

16 March 2017/18 Adar 5777

Dear Shir Tikvah:

If you are surprised that we are following up our first update so quickly, then so are we.

Remember back to update #1, when we wrote: *“Were we to meet someone early in the process with whom all the stars aligned in seemingly miraculous ways, we would not ignore the signs”?*

Well. We have met someone. And, despite the compressed timing, the Hiring Advisory Team (HAT) feels strongly that we want you to meet this candidate before we lose the opportunity to consider hiring her.

Rabbi Arielle Rosenberg (to be ordained by Hebrew College in Boston this June) is an accomplished singer and music leader, with roots in classical music and opera, Sepharic/Mizrachi piyutim (musical poetry), Debbie Friedman and the power of the Niggun (wordless melody). She is currently a full-time Rabbinic Fellow at congregation [B'nai Jeshurun](#) in New York City. She is an experienced activist and community organizer. She is articulate, soulful and scholarly. You can listen to her here:

An original composition: [Shuvi Nafshi \(from Psalm 116\)](#)

Service Leading: [Listen](#) | Friday, December 23, 2016 at BJ (She leads music throughout the service and delivers a kavannah at 49:20)

Divrei Torah:

[Parashat Tzav at BJ](#)

[Parashat Bereishit at BJ](#)

[Parashat Korah at BJ](#)

Several people suggested that Rabbi Latz reach out to Rabbi Rosenberg about the position; it was a rabbinic colleague at Hebrew College who recently introduced them. When Rabbi Latz brought her to our attention at our first HAT meeting, there was healthy skepticism from the HAT because of the importance of this hire to the future of Shir Tikvah and the desire to vet many candidates before conducting interviews.

But once we reviewed her resume and music samples, we ultimately decided to have an initial Skype conversation with her. This was not even set up as a job interview, but rather as a first conversation to see if we wanted to move ahead with an interview. That conversation took place on the morning of March 10, with MJ Gilbert, Gayle Zoffer, Ofer Geller, and Jane Binder (Rabbi Latz was present, but he took a back seat in the conversation). We were, honestly, blown away. She exhibited great talent, humility, and a great heart that burst through the screen in ways that a Skype conversation makes very difficult.

The timing, on both ends, is admittedly challenging. Rabbi Rosenberg is in active consideration for other positions such that she needs to make her job decision in early April. The fact that such a timeline does not make us say, “thanks and best of luck” and move on, wistful about what might have been, should be a sign to you of how deeply we have been moved by her. We see the potential for her to help lead our community to a place that is both grounded in our history and tradition, and also dynamic, creative and new. Mostly, we think that taking the next step of in-person interview and site visit is in Shir Tikvah’s best interest, so that was our unanimous HAT recommendation. We are excited to meet her in person and to have you meet her, too.

In consultation with the entire HAT and the Executive Committee of the Board, we have invited Rabbi Rosenberg and her fiancé, Noam Lekach, to join Shir Tikvah for the weekend of March 31, to spend a Shabbat with us, for her to sing, pray and study with us. The HAT will also conduct a formal interview during the weekend.

We want to be clear that we are taking this step with no foregone conclusion as to the outcome, and we are continuing to accept applications [for this position](#).

We are asking for your trust, for your welcome to Rabbi Rosenberg and Noam, for your voices and opinions. One of the reasons she is seriously considering this position is that Shir Tikvah has a national reputation. We are excited for her to experience our “Radical Hospitality” and to see how well-deserved that reputation is.

More details about the schedule for Rabbi Rosenberg and Noam’s weekend will be forthcoming. Please feel free to contact any member of the HAT, or use [this link](#) to share your thoughts. And let’s all breathe together.

Jane Binder & MJ Gilbert, Hiring Advisory Team Co-Chairs

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Shir Tikvah is a *k'hilah k'doshah* (holy community), joyfully revealing the intersections of *talmud torah* (lifelong Torah study), *t'filah* (prayer), *tzedakah* (justice), and *hachnasat orchim* (radical hospitality). We creatively wrestle with tradition and innovation as we invigorate Jewish spiritual life and transform the world.