report and adoption of 2024-2025 budget: Amy Rassen
- 4) Committee Updates: (Written summary reports included)
 - Chance for questions from members and some very short oral reports may be given.
 - a) Worship
 - b) Religious School
 - c) Adult Lifelong Learning
 - d) Membership
 - e) Development/Fundraising
 - f) Caring Community - Chesed
 - g) Social Action
 - h) Sisterhood
 - i) Men's Club
 - j) Communications
 - k) Security
 - l) Legacy
 - m) Greeters Team
- 5) Board Member Elections: Alexandra Allen - Report from nominating committee attached.
 - a) Nominating Committee recommendations: the new member nominated is Richard Preiss. Linda Goldman and Sydney Randazzo were was nominated to continue for another term.
 - b) Confirmation of candidates and vote of the membership.
- 6) Changes to the Bylaws: Lew Perlson
- 7) Questions, concerns, comments from members.
- 8) For the Good and Welfare of the Community: Jan Chernoff
 - a) Recognitions
 - b) Other announcements
- 9) Adjourn

Post-Meeting: 1) Immediately upon adjournment of the Annual Meeting, the 2023-2024 Board shall convene momentarily to nominate and elect the 2024-2025 Board Officers.

Financial Report

2024/2025 Proposed Budget

REVENUE		2024/2025 Budget	2023/2024 Actual as of 4/30	2023/2024 Budget
	Contributions (Fundraising)			
3000	Annual Fund and Special Events	63,750	78,947	50,000
3010	Chai Sustaining Campaign	8,000	5,926	10,000
3020	Fund Raising Misc	0	142	250
3030	Major Fund Raisers:Fund-in-need, <i>Gala is listed below</i>	0	60,050	14,000
3040	Major Fund Raisers:Gala Auction	30,000	24,595	
3050	RaiseRight Gift Cards	900	894	1,000
3060	Tree of Life	180	180	0
	TOTALS	109,930	187,675	75,250
	Donations			
3100	Bequests	20,525	267,837	
3110	Chesed/Charitable donations	0	-156	500
3120	Religious School	0	54	750
3130	Safety and Security	0	2,936	1,000
3140	High Holy Day Donations, <i>(tickets)</i>	5,067	4,810	500
3150	General, <i>includes Music fund and Misc income</i>	15,000	13,783	7,350
3160	Yortzeit	10,000	9,624	8,000
3170	Yom Kippur Memorial Roll roll	1,750	1,734	1,500
	TOTALS	52,342	300,622	19,600
3180	Membership Dues	160,000	157,808	140,000
3200	Events			
3210	Gala	30,000	18,680	30,000
3220	Chanukkah	1,375	1,375	1,300

3230	Purim	0	0	1,000
3240	Seder	10,000	9,897	8,500
3250	Misc.	0	0	
3260	High Holy Day Luncheon	1,500	1,216	
	TOTALS	42,875	31,168	40,800
	Hebrew School, includes Rel School donations above			
3270	School Tuition	7,500	11,106	6,500
	TOTALS	7,500	11,106	6,500
	Committees			
3280	LifeLong Learning	2,400	2,400	600
3290	Social Action	0	500	400
	TOTALS	2,400	2,900	1,000
	<i>Safety and Security (\$1000) listed above under donations)</i>			
	Grant (security)			
3300	CSS State Grant 2023	153,820	46,180	
	TOTALS	153,820	46,180	0
	Misc. income			
3310	In Kind Monetary Donations	0	0	
3320	In-Kind Professional Services	0	0	
3330	Interest/earnings on accounts	9,000	8,407	10,000
3340	Maintenance/Cleaning donations	0	0	
3350	Sisterhood-Men's Club donations	3,000		2,000
	TOTALS	12,000	8,407	12,000
	TOTAL REVENUE	540,867	745,866	295,150

