



HOLY BLOSSOM TEMPLE

Bulletin

CHANUKAH 5780



LEADERSHIP AT HOLY BLOSSOM

Chanukah at Holy Blossom

Yad:20s & 30s Chanukah Party

Saturday, December 21, 2019, 7:30 pm

First Candle Lighting

Sunday, December 22, 2019, evening

Intergenerational Celebration

December 27, 2019, 5:00 pm





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On the cover: Cantor Beny Maissner sings at the Music & Art: Living Memory Concert on November 6, 2019, one of three celebrations that honours his 41 years of musical leadership at Holy Blossom Temple. In these 41 years Cantor Maissner has taken us on a journey in music that touched our hearts and defined the very soul of Holy Blossom Temple. Stay connected with us! Visit www.holyblossom.org/beny2020 or follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

LEADERSHIP IN THE JEWISH LEXICON

Rabbi Yael Splansky, Senior Rabbi

RABBINIC REFLECTION



The Hebrew word for leadership (*manhigut*) is related to the word for driver (*nahag*). A leader drives a project, a community forward. A leader sets the direction of a business, a country, a family. A leader knows when to slow down, when to advance, when to adjust and how to protect others from veering off course. When our Past President Henrietta Chesnie z”l addressed the congregation on the occasion of her 90th birthday she recalled when she was a girl and her grandfather let her hold the reins on the horse and buggy. “I liked the way it felt,” she said. A natural-born leader and driver.

The Hebrew word for leadership (*manhigut*) is also connected to the word to behave (*l’hitnaheig*). It comes in the form of a reflexive verb: “to conduct oneself.” In this way, leadership is bound up with behavior. In Jewish terms, leadership has more to do with HOW one does than WHAT one does.

Finally, the Hebrew word for leadership (*manhigut*) shares its root with the word for custom (*minhag*). A leader is one who inherits the customs of the people and is entrusted to keep them, model them, practice them. In Jewish life, customs are not only for remembering the past; they are also for guiding the future. For example, the joyful custom of lighting Chanukah candles is not only for celebrating the religious freedoms secured by the Maccabees in the second century BCE. The simple act of lighting those thin candles is powerful enough to illuminate our own Jewish identity and lead us toward the commitments we make in our own day.

From the Hebrew we see that leadership is understood to be rooted in direction and drive, behavior and conduct, custom and practice.

A Congregation of Leaders

Holy Blossom’s greatest resource is our members. Our people are doers, thinkers, givers, volunteers and leaders for so many worthy causes. Everyone seems

to have a project -- or two or ten -- for Holy Blossom, for the broader Jewish community, for Israel, for far-off countries, and for Canada’s institutions of social services, medical research, the arts, education. Holy Blossom-ites intuitively know that to lead a life of meaning and purpose requires generosity of time, talent, and treasure. Recent studies show that volunteerism and charity are down as religious life is replaced with secularism. But at Holy Blossom even our students are trained in leadership and demonstrate how to joyfully give of ourselves to something larger than ourselves.

A Leading Congregation

As the first synagogue of Toronto, Holy Blossom has inherited a legacy of courageous and compassionate leadership. Our delegation of twenty-four just returned from the Biennial Convention of the Union for Reform Judaism, where Holy Blossom was acknowledged as a leading congregation of North America. Yes, this praise comes to honour how we have successfully built exquisite new spaces, but also because of how, even under construction, we provided refugee resettlement and poverty relief, we established new interfaith relations, we grew our membership, welcomed many young families, and maintained physical accessibility for all programs and prayers. Our congregational leadership is deeply rooted in all three aspects of the word *manhigut* -- direction and drive, behavior and conduct, custom and practice.

We learn a lesson in leadership from the *shammash* of the *Chanukiyah*. The *shammash* is set apart to play a unique and leading role. It isn’t a sacred candle itself, but through its humble and steadfast commitment to bringing greater light into the world, it earns a name for itself.

Chag Urim Sameach!

BUILDING OUR SACRED PARTNERSHIP TOGETHER

Avra Rosen, President, Holy Blossom Board of Directors

FROM THE PRESIDENT



I don't hesitate when I make decisions. I get things done both at home and at work - I am known as being decisive. However, when I was asked to be the President of Holy Blossom Temple, I hesitated. I had difficulty committing to such an onerous responsibility, and when thinking about the legacy of the Presidents who led our congregation before me, I was worried that I would not measure up to the task. I have been on the Board of Directors on two occasions, have been involved in many aspects of leadership at Holy Blossom since the early 1990s, most recently as the Chair and Vice-President of the Department of Administration. I have always been able to have quality family time and manage a demanding family law practice, notwithstanding my various commitments to Holy Blossom. I was concerned that I would not be able to do so. I give all of myself to my passions, whether it is to my clients, this congregation or to my family. I do not like to fail.