EXPENSES				
	Salaries (and wages)			
4000	Rabbi's Salary	88,200	60,417	72,500
4010	Office Manager Wages	18,480	12,843	16,800
4020	Communications Coordinator wages	3,347	2,527	3,000
4030	School:Teachers/Childcare Staff Wages	8,000	9,931	7,400
4040	Program Coordinator	3,000	2,760	
4050	Handyman	3,000	350	
4060	Music & Tech staff for Shabbat Services	3,200	2,814	2,500
4070	Music & Tech staff for High Holy Day Services	4,200	4,131	7,000
	Payroll Taxes			
4080	Payroll State Taxes	0		
4090	Payroll Federal Taxes	2,500	2,350	
4100	Rabbi's payroll fed taxes (in-lieu)	11,475	0	
4120	Rabbi's payroll state taxes	0	0	
	Benefits			
4130	Rabbi's Medical insurance	10,956	10,000	12,000
4140	Yaffa's Medical Insurance, <i>included above</i>		0	
4145	Rabbi's Life Insurance	3,000	0	0
4150	Rabbi's Retirement Contribution	22,500	6,000	6,000
4160	Rabbi's Parsonage	61,800	51,500	61,800
4170	Rabbi's Car allowance	4,800	720	720
4180	Rabbi's Phone allowance	2,400	600	
4190	Rabbi's Conferences, \$300 <i>in budget for Rabbi books, etc.</i>	3,000	2,507	1,080
	TOTALS	253,858	169,450	190,800
	Worker's Compensation			
4200	Worker's Compensation Insurance, <i>part of general insurance 5970</i>	1,200	614	
	TOTALS	1,200	614	0

	Consultants/Contractors			
4210	Accounting and Bookkeeping services	5,000	1,768	
4220	Payroll processing fee	780	575	
4130	Program consultants (e.g.grief group)	0	500	
4140	Legal Services	0	882	
4150	Contractor Labor Services, <i>mostly paid for room renovation</i>	8,000	7,940	
4160	Professional Services	0		
4170	Electrical and Security Services/consultants	0	0	
	TOTALS	13,780	11,665	0
	Committees			
4180	COMMITTEES:Chesed	200	78	600
4190	COMMITTEES:Communications	0	2,333	1,800
4200	COMMITTEES:Fund Raising	0	0	500
4210	COMMITTEES:Lifelong Learning	2,400	1,889	1,500
4220	COMMITTEES:Membership	1,200	1,132	750
4230	COMMITTEES:Safety & Security	10,000	9,442	7,000
4240	COMMITTEES:Social Action	1,000	0	
4250	COMMITTEES:Worship Committee	0	0	
	TOTALS	14,800	14,874	12,150
	Hebrew School Expenses			
4260	SCHOOL:Books and supplies	2,000	2,025	1,800
	TOTALS	2,000	2,025	1,800
	Fundraising Expenses			
4270	Annual Fund expenses	0	0	200
4280	Fund Raising event expenses:Gala	12,000	9,785	11,000
4290	Tree of Life expenses	0	29	
	TOTALS	12,000	9,814	11,200

	Office Expenses			
4300	Equipment	0	8,147	300
4310	Office supplies	1,500	1,782	800
4320	Office telephone and internet access	100	1,422	1,400
4330	Other office expenses	250	207	200
	TOTALS	1,850	11,558	2,700
	Credit Cards			
4340	Credit Card Fees	2,500	3,533	3,000
	TOTALS	2,500	3,533	3,000
	Travel			
4350	Travel Expenses	0	0	
	TOTALS	0	0	0
	Food			
4360	Food and meals general	500	0	250
	Rent			
4370	RENT-FCC	49,752	37,730	46,400
	TOTALS	49,752	37,730	46,400
	Holidays			
4390	Channukah Celebration	1,613	1,613	1,300
4400	Purim celebration	0	0	1,000
4410	Seder expenses	10,000	8,259	8,500
4420	Sukkot Expenses	500	554	
4430	Celebrations misc	500	180	
4450	Tu B'Shvat Expenses	0	0	
4460	High Holy Day RH Lunch	1,500	1,160	

	TOTALS	14,113	11,766	10,800
	Communication			
4470	Website expenses	935	701	1,300
4480	Newsletter expenses	176	176	200
4490	Advertising Expenses	2,000	2,172	3,250
	TOTALS	3,111	3,049	4,750
	MISC. Expenses			
4510	Oneg/Kiddush Expenses	500	521	100
4520	Shabbat Other expenses	500	495	
4530	Program expenses other	0	1,295	550
4540	Dues and Membership	127	0	75
4550	Library general expenses	0	0	
4560	General Insurance, <i>includes worker's comp</i>	2,642	1,821	2,750
4570	Investment Fees	4,408	4,408	
4580	Bank Service Charges	90	90	20
4590	Maintenance and Cleaning, <i>includes payments to cleaners</i>	4,000	2,025	1,400
4600	Meeting expenses	0	213	
4610	Recognition/Gift Expenses	550	551	300
4640	Charitable Contributions	0	0	
	TOTALS	12,817	11,419	5,195
	TOTAL EXPENSES	530,469	338,809	288,795
	Security Grant			
	CSS State Grant Expenses	148,688	51,312	
	TOTALS	148,688	51,312	0
	NET INCOME	13,630	399,926	6,355
3070	Rabbi's discretionary fund	7,100	16,941	

Ways to Support our Congregation

Congregation Shir Shalom is very fortunate to have the support, generosity and commitment of its membership. Membership Dues account for 35% of our budget, and we count on various fundraising efforts to compensate for the 65% needed to sustain and build our Congregation. There are many ways that members can contribute and designate to specific CSS operations funds:

Operating Funds include:

- **Annual/High Holiday Appeal** – unrestricted funds to help sustain our core programs and activities.
- **“Chai” Sustainer Campaign** – designed to support the basic overhead costs of sustaining CSS.
- **General Fund** – to support recurring operational expenses.
- **Hebrew School Fund** - supports Hebrew School programs and scholarships that are not covered by general tuition.
- **Safety and Security Fund** - supports programs and projects to enhance security of CSS during services and community events.

Program Specific Funds:

- **Chesed Community Card Sale** – these beautiful cards can be purchased as gift/note cards for your personal use, while also providing the funds that allow the Chesed Committee to send acknowledgments to members on various occasions.
- **RaiseRight for Shir Shalom** – Gift Card program benefits CSS General Fund. A percentage of the cards purchase value goes to CSS and is applied to the General Fund. Please contact Marjorie Nydell (marjorienydell@gmail.com) with any questions.
- **Tree of Life** – create a lasting tribute by purchasing a leaf for the tree. Show appreciation to someone special, or celebrate life cycle events. The Tree of Life is located on the back wall of the Sanctuary.
- **Yahrtzeits** – in honor of, to celebrate, etc. (including Kaddish and Yizkor)

Long-term Investment:

- **Legacy Fund** – *Leave a legacy build a future* by considering a bequest that provides ongoing financial support to CSS.
- **Lifetime Membership** – Cost is tier-based on the member(s) age at time of commitment and whether it is a single or family membership. For additional information please contact Janet Gallin (janetgallin@gmail.com).

Other Ways to Donate:

- **Rabbi’s Discretionary Fund** – provides funding for charitable purposes at the Rabbi’s sole discretion.

To make a payment, please go to www.shir-shalom.org and click Donate Today and select the appropriate category.

Committee Updates

A. Worship Committee:

Led by Rabbi Steve. The Worship Committee and the Hebrew School staff are one in the same, which makes perfect sense when one considers the source of their dedication. Thank you to: Reb Neal Attinson, Tony Rollins, Yaffa Finley, Ari Moshe Wolfe, Linda Goldman, Robert Tenenbaum, Richard Preiss, Stephen Steiner, Galen Peterson, and Sophia Metzner

For our 2023-24 plans - We did not have formal meetings, but rather, engaged in informal yet soulful chats during Hebrew School recess, before and after school, and even some parking lot conversations. It has been then and there where we have come up with:

- The idea and implementation of dedicating our High Holy Days to teachings about Moses
- Plans and structure for each Friday Night and Shabbat Morning Service
- Our Torah chapters and verses to be chanted on Shabbat Morning
- A “who’s doing what” distribution for Shabbat responsibilities
- The wonderful week of Sukkot and all the various celebrations within
- Our grand plans for Hanukkah with the 100+ interfaith gathering in the street.
- Our Tu B’Shevat planting “what and where” (Myrtle bush among the Roses)
- Our Friday Night Purim Shpiel - Hebrew School kids and our Banot Mitzvah
- This year’s Passover plans were discussed at Hebrew School, but took on a much wider scope with invaluable input and work done by our Sisterhood, Social Action Team and Men’s Club

With the “Why try to fix what’s not broken?” approach, the plans and the team for next year remain the same.

B. Religious School:

Hebrew School Staff / 2023-24:

Rabbi Steve	Robert Tenenbaum
Neal Ross Attinson	Galen Peterson
Ari Moshe Wolfe	Stephen Steiner
Linda Goldman	Tony Rollins
Yaffa Finley	Tricia Ladouceur

Hebrew School Students / 2023-24:

Upper Grades

Noa Fynn Weiswasser
Theo White
Nomi Signer
Ellie White
Haley Weiswasser
Riley Weiswasser
Avi Sager

Lower Grades

Mallory Feinstein
Louis Bellach
Parker Mayer
Emma Bellach
Brooklyn Mayer

Hebrew School opens traditionally on the first Wednesday of September and our last school day is on the Wednesday before Memorial Day weekend – Approximately thirty-two sessions total. We have two classes: lower grades K-4 /upper grades 5-7.

Not Weiswasser celebrated becoming a Bat Mitzvah this year. All other students plan to return for the 2024/2025 school year.