After much thought, discussion, and support from various Board members, Past President Judy Winberg, Rabbi Splansky, my law partner Susan Sack and my husband, Mark Goodman, I accepted the nomination as President of Holy Blossom Temple. Throughout the summer, I read books and articles about leadership and how leadership positions outside of a synagogue community are different from congregational leadership. I have learned that being your President is holy and sacred work. Chapter 2.2 of Pirkei Avot, says the following: *"Let all who work for the Congregation do so for the sake of Heaven."* When the Board members work with each other and with our professional partners and staff at Holy Blossom, sharing responsibilities and obligations, we strengthen this congregation. This is what is known as a sacred partnership. Sacred partnerships are built and nurtured through the Jewish values of mutual respect, honesty, trust, listening and communication, transparency, confidentiality, flexibility and reflection.

Just as we have been transformative in our new spaces, as President of Holy Blossom Temple, I believe it is the right time to look inside, and be visionary as to where we want to be in the next 5, 10 or 15 years from a membership, financial and operations perspective and start having those important and even difficult discussions. To date, we have already undertaken the following:

1. A Strategic Plan committee, chaired by Darren Sukonick, our Vice-President of Membership. I look forward to having the Committee's Report presented to the Congregation before I complete my first year as President.

2. A Financial Planning and Development Task Force, chaired by Past President Joan Garson, which will have a hard look at our finances and the financial sustainability of this synagogue and will also work closely with the Strategic Plan Committee.
3. A Review and update of all policies is being undertaken by Vice-President of the Department of Administration, Ellen Cole and recently retired Board Member Dylan Aster, so that all policies can be transparent and available to both staff and congregants in a new policy manual.
4. The creation of a leadership developmental program that not only identifies potential leaders, but one that provides our next leaders with the necessary skills to take on leadership roles at Holy Blossom.

In addition to being strategic in my approach as your President, I also want to be an approachable President. A visible president. I will do my best to be a presence at the various services held throughout the week at Holy Blossom as well as at a variety of programs, recognizing that I cannot do it all. I will be at Holy Blossom most Wednesday afternoons in the Schwartz Reisman Atrium, where congregants or staff are welcome to chat with me. You, as a congregation, should recognize me. Feel free to come up to me.

Being the President at Holy Blossom can at times feel like a daunting responsibility. But having fully immersed myself in the transition to be your President, I can assure you that I am excited and ready for the challenge. I know that I can't do it alone, nor will I try. A leader must know when to lean on others for their support and assistance. I am blessed to not only have a very strong Board, but as well, a team of incredible Vice-Presidents, who will be there with me every step of the way, not letting me falter, and giving more of themselves to make this new Board even stronger than ever.

As we read the Book of Genesis, God speaks to many of our biblical leaders at times of vulnerability and struggle. God tasks them with the job of transformation, and the response is often *Hineni*. I too am here, fully present in this moment, committed and engaged to accept the mantle of leadership around my shoulders, ready to go forth and continue the legacy of the incredible men and women who have led this congregation to date. I look forward to working with you in this sacred partnership.

SACRED RELATIONSHIPS: LEADERSHIP AT HOLY BLOSSOM

By: Rabbi Zachary Goodman, Assistant Rabbi

I am incredibly honoured and humbled to have been installed as the Assistant Rabbi of Holy Blossom Temple; The first synagogue in Toronto, a community filled with leaders in their respective fields of industry, a beacon of Canadian Jewish life that is known all over the globe. With clergy, throughout our long history, that embody rabbinic and cantorial excellence and a recent visit from the Prime Minister, we know that Holy Blossom Temple is a symbolic exemplar of the Reform Jewish world. Holy Blossom's strength is its leadership and its role as a leader in and of itself.

As I formally assume the position of Assistant Rabbi of Holy Blossom Temple, I am grateful for the tremendous privilege and responsibility this congregation has bestowed upon me as one of its leaders. I am mindful of the historical Jewish giants, whose leadership elevated Holy Blossom into the international arena and whose shoulders we now stand on.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the leadership of Rabbi Splansky, who was instrumental in my decision to come to Toronto. As a young rabbi, assuming my first position out of seminary, I recognized that what I desired most in a congregation was a mentor. The decision to move to Canada was a simple one; if I was lucky enough to work for and learn from Rabbi Splansky...I would jump at the opportunity. The fact that Rabbi Splansky was the senior rabbi of this historic congregation, with its illustrious history, good people and their tremendous stories were all welcomed benefits.

Additionally, I have found that the power of this community is found not solely in its chosen leaders, but rather, within the congregational membership. It is not those seated in positions of authority, but rather, those who sit in the seats of our Mishkan and the pews of our sanctuary that give us our strength. It has been incredibly moving to work with so many exceptional leaders!