The 2024/2025 school year will resume here at Shir Shalom with the use of our Marvin Diamond Education Center/Library as well as the Sanctuary, Community Room and Burlingame Hall all as needed.

C. Adult Lifelong Learning:

Led by Judy Miller, Sydney Randazzo, Linda Goldman, Lori Starr, Armando Hernandez and Bonnie Walner

Committee Mission: To develop and present programs primarily to enrich the lives of our congregants and secondarily to engage the larger community of Sonoma Valley. To bring to CSS topics that are important to us as Jews and citizens of the world.

We are happy to welcome three new members to the Lifelong Learning Team: Lori Starr, Armando Hernandez and Bonnie Walner.

We have been able to bring programs to the Congregation throughout the year. This has enabled us to keep our members connected and interested. We have been well supported by the Rabbi, the Board of Directors and the general membership. We are now able to have events in person at Congregation Shir Shalom or on Zoom. This past year our team presented several outstanding programs: a documentary Jews of the Wild West with an in person appearance by Scott Gerber, the Jewish Singing Cowboy ; The Legacy of Ann Frank, a discussion led by Gillian Perry; A Lunch and Learn Combating Hate led by Rabbi Steve Finley co-sponsored with the Social Action Committee; Sharing Family Stories organized by Linda Goldman; a Book and Author Event co-sponsored with Sisterhood; A six session Culinary Tour of the Jewish Diaspora . All of these programs were the result of hard work by members of our committee.

Looking ahead to 2024-2025 the challenge for this committee is to come up with interesting and timely programs. We will continue to post Special Events in the second and fourth weekly editions of the CSS Newsletter, now planning to include live and in person events for our members to enjoy along with current books, TV and movies of interest to enjoy at home.

Linda, Sydney, Lori, Armando, Bonnie and I welcome all suggestions and participation to Lifelong Learning. - Judy Miller

D. Membership Committee:

Members: Sharon Malakoff (chair), Gayle Stanford (co-chair), Alexandra Allen, Tamra Rollins, Marcia Sohn and Janice Perlman-Stites (and Helena Mitchell of blessed memory)

Committee Mission: The Membership Committee develops and engages CSS's membership to sustain a vibrant, solvent and multi-generational CSS community now and into the future. The committee recommends annual membership goals to the Board of Directors and develops and implements a plan to achieve those membership goals. The Membership Committee's focal points are outreach, recruitment, welcoming new members and facilitating retention. The Committee also partners with other Committees to help achieve their goals.

New members (July 1, 2023 – May 16, 2024):

14 new households - representing singles and families; 22 adults and 4 children

Activities:

- Outreach by personal invitation to on-going list of new members, guests and prospects
- Shabbat potluck and services
- New member pizza party – attended by new members, guests, CSS Board and committee chairs
- Tuesday Farmer's Markets – focus on providing a welcoming environment and introductions for new and existing members
- Sukkot – “membership night” attended by new members, guests and prospects
- Coffee with the Rabbi
 - ◉ Coffee and pastry in the Bar at MacArthur Place, attended by 16 new members
 - ◉ Accomplished goal of gathering the 2023 new members to meet with Rabbi Steve, Yaffa, Sharon and Michele
- Young Professionals Group
 - ◉ Assisted Rabbi Steve with coordination and development of program
 - ◉ Attended by eight couples from around the Bay Area plus four couples from Shir Shalom

Coordination with other committees:

- CSS Board – monthly reports; meeting with Jan for membership update, program recaps and program ideas
- Rabbi Steve – collaboration on new member outreach and brainstorming
- Sisterhood – advised of new and prospective members for mailing list; general thought partnership
- Communication – feature new members in CSS newsletter and offer the opportunity to others; provide event photos for the newsletter
- Men's Club – advised of new and prospective members for mailing list

E. Development/Fundraising:

Fundraising/Development Committee Members: E. Michèle Samson-Chair, Lynn Blankfort, Judy Miller, Marjorie Nydell, Janet Galin, Sydney Randazzo, and Devorah Deutsch, Tamra Rollins, Monica Haimowitz, Sheryl Alexander

Committee Mission Statement: Develop a variety of sources and strategies to not only sustain CSS as the home of the Jewish Community in Sonoma Valley but to enable CSS to grow and flourish into the future.

CSS Yearly Gala: The Gala is our main yearly fundraiser. This extremely strong committee works tirelessly and has taken necessary measures to ensure the sustainability of our congregation. We are proud of the events we've brought to CSS for all of us to enjoy. On March 2nd, at this year's Gala, we celebrated "Jewish life in Sonoma Valley." The Gala brought our community together which we all needed. This year has been incredibly devastating, so as Jews, as difficult as this is, we all gathered strength, prayers, hope and yes, we set aside a bit of time to bring some joy as well to celebrate all of us and our special connection. We must remember that we do have so much to be grateful for.

The Gala provided much needed funds for our general operation, security, updating and improving our infrastructure including updates to become ADA compliant. The exciting news, we exceeded all other fundraising events to date! We reached \$90,000, more than doubling last year's earnings! This year has been successful because of our entire community. We are lucky to have so many wonderful members. Thank you all.

Goals: Our goal this fiscal year is to create again, sustainability for Congregation Shir Shalom. This will make us strong enough to provide you with everything needed to practice your faith and spirituality, to make strong connections, and being able to reach out to help our Sonoma community in times of need.

We hope you'll support us in our effort to keep Congregation Shir Shalom strong and viable. Donate by simply going on to our website. There are many opportunities to contribute:

1. RaiseRight-no cost to you but CSS will benefit from this program
2. Beautiful Gold Leaves for our Tree of Life in the Sanctuary. (In memory/in honor)
3. General Donations
4. Annual Fund
5. Legacy
6. Lifelong Membership
7. Chai Sustainer Campaign
8. Rabbi Discretionary
9. Hebrew School Fund
10. Safety and Security

We are constantly planning events and other forms of inclusion for this community. Our 2024/2025 calendar is already filling up.

Next Event: On Sunday, June 23rd at 1:30pm we kick off the year with, an afternoon of engaging conversation and insights as we explore the future of baseball-featuring Mick Chantler, noted baseball historian and Noah Lowery, former Giants pitching great. PLEASE JOIN US!

More events will be announced very soon.

F. Caring Community / Chesed:

Members: Alexandra Allen, Judi b. Friedman, Heidi Stearn, Helena Friedman, Sy Lenz, Amy Alper, Janet Zipkin, Ken Cavalli

Committee Mission: The chesed community's charge is to provide assistance, support and comfort to our members and their families in times of need, especially in times of hardship, ill health and any other issues in which a helping hand could make a difference.

Over the past year we have stayed in touch with members who have continuing health issues as well as supplying meals to aid in relieving members with stressful situations.

We have sent out cards of healing as well as cards acknowledging congregants Birthdays and Anniversaries.

Our target audience are congregants in need. Our monthly meetings are fluid. We see a need as we are notified and we do what we can to support that person. It can be providing meals for a short time, visiting or calling the person on a regular basis, or visiting someone in the hospital. We have also shopped for groceries, sent flowers, and referred congregants to community services.

We are in need of new members, with a special need of one or two who have some daytime hours to visit people in the hospital or in their homes for short visits but on somewhat of a regular schedule and also who could drive someone to appointments. These are not regular demands, but situations we should be able to help our Congregation Shir Shalom community.

G. Social Action:

Members: Bev Perlson - co-chair, Lew Perlson - co-chair, Rabbi Steve, Sue Gertz, Mara Kahn, Tamra Rollins, Tony Rollins, Barbara Sachs, Lori Starr, Gwen Watson

Committee Mission: The Social Action Committee is anchored in the values of Judaism. It shall undertake and promote opportunities founded upon the principles of Gemilut Hasadim (good deeds) and

Tikkun Olam (repairing the world). We promote social justice and encourage action and advocacy. We are non-partisan and mindful that Congregation Shir Shalom welcomes a diverse membership.

The Social Action Committee has been revitalized and active this year. During the past year we planned the following programs:

- T Shirts, underwear and towels were collected during the High Holidays and delivered to a very appreciative response by SOS.
- We planned a Build your own Bagel Brunch in support of the Sonoma Valley Mentoring Alliance. Several new mentors signed up as a result of the program.
- CSS provided Bell Ringers in support of FISH's annual fund raising event. Close to \$1,000 was raised by CSS Bell Ringers.
- We made our congregants aware of La Luz's need for people willing to assist with tax preparation.
- Under the leadership of Lee Wanetik, meals were provided for those in need in conjunction with Homeless Action Sonoma.
- We continued to monitor and support the delivery of meals to the homebound via SOS. Many CSS members deliver meals on a regular basis.
- In addition, we worked under the leadership of Sue Gertz to help plan and support CSS's participation in the ADL/Kulanu program.

The committee would gladly welcome new members and/or ideas.

H. Sisterhood:

Sisterhood Officers: Sue Gertz, President; Jen Newman, Vice President; and Sally Brian, Treasurer; Tamra Rollins, Secretary.