The Israel Engagement committee is educating and connecting our community to our homeland. The leaders of HBTtogether have enhanced our sense of

community with many chavurot and small groups. The Bikkur Cholim committee ensures that we live out our Jewish values and take care of the needs of our community members. The volunteers of Mondays @ The Temple for Seniors have brought warmth and joy into the lives of so many. The members of the Young Adult Division have consistently sold out events and filled our new spaces with individuals in their 20's and 30's! The Luke Sklar Mental Health Initiative provides trailblazing programming and resources to end mental illness stigmatization and encourage dialogue. By all means, this is not an exhaustive list! These are just a few ways in which our leaders are making good on the promise that Life Can Blossom Here! I am so grateful to all of you who play a major role in establishing Holy Blossom as a spiritual home for those who seek it!

“Ben Zoma omer: Eiza’hu chacham? Ha’lomed mi’kol adam – Ben Zoma says, Who is the Wise One? One who learns from all people.” (Pirkei Avot 4:1). As I encounter so many new faces and personalities, this text remains for me an eternal truth. It serves as a constant reminder that we all have something to teach and something to learn. I consider myself extraordinarily fortunate to serve as a rabbi of Holy Blossom Temple and to have the honour and privilege of learning from you.



FIVE to FINISH

8
MEZUZOT
ACHIEVED!

\$200,000 X 25 MEZUZOT
= \$5 MILLION

MATCHING CHALLENGE BUMPED TO 600K **ALL GIFTS NOW DOUBLED!** **8TH MEZUZAH ACHIEVED**

*Here's a doubly powerful idea for the Chanukah giving (and tax planning) season: **Right now, any gift you make to Holy Blossom's transformational Renewal Project is effectively DOUBLED!***

If you give \$18,000 ... it becomes \$36,000!
If you give \$25,000 ... it becomes \$50,000!
If you give \$50,000 ... it becomes \$100,000!

This is the result of (now) 4 generous Temple Families who have come together to donate \$600k in a Matching Challenge to the congregation, as a part of our "Five to Finish" campaign. That means, they will match your gift, dollar for dollar, to a total of \$600k. So, whether this is a first gift or an increase from your prior pledge, **now is really the time because your donation will have double the impact!**

And the best part is, the Matching Challenge is working to spur new giving! **We've just achieved our 8th Mezuzah, having raised just over \$1,630,000** of our \$5 million goal to complete fundraising for Phase 1 of Renewal. As you know, we're installing a beautiful, new Mezuzah on one of 25 Temple doors every time we raise an additional \$200,000.

But there are still 17 Mezuzot to go and it's no exaggeration to say we're going to need the entire congregation's help to get Phase 1 across the finish line. **Please, as you are finalizing your 2019 year-end giving plans, make sure to include the Renewal Project among your donations.**

If we haven't spoken yet, please know that we're here to help you work out what a personally meaningful gift might be. All donations can be **paid over a 5-year period, and we can also help you structure any pledge for maximum year-end tax advantage.**

Our "**Five to Finish**" Gift-Doubling, Tax-Saving Operators are standing by. To discuss your gift, please reach out to:

Joan Garson, Chair Renewal Fundraising Committee at development@holyblossom.org

Jonathan Ain, Director Capital Campaign at jain@holyblossom.org



CAROLINE INGVALDSEN: LEADERSHIP IN MOTION!

By: Denise Gordon

Caroline Ingvaldsen is a librarian's librarian: warm, smart, humble, *menschy*, and brilliantly organized. She has put these skills to excellent use in her 40+ year career with the Toronto Public Library system. Now she has graciously stepped up to the plate to provide service leadership as the Library Chair *and* as President of Temple Singers at Holy Blossom.

As a self-described “book Bubbie,” Caroline, grandmother of two, is passionate about the printed word, oral language, and the need to transmit who we are, as Jews, through story. “We *are* a story,” according to Caroline. She makes it her business that the children in the HBT nursery and religious school programs know this too. Caroline has weekly Jewish story time sessions with the kids, each and every Sunday and Monday morning, rain or shine - with or without her walking cane (she is still in recovery from a hip operation, but heavens, that won't stop her!). And they are enthralled!

As the *People of the Book*, Caroline is insistent that the new library function as a place of gathering and as a place of learning. She has a cadre of loyal volunteers to help her organize and curate the collection. She is a staunch advocate for lifelong learning and hopes that the newly renovated library space will provide a nexus point for meaningful programming; this could include in-house writers, old and new, to share the power of their crafted words with our temple community. There is much to be done and Caroline has her sleeves rolled up to keep the ball in perpetual motion!