Mission Statement: Our mission is to bring together women who are seeking connection with other Congregation Shir Shalom members in a spirit of camaraderie, to serve our Congregation, support our community and each other and enrich our lives through social events, education, spiritual programs, and fundraising.

Membership: All women in the congregation are invited to join the Sisterhood and participate in its activities and programs. Dues are \$54 annually; for 2022 – 2023, 54 women have paid dues, the highest number in recent years.

Programs/Activities: Sisterhood continues to flourish, building on the strong connections developed over the past few years. We've provided opportunities for woman to come together on a regular basis with programs/activities that appeal to different interests.

Ongoing Programs

- Relunched Women in Conversation in November – 3 groups, 34 women - monthly
- Sisterhood Pickle-ball League – weekly

- Sisterhood Lunches (sometimes with outings) – monthly
- Launched “Talks with Rabbi” with focus on Israel – bi-monthly
- ONEG/Potluck Dinners – monthly (Sisterhood sets up, cleans and sponsors ONEG and takes the lead with Membership on Potluck Dinners)
- B’nai Mitzvah ONEGs – Sisterhood has provided ONEGs for 5 B’nai Mitzvahs in the last year
- Bocce Ball – intermittently
- Launching Small Group Programs for Sisterhood – Hosted Dinners (June 21st) and Cocktail
- Party/Havdalah Service (July 22nd)

Special “One-off Programs/Activities”

- Sisterhood Happy Hour at Kina’s Kitchen
- Hike at Sonoma Botanical Garden
- Sisterhood Annual Potluck Brunch
- Sponsored Rosh Hashanah Lunch
- Sponsored “Break the Fast”
- Lead on Community Seder
- Hannukah Chinese Dinner/Movie – partnership with Men’s Club
- One Bay/One Book – partnership with Adult Lifelong Learning
- Periodic Book Club Meetings w/ Authors
- Music, Pizza and Pinot with Men’s Club (July 9th)

Strengths: energy, enthusiasm, engagement and commitment from members and creative ideas for a variety of new programs; higher percentage of women paying dues than prior years; successful partnership with Men’s Club, Membership Committee and Adult LifeLong Learning to plan and execute programs.

Challenges: VOLUNTEERS - need to be expand pool of volunteers; concerns have been expressed that Sisterhood is expected to provide food and clean-up for most Synagogue events; it has been suggested that other committees take on some of these events.

I. Men’s Club:

Led by John Randazzo - President, Frank Samson - Assistant-to-the-President, and Richard Pollack - Treasurer

Committee Mission: The Men’s Club is charged to implement programs such as social and educational activities that encourage spiritual growth, challenge minds, build friendships, provide service to the Sonoma Valley community and create openings for real dialogue and self-expression. The goal is to create a cohesive, trusting and enjoyable group of men that develop genuine and meaningful attachment to the Shir Shalom community.

The Men's Club has spent much of the last year planning and facilitating Shir Shalom events both in partnership with other committees (e.g. Jewish Peoplehood Lecture, Pizza & Pinot Festival) and organizing their own events (e.g. Sunday Brunch, Hanukkah Chinese Dinner & Movie). Men’s Club volunteers have worked tirelessly behind the scenes setting up for events, dismantling the Sukkah Hut and sponsoring wine for every major occasion from the annual Gala to the Passover Celebration. The

Men's Club also organizes outings for "Jewish Heritage Night" at Bay Area sporting events (e.g. S.F. Giants, Warriors or Oakland A's).

The Men's Club is constantly soliciting input from the congregation, working to build its membership effort to facilitate expansion and revitalization. It will be looking to elect a new slate of officers in the FY '24-'25.

J. Communication Committee:

Members: Ken Gertz, John Randazzo, Sandy Pollack, Brett Newman, and Mara Kahn.

Communications Coordinator: Michelle Flores

Committee Mission: The Communications committee is responsible for developing a communications and marketing strategy to engage members and non-members and for recommending to the Board of Directors communications policies. The committee's charge is also to implement methods for CSS to communicate with its members and other interested parties.

The Communications committee was formed in early 2020 in response to the new CSS strategic plan. As a committee, we have been very active in starting up a more concerted effort to enhance the awareness and visibility of CSS activities both within our congregation and in the Sonoma Valley.

Our initial primary work has centered around the creation of a new CSS website. This has involved a new design, updated content and pictures, a new data management system, and a host of other issues. This new site is now operational and is more user-friendly, easier to maintain and update, and more attractive to prospective and current members. This will provide CSS with the kind of messaging and branding that we need to grow membership, fundraising and general awareness. This year we have continued working to tweak the site, remove some of the initial bugs, and enhance our ability to more easily pay on line for events and other CSS initiatives and funding priorities.

Our second major initiative over the past few years, was to redesign and rejuvenate our bi-weekly CSS newsletter. The new newsletter went live in late 2022, and has been very well received by the congregation. It is more user friendly, has a fresh new look and has some new important information we now provide the community on a regular basis.

This year, the Committee, working with our excellent Communications Coordinator Michelle Flores, has focused on developing a systematic and regular effort to do outreach to local media outlets. We have begun to create stories and press releases using ChatGBT, an artificial intelligence application. And we have formulated a comprehensive list of targeted media along with a plan to build connections with key personnel in those organizations.

This effort has resulted in a number of stories on CSS activities and events featured in the J, the Sonoma Index Tribune, the Sonoma JCC, and a TV outlet in SF. The increased visibility for CSS has helped to grow our membership and raise additional funding.

In addition, we continue to work with other CSS committees to create flyers, brochures and ads to provide more visibility for our events.

This coming year, it is our intention to revamp our social media presence (Facebook, Instagram, etc..) in an attempt to reach a younger demographic.

K. Security Committee:

Members: Linda Tiefenthal, Andy Hyman, Carl Speizer, Devora Deutsch, Mark Hummel

Committee Mission: The Security Committee endeavors to plan for security improvements to facilities used by CSS at the West Spain Street campus, and to recommend relevant security training for officers and members of the Congregation.

This past year, the Security Committee:

- Coordinated volunteer greeter assignments for security screening at in-person events (now augmented by hired security personnel)
- Made substantial progress developing an Emergency Preparedness and Response Handbook for eventual use by the congregation, with input from temple leadership
- Met on several occasions with local law enforcement for updates on the regional security environment and including an in-person familiarization review of the CSS campus
- Successfully applied on behalf of CSS for, and are now awarded, \$200,000 in CalOES-administered grant funding for security upgrades to CSS/FCC facilities including exterior lighting upgrades, video surveillance equipment, upgraded sanctuary doors and hardware, and shatter resistance window film
- Publicized and participated in additional online security training sessions for temple leadership.

In the coming year, the Committee aims to:

- Promote regular calendaring of volunteer greeter assignments for security screening at in-person events
- Finalize the Emergency Preparedness and Response Handbook for use by the congregation and assist in providing commensurate training opportunities
- Continue to with local law enforcement for updates on the regional security environment
- Begin implementing grant-funded security improvements at the CSS/FCC campus
- Publicize and participate in further locally-sponsored security training sessions for temple membership.

L. Legacy Committee:

Committee Members: Lew Perlson, Michele Samson, Linda Goldman, Alexandra Allen, Sheryl Alexander and Jan Chernoff

Committee Mission: The Mission of the Legacy Planning Committee is to build long term economic sustainability for CSS through significant financial gifts from members and supporters during their lifetime and at death.

Legacy giving describes a variety of charitable giving techniques including lifetime gifts, bequests, retirement plan and life insurance beneficiary designations and charitable trusts that allow individuals to support Jewish life in the Sonoma Valley after their deaths. The Committee has developed policies, which have been adopted by the CSS Board, to assure legacy gifts received by CSS will be used to sustain the synagogue in the future.

In the coming year, the Committee plans to hold an additional workshop to educate CSS members on ways to make legacy contributions.

To date, the Committee has identified approximately 15 individuals who have arranged for a legacy gift upon their death. The Committee is in conversation with others who have indicated their interest in doing so. The Committee is planning an event for this Summer to recognize these individuals and thank them for generosity. If there are other individuals who have arranged for a legacy gift to CSS, they should advise a member of the Committee so they can be invited to the event.

An endowment type fund has been established at the Community Foundation Sonoma County to invest funds received through major and legacy gifts. Currently the fund has a market value of \$550,000. Income from these funds may be used to supplement other revenues for CSS operations.

Legacy Circle

Shir Shalom has established the Legacy Fund, a planned giving program which allows members to support Congregation Shir Shalom through numerous different mechanisms in assets from their estate. These gives can be part of your will and take place after your demise or can occur at any time. When you give to this fund you become part of the Legacy Circle and your financial support helps to build a future for Congregation Shir Shalom.

For more information, you may contact Lew Perlson or Sheryl Alexander, CSS members, who can describe which legacy gift vehicle might be right for you.

M. Greeters Team:

Jan Chernoff will report

Board Member Elections

The 2024 Nominating Committee

The Committee: Our by-laws provide for a nominating committee to select new board members. The committee is comprised of two board members and three congregants. Our committee members were Alexandra Allen, Mark Hummel, Linda Goldman, Devora Deutsch, and Tamra Rollins.