Paradoxically, Caroline's initial entry to Holy Blossom started through music, when she began attending Friday night services

some years back. Growing up in a secular Jewish home as a child of Holocaust survivors, Caroline was given a strong ethno-cultural Jewish identity, but she “itched” for something more. She found a religious access point to synagogue life through the Temple's beautiful Friday night services. The prayers and accompanying music spoke to her. Encouraged by Nadja Adler, our talented piano accompanist, Caroline joined Temple Singers; this led to participation in Saturday morning services where she started to pray through song. This was followed by further Jewish investigations, including active membership and participation in our Sisterhood Leadership Council. Finally, in short order, Caroline decided to study toward an adult bat mitzvah; two years later she was proudly called to chant Torah with friends, family and temple community alongside. Jewish liturgical song and text were fused!

Clearly Holy Blossom holds a sacred place in Caroline's heart. Caroline has found renewed purpose while developing and sharing her love for Jewish learning; she is able to offer meaningful service leadership, she is deeply rooted to our temple community, and she continues to strengthen Jewish continuity through her voluntary participation in Temple Singers, Sisterhood's Leadership Council, and the library.

Caroline Ingvaldsen brings veracity to the phrase ***Torah is a Tree of Life for those that hold fast to it.*** She is a real mensch and a delight, and we are all the richer for her enthusiastic lay leadership at Holy Blossom Temple.

For all this, Caroline, we say, *Todah Rabbah!*



From left to right: Lior Morgulis, Adelaide Bertoia-Dixon, Sophie Atkinson, Eli Sol, Lilah Petersiel, and Seth Kirsh
Missing from picture: Horton the Hippo, HABSTY Mascot

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A JEWISH YOUTH LEADER

By: Eli Sol, HABSTY President

Since its establishment in the 1960s, HABSTY has been brimming with talent, ambition, and positivity. Teen leadership at Temple and in the URJ has proven to be key in youth engagement. As a youth leader and even as an older teen, I feel responsible for our younger students, and for the time being, it is my privilege to ensure their active participation in the Jewish world. I enjoy the task of inspiring our temple youth, and have made it the HABSTY board's business to engage them in our various youth programs. I ask all parents and grandparents to urge our temple youth to continue in our youth program even after bar/bat mitzvah age. With luck, and with a good push from relatives, our once "little blossoms" can grow into amazing leaders in the Jewish, and non-Jewish worlds. HABSTY has evidently had a lasting impact on our active board:

"Being on the HABSTY board has made a massive impact on my life. I feel more connected to the Jewish community and I feel like a leader within the Temple. I look forward to board meetings and lounge nights and I am passionate about making Holy Blossom an amazing place for everyone, just like it is [for] me." – Sophie Atkinson, HABSTY Communications Vice President

INTRODUCING YOUR HABSTY BOARD

In previous years, we did not have enough members to form a full board, but since that has changed, the HABSTY board has recently decided to return to a NFTY-model board. I am delighted to formally introduce our board members and their newly reinstated positions.

Sophie Atkinson and Seth Kirsh are our Communications Vice Presidents (CVPs). They will oversee the HABSTY instagram page (follow us @hbhabsty!) and are responsible for the production of HABSTY merchandise. (Only \$35 for a HABSTY sweatshirt!)

Lior Morgulis is our Social Action Vice President (SAVP). Lior will collect and distribute the funds from the tzedakah box located at the Ava Road entrance. He will also participate in the overseeing of the HABSTY bagel box tzedakah project.

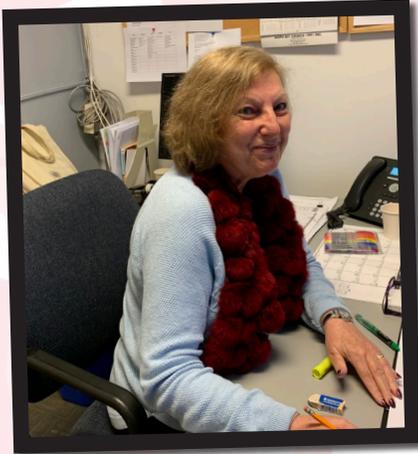
Adelaide Bertoia-Dixon is our Programming Vice President (PVP). Adelaide will manage the HABSTY programming calendar, and help to organize events. As Adelaide is also a student-teacher on Monday nights at the Temple, she will represent the wishes of her students, whom we value so much.

Lilah Petersiel is our Membership Vice President (MVP). Lilah is the keeper of our "master list," as we like to call it. She will keep in touch with our younger HABSTY participants and manage our HABSTY 'buddy' system.

Lastly, I am your HABSTY President. I oversee any ideas the board has and I keep in touch with Lisa Isen Baumal, our Director of Youth Engagement, and the Holy Blossom Board. If you have any ideas for an event or lounge night, please do not hesitate to contact me. We are, as the year goes by, learning what works and what does not, so any feedback, ideas, questions, or inquiries are welcome.

DALIA ALALOUF: 50 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP AT HOLY BLOSSOM!

By: Debbie Spiegel, Director of Education



"It helps to be surrounded by supportive colleagues who encourage me to try my hardest, aim for excellence, and refuse failure. As well to work in an environment who provides opportunities for advancement and enrichment."

This was the response when asking Dalia Alalouf about her experience with Holy Blossom Temple over the past 50 years. Dalia has been a part of Holy Blossom Temple since 1969. An immigrant from Romania via Israel, she came to Toronto as a certified teacher without any experience with North Americans. It was a difficult climb to where she is today. Her first experience at Holy Blossom was with Ethel Raicus, then principal of Holy Blossom Temple Religious School, and for the first 3 years she needed to prove to herself (and mostly to Ethel) that she was/is a capable and confident teacher and educator.

Similar to the Biblical Jacob, it took seven difficult years to bring Dalia seven fruitful years and beyond at Holy Blossom. It took that long in order for her to demonstrate her abilities to her employer. She had fantastic role models through the years; Heinz Warshauer, Selma Sage, Nancy Ruth, Bob Tornberg to name a few. Their leadership styles all taught Dalia that in order to get all that you want from teachers and students, one needs to be demanding – set your expectations high, and you will receive the benefits many times over.

Throughout the years, Dalia had a number of different positions at Holy Blossom Temple in the early years. She was a floater under Ethel Raicus, moving on to a teaching position, and finally was convinced by Bob Tornberg to become the Supervisor of the Hebrew Language Department. In this role, she created many materials for the school – holiday curricula for each grade, building on the foundation of the grade prior and created many Hebrew reading booklets as supplemental material for the ever-changing Hebrew Language program. She has tutored many children and adults – preparing them for the love of learning Hebrew or for a special Torah or Haftarah celebration.

Dalia describes herself as shy and introverted. She has a very quiet nature. When working with teachers or students, she displays an overwhelming calmness, instilling in each individual the need for excellence – teachers and students alike. She makes it clear that with everyone that the ultimate goal is to be “bima ready” – the presentation/celebration or even a practise is important for the individual but also to the entire congregation. No experience can be half done – it is all the way or not at all. Dalia is an artist – working with her hands, her brain and her heart, wanting each individual to be successful.

For all that Dalia has given Holy Blossom Temple over the past 50 years, she truly feels that she has received more in return. This is a place where she can do good things for others and at the same time for herself and her family.



Dalia feels grateful that all of her personal celebrations and sorrows have been through Holy Blossom Temple. From the time that her oldest son Ophir became Bar Mitzvah, and at each life cycle event since, has been through her Holy Blossom family. She describes this place as her home away from home. She and her husband Jack have made this a wonderful community for themselves – coming often with friends and family.

We thank Dalia for her generosity of spirit and time. She is a treasure to us all. *Yashar Kochachech! Kol Hakavod* for all that you do. *Chazak V'amatz!* May you continue to have strength in all you do!



Henrietta Chesnie z"l (left) with the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean (27th Governor General of Canada), and Rabbi Gunther W. Plaut

HENRIETTA CHESNIE AND LEADERSHIP

By: Michael Cole & Sheila Smolkin, Holy Blossom Temple Archive Committee

It was appropriate that, in October, 1983, Henrietta Chesnie welcomed participants to the first Holy Blossom Synagogue Leadership Institute. It was she who first conceived of this Institute - a winter-long series of lectures and workshops to prepare young people to take positions of leadership within the congregation - and it was she who in her own life embodied leadership.

It was Holy Blossom Sisterhood that first gave Henrietta the opportunity to show her leadership skills. She joined Sisterhood Board in 1951 and worked her way up to be its president by 1963. She was voted an Honorary Life Member in 1975. During her time in Sisterhood, Henrietta was responsible for organizing the Institute on Human Relations, "a series of programs that relates to the position and problems of women on the contemporary scene." She was involved in the development of the *Kallah*, Sisterhood's study retreats, and a course titled "We Speak for Judaism," which prepared Temple adults and youth to appear at Church groups and tell the story of Judaism. Henrietta was for many years an executive member of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, and she was chair of its Biennial in 1969.

It was as a Sisterhood vice-president that Henrietta first sat on the Temple Board. During her time on the Board, she organized a committee that made a large, intensive study of the functioning of the Religious School. Later, in 1973, she headed an even larger and more intensive study of Holy Blossom itself. Known as Project Isaiah, this study involved inviting opinions from every congregant as to how the Temple could serve their needs and desires. This study led, eventually to the creation of

the Department of Jewish Living.

So evident were Henrietta's leadership skills that she was nominated and elected as president of Holy Blossom Temple in 1974, becoming the first woman to hold the position of synagogue president in Canada. This milestone event was duly noted in the Jewish and general press at the time.