Task: Select three board members for a three-year term.

The Process: The committee, with input from the board, created a list of attributes, skills and responsibilities needed to be a board member.

Potential candidates came both from those who inquired and from names that were suggested as possible board members from a variety of sources.

After an extensive process we are pleased to announce that Richard Preiss was selected as a new member and Sydney Randazzo and Linda Goldman were nominated to continue for another term. These candidates were chosen because of specific skills they can contribute to the Board. We are sure you will agree that their bios reflect a wealth of experience and knowledge that will be a great addition to our congregation.

Nominees for CSS Board term 2024 - 2025:

Richard Preiss



I was born and raised in South Africa. After military service and an undergraduate education, I spent the next 2 years in Israel. I met my wife, Sherry, on Kibbutz Hanita. After living and working in Jerusalem, we moved to the States where we both attended graduate school. Thereafter, we settled in northern New Jersey, and raised a son, Alex, (now in Brooklyn, NY) and a daughter Elyse, (now in San Francisco).

Between 1980 and 2021, I was a principal and vice president of a planning and real estate consulting firm, first in New York City, and later Hoboken, New Jersey. The practice was focused primarily on the New York metropolitan region. In 2021, Sherry and I both retired and moved to Sonoma to be closer to family, especially our grandson, Leon. Almost immediately upon arrival we joined CSS. I now enjoy teaching at the CSS Hebrew School, as well as volunteering for other Sonoma-based non-profit organizations. I am excited to work closely with Rabbi Steve, Yaffa, the CSS Board and the congregation of Shir Shalom.

Linda Goldman



I was born and grew up in Pittsburgh, PA. After moving around the country searching for my place, I settled in California in 1984. I lived in San Francisco and Berkeley/Oakland until 2005, and then discovered bucolic Sonoma and never looked back.

My professional life has been that of a social worker, with a few years interspersed dabbling in real estate. My range of experience has been working with individuals and families in home health care, assisted living, or nursing home care; this includes being a manager and supervisor in those settings. I've been a LCSW (Licensed Clinical Social Worker) for many years and still wear that badge with honor. Locally, I was Director of Social Services at Spring Lake Village in Santa Rosa, followed by a semi-retirement position at Healing at Home in Sonoma. I'm now fully retired, but once a social worker, always a social worker. I still identify strongly with that aspect of my life.

In addition to volunteer work at Bouverie Preserve (I serve on its Docent Council Board), I also volunteer at the CSS Hebrew school as a Hebrew tutor. Although my Hebrew's rusty, I manage to stay a few steps ahead of my students. I'm glad to have found a home within the Shir Shalom community. I look forward to my new adventure and commitment as a member of the Board.

Sydney Randazzo



A native Californian and 3rd generation Angeleno, my husband John and I moved full time to Sonoma from Mill Valley over 13 years ago. Prior to retiring, I worked in the San Francisco advertising industry for 10 years before opening a consulting business specializing in media planning. That led me to Sonoma and a 25-year relationship with Spanish winemaker Freixenet USA and their local subsidiary, Gloria Ferrer Caves & Vineyards.

Volunteer work has always been an important part of my life. While living in Mill Valley I served on the Board of To Celebrate Life Breast Cancer Foundation, as chair of the grants committee, Vice President and, eventually, President of the Board. To Celebrate Life provides education and support services for women, men and their families who have been diagnosed with breast cancer. In Sonoma, I was a member of Impact100 for nine years and served on both the Impact Grant and Community Grant committees. I joined the Board of Directors of Impact and was later named President of the Board, serving for two years. As a member of Impact, I learned about the many nonprofits that serve the Sonoma Valley, including Teen Services Sonoma, which led me to join their Board—culminating with their merger with Boys & Girls Clubs in 2020.

John and I've worked on various CSS committees over the past seven years, and as a member of the CSS Board I look forward to contributing to its continued success, growth and presence in the Sonoma Valley.

Changes to the Bylaws

Additions to the Bylaws (in red)

6/23/24

ARTICLE VI. EMPLOYMENT OF PROFESSIONALS AND OTHER STAFF

B. AUTHORITY TO HIRE. The Board of Directors may engage the services of such religious and administrative professionals, as it deems appropriate, according to the provisions of this Article and Article V111 (below). No initial contract shall be for a term exceeding two (2) years. No renewal contract **for any such person other than the Rabbi** shall be for a period exceeding five (5) years, unless such a tenure is made for an indefinite term with mutual possibility of termination on adequate notice.