After serving her term as president, Henrietta did not rest on her laurels. She became an active member of the World Union for Progressive Judaism, and she took on the herculean task of organizing Holy Blossom's 150th anniversary celebrations.

In her welcoming remarks at the opening of the Holy Blossom Leadership Institute back in 1983, Henrietta commented:

It is from this congregation that outstanding men and women of quality and leadership have contributed and are contributing to every facet of the Canadian scene—Judicial, academic, Philosophical and Theological, Cultural, Economic, Legal and Medical.

It is from this congregation that the growth of Reform Judaism in Canada was nurtured, encouraged and supported. It is from this congregation that important issues and questions of the day were raised dealing with every aspect of social, religious and cultural concerns.

It is no exaggeration to say that Henrietta was herself among the "outstanding men and women of quality and leadership" who "nurtured, encouraged and supported" the growth of Reform Judaism in Canada and abroad, and who was a role model and mentor to many of those who would follow in her path.



Renewal Project Steering Committee celebrates as they hang the first mezuzah at the Housewarming Celebration on December 2, 2018.
From left to right: Russ Joseph z"l, Judy Winberg, Joan Garson, Tom Friedland, Mark S. Anshan, David Rosenberg, Carey Solomon, Rabbi Yael Splansky

A LEADER IN DEEDS

By: David Rosenberg, Communications Chair, Renewal Project Steering Committee

Like a lot of what Tom Friedland does, it started with a list.

Not a long list in this case, unlike so many of Tom's lists (more to come on that). This list was a piece of paper with three brief stipulations he had jotted down when, despite his busy practice as a litigation partner at Goodmans and a young family, he was considering becoming involved in our Temple Renewal Project, way back in 2004. Let's call them his own personal rules of engagement.

1. *He had to have fun doing it.*
2. *The Project had to be seen through to the finish.*
3. *It wouldn't take too much of his time.*

For those scoring at home, that's:

1. *Check.*
2. *Check.*
3. *The complete opposite of check.*

But the list itself, and even the failure to check the third box, underscores what's at the heart of Tom's vision for leadership at Temple, and really, for any task he decides to devote his time to: INTENTIONALITY.

Being ever purposeful in his words and actions is, from this writer's point of view, the Tom Friedland trademark. And it goes a long way to explaining how, along with his formal title, he got the unofficial designation of "Chief Nudger" for our Renewal Project.

"If you commit to taking something on, you have to do it fully and completely," says Tom. "I just believe that you have to put the same quality of effort into volunteer activities, as you do anything in life."

Anyone who's seen Tom in action since he first volunteered his time in the late 90s to our "Out of the Cold" program would know that he lives by these words. The same goes for his productive tenure in various portfolios on our Temple Board.

But as Chair of the Renewal Project's Steering Committee, it was this core philosophy, and the "let's get stuff done" behaviours that arose from it, that proved to be crucial to an undertaking with this kind of immense scope and existential importance. Which brings us back to Tom's lists. So many lists, notes, meeting minutes and project details. Contained in so very many notebooks ...



116 notebooks. And counting.

It has been written countless times that our Renewal Project is a “project of many.” And there’s absolutely no doubt about that. From our incredibly generous donors, to our Steering Committee, to our hundreds of volunteers engaging for thousands of hours on numerous sub-committees, to professionals and subject area experts who have given their time without hesitation, to our deeply committed clergy and Temple staff, Renewal has been a Project with countless arms and legs.

All of which underscored the need for a leader with not only a broad vision, but also the meticulous nature required to keep so many working groups operating in harmony. To ensure every single one of the thousands of details was recorded, and that the Project was moving forward on all fronts. Hence, the 116 handwritten notebooks, filled front to back. And maybe the writer’s cramp that comes along with it.

“I’ve never needed to be front and centre as the figurehead on the Project,” Tom says. “It’s the follow up calls, the emails, the spurring on and the pulling together of so many fabulous people with different roles – Steering Committee, Building Committee, Fundraising, Communications, Engagement, Neighbourhood Outreach, Financial Controls, Architects, Contractors – that’s been so rewarding for me. A real sense of purpose and camaraderie emerges ... to see the Project through and to overcome the hundreds of challenges along the way.”

He continues, “The more people I engage with, the more I thrive. Building communities around shared interests and having people who will look out for you as you look out for them. That’s what brings fulfillment.”

Life can (continue to) blossom here.

If you’ve ever spent any time around Tom, you’ve heard him talk passionately about the idea of being “Best in Class”. That for Holy Blossom to go forward and continue to thrive as a large and leading congregation in North America, we must always work to be the best expression of ourselves.

From our clergy, to our educational offerings for both children and adults, to our programming, to our professional staff and lay leadership, everything at synagogue works in concert to provide an attractive choice for vital new membership, and just as importantly, to ensure current member satisfaction. There is no doubt that the kind of physical renewal we’ve undertaken together, helps to fulfill all of those objectives. As Rabbi Splansky has said, it’s not about “If you build it, they will come. It’s about building something meaningful together, as a congregation. People will want to come and be a part of that kind of community.”



“In the end, it’s about Jewish continuity,” says Tom. “Working with so many talented people on a project that’s now well into its second decade, has helped lay the foundation for our Temple to thrive for the coming generations. What could have greater purpose than that?”

Well noted, Tom. Well noted.

IN MEMORIAM

Jean Applebaum, mother of Ira Applebaum, Stephen Applebaum and Raymond Applebaum

Ethel Bain, mother of Linda Pack and Larry Bain

Caryl Adrienne Barruch, mother of Meryl Solomon and Diane Gladstone

Eugenia (Jojo) Beinglas, mother of Dalia Alalouf

Alex Bercovici, husband of Freda Bercovici; father of Mark Bercovici, Paul Bercovici, Vivian Bercovici, and Ruth Kraus

Jerry Borins, father of Richard Borins, Carolyn Borins, Andrew Borins, and Matthew Borins; brother of Mel Borins

Henrietta Chesnie, mother of Dr. Deborah Chesnie Cooper and Dr. Brian Chesnie

Mercedes Fernandez-Duran, mother of Elisa Cogan; sister of Chuni Fernandez-Duran, Regina Fernandez-Duran Planchuelo and Luis Fernandez-Duran

Anne Floom, mother of Tanis Floom, Jerry Floom and Linda Rutman

Arnold Getz, father of David Getz and Emily Getz; brother of Phyllis Bagdanoff and Hedy Morris

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Marilyn Winberg, mother of Jack Winberg, Alan Winberg and Carole Winberg; sister of Mitch Tanz and Mark Tanz

Noel Zeldin, companion of Evie Smith; father of Dr. Robert Zeldin, Marilyn Zeldin and Teri Brown

August 13, 2019 to November 15, 2019

WELCOME TO OUR CONGREGATIONAL FAMILY

We are delighted to welcome the following new members to Holy Blossom Temple:

Jordan Applebaum	Nina Fainman-Adelman	Cathrine Hoelseth & David Krygier-Baum	Madison McCloskey
Deborah & Phil Bacal	Liat Fainman-Adelman	Adina Hoppe & Greg Lewis	Jon Medow & Elyse Schlein
Michael Blinick & Lauren Caplan	Karen Fainman & Jason Adelman	Caylee Kalisky & Boris Zipilevich	David & Susan Mitchell
Brian & Jan Bornstein	Jessica & Zachary Farber	Falyn Katz & Lisa Barber	Adam Novack
Erik Bornstein	Hayley & Jordan Finewax	Jeffrey Kolominsky	Lola Rasminsky
Shai Brown	Diana Fridlyand & Brent Charles	Jamie & Ellen Levy	Zachary & Michelle Sadowski
Stephanie & Jeffrey Cling	Jennifer Goldhar	Ann & Alan Lieff	Edith Sapera
Dorith Cooper	Barry & Marcia Gordon	Eli Lieff	Alons Shulman
Desiree & Blayne Creed	Reesa Gringorten	Jessica & Jordan Lipton	Josh & Eliana Tizel
Sharon Dembo	Stacey Herberman & Jordan Puritt	Heather & Jeffrey Mandell	Tatiana Tseitlin
Jeremy Einhorn & Hannah Gofman	Jessica & Robert Herzig	Marcela Mayo	Michael Warshafsky & Chanel Alonzi

September 11, 2019 - November 15, 2019

Mazel Tov to...

MARRIAGE

Julia Rosenberg & Chris Munro on their wedding on September 1, 2019

Caity Lehman & Scott Figler on their wedding on September 14, 2019

Elyse Schlein & Jonathan Medow on their wedding on November 9, 2019

BIRTHS

Judy & Allan Borodin on the birth of their grandson, Bronx Bader Borodin. Proud parent is Talia Borodin on September 24, 2019.

Devon & Graham Wolch on the birth of their daughter Lily Wolch. Proud grandparents are Joni Stossel & Graham Stairs and Cathy & Al Wolch. Proud great-grandmothers are Barbara Clarke and Christine Wolch.

Stacie & Stephen Fields on the birth of their daughter Jordyn Paige Fields. Sister to Alexis, Dylan and Brett. Proud grandparents are Bernie & Brookie Glazman

and Gail Fields. Proud great-grandparents are Hymie & Clara Glazman.

Debra & Barry Campbell on the birth of their grandson Theo. Proud parents are Lauren Myers-Cavanagh and Matt Campbell.

Jessica Roher & Louis Century on the birth of their daughter. Proud grandparents are Eric & Beth Roher.

Esther Connors & Joshua Miller, on the birth of a son Aaron Luka, and brother to Noah. Proud grandparents are Sharon & Shelley Miller, Helen Gurofsky & Alan Connors.

Erez Cukierman & Jillian Kovensky, on the birth of their daughter Berkeley Sloan Cukierman, and sister to Ethan and Jacob. Proud grandparents are Sheldon Kovensky and Shelly & Ilan Cukierman.

Yotam & Caitlin Dor, on the birth of their daughter Hannah, sister to Coan. Proud grandparents are Irit & Boaz Dor and Jane & Bruce MacLeod.

Madlyn Axelrod & David Kogan, on the birth of their daughter Zephie Sasha Kogan. Proud grandparents are Heather Shapiro and Terry Axelrod and Lilya Levitan and Naum Kogan.

Michael and Rebecca Herberman, on the birth of their son, Beau, brother to Jake Herberman. Proud grandparents are Ettie Hererman, David and Teri Leese. Proud great-grandparent is Helen Morgan.



B'NEI MITZVAH



Jacob Glazel
Son of Lisa Engle Glazel & Jeff Glazel
August 2, 2019



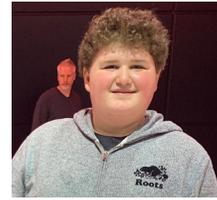
Ezra Horwitz
Son of Rachelle Chester & Daniel Horwitz
September 14, 2019



Lola Cohen
Daughter of Katy Diamond & Justin Cohen
September 26, 2019



Dylan Hopper
Son of Janna Miller & Ryan Hopper
October 12, 2019



Jonah Goldman
Son of Alison & Corey Goldman
October 17, 2019



Corrie Spetter
Daughter of Meredith Englander
& Jason Spetter
October 19, 2019



Jesse Sol
Son of Rabbi Yael Splansky & Adam Sol
November 2, 2019



Jared Horwitz
Son of Alix & Warren Horwitz
November 9, 2019



Mia Cadsby
Daughter of Fei Song & Bram Cadsby
November 16, 2019



Sofia Davidson
Daughter of Dimitra & Michael Davidson
November 16, 2019



Talia Birenbaum
Child of Jennifer & Solomon Birenbaum
November 23, 2019



Raquel Mansoor
Daughter of Dana & Jonathan Mansoor
November 30, 2019



Madeline Salmons
Daughter of Leslie Richmond & Darren
Richmond and Elliot Salmons & Amy Caplan.
December 25, 2019

<p>Jaidyn Clements Daughter of Eli & Larry Clements October 5, 2019</p>	<p>Hannah Lewis Daughter of Kelly Grant & Michael Lewis November 9, 2019</p>
<p>Jordan Craig Daughter of Miriam & Michael Craig October 12, 2019</p>	
<p>Samuel Donahue Son of Marla Spiegel & Joe Donahue October 26, 2019</p>	

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Ryan Hopper & Janna Miller in honour of the Bar Mitzvah of their son Dylan Hopper
 Michael & Miriam Craig in honour of the Bat Mitzvah of their daughter Jordan Craig
 Jason Spetter & Meredith Englander in honour of the Bat Mitzvah of their daughter Corrie Spetter
 Joe Donahue & Marla Spiegel in honour of the Bar Mitzvah of their son Samuel Donahue
 Adam Sol & Rabbi Yael Splansky in honour of the Bar Mitzvah of their son Jesse Sol
 Michael Lewis & Kelly Grant in honour of the Bat Mitzvah of their daughter Hannah Lewis
 Bram Cadsby & Fei Song in honour of the Bat Mitzvah of their daughter Mia Cadsby
 Michael & Dimitra Davidson in honour of the Bat Mitzvah of their daughter Sofia Davidson
 Solomon & Jennifer Birenbaum in honour of the Perach Mitzvah of their child Talia Birenbaum
 Jonathan & Dana Mansoor in honour of the Bat Mitzvah of their daughter Raquel Mansoor

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Purim & Pesach 5780 at Holy Blossom

Purim

PURIM CARNIVAL

Sunday, March 8, 2020, 11:00 AM

ESTHERDAY: MEGILLAH READING, SHPIEL, COSTUME PARADE & CELEBRATION

Monday, March 9, 2020, 6:30 PM

Pesach

EREV PESACH SERVICE

Wednesday, April 8, 2020, 6:00 PM

FIRST DAY PESACH SERVICE, NEWLYWED BLESSING

Thursday, April 9, 2020, 10:00 AM

HOLY CHAG PESACH!

Thursday, April 9, 2020, 10:00 AM-2:30 PM

EREV SEVENTH DAY PESACH SERVICE

Tuesday, April 14, 2020, 6:00 PM

7TH DAY PESACH SERVICE & YIZKOR

Wednesday, April 15, 2020, 10:00 AM



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