

All,

Just a few weeks ago, Shir Tikvah blessed its 30th confirmation class and you'll soon see their photo hanging on the wall in the sanctuary. Sam Brewer, a 2019 [confirmand](#) whose family drives to Shir Tikvah twice weekly [from St. Cloud](#) (150 miles round trip), gave this reflection:

Shir Tikvah's religious school, for me, has been an major asset and aid in helping me formulate ideas as both a young person in our ever-changing world and as a Jew. From Night on the Street to the March for Our Lives, to Interfaith Outreach and Simpson House, the social justice work that I have done with my classmates throughout middle and high school has been incredible. Shir Tikvah has helped me find my voice, and has helped me step out of my comfort zone to do things that I never thought I would do. From helping to organize a walkout at my school to giving speeches about gun violence prevention to middle schoolers to getting involved with a political campaign, I owe it all to my religious school experience here at Shir Tikvah. With the help of my rabbis and teachers, I have learned that I am not just a young person who will stand idly by, but that I am a young person with valid opinions, moral courage, and a drive to repair our world.

As I listened to Sam's experiential learning—the highlights coming outside of the traditional classroom—as I heard his strength and his spirit, I compared it to my own distant religious school experience for which I feel very little warmth. Thank you, Sam: I don't think I could find a more well-framed realization of my pride in Shir Tikvah's present and my hopes for Shir Tikvah's future.



Celebrating confirmation: Mira Katz-James, Carly Joseph, Antoine Godin, Sam Brewer (he's slipping - he's perhaps the tallest of this bunch), Gabe Chang-Deutsch, Ari Kaner-Roth, and Isaac Landecker.

High Holy Days and security at High Holy Days

I am excited to let you know that for High Holy Days 2019/5779-80 we will be returning to South Minneapolis. We will be hosted by our friends at [St. Joan of Arc Catholic Community](#), partners in our racial and economic justice work, and the folks who surrounded our building with hugs and candles that November Shabbat after the murders in Pittsburgh. St. Joan's has been under intense pressure from conservative Catholics because of its pro-family views and activism; I am proud that Shir Tikvah's

presence at High Holy Days will mean a modest rental contribution to a Catholic community that understands love and family as we do.

Although they have a small chapel at 45th and 3rd Avenue South, they frequently worship in a gym attached to a school on their campus. That gym can be set up free of Christological symbols and hold more than 800 of us. There won't be as much space as we had at Earle Brown last year or as much parking, but thank you to the Minneapolis Public Schools who have offered to make additional off-street parking available for the evening services at the Field School, just a block and a half away.

The Board is currently in deep discussion about our security commitments for High Holy Days. We are working with our Safety and Security Committee (headed by congregant [Jeremy Kalin](#), linked to the Board by [Joel Zimmerman](#), and staffed by [Forrest](#)) and [our consultant](#) to improve what we do both in our building and for High Holy Days. We can make two commitments now. First, as we have in years past, we will not restrict attendance. Second, we will have an increased, and increasingly visible, security presence at High Holy Day services, relying on expertise and resources internally and through contracted professionals. Shir Tikvah is committed to being a safe, welcoming congregation and holy community. Our commitment to radical hospitality brings an obligation to make us all feel safe and secure in our worship. We are working every day to ensure that the security steps we take advance our values, particularly recognizing that many congregants are apprehensive about law enforcement. To get involved and support this work, [donate](#) and/or email [Jeremy](#) or [Joel](#) about volunteering.

Rabbinical and musical updates

God willing, Noam and Rabbi Lekach-Rosenberg will welcome their first child early next month. Rabbi Latz will be studying in Israel for three weeks in July. And you might be wondering who will see to your spiritual and religious needs in those weeks? Don't worry! Rabbi Rappaport, with support from lay leaders like MJ Gilbert, will be handling Shabbat services throughout the first half of the summer. I look forward to Rabbi Rappaport's inspired teaching this summer and thank MJ for sharing her voice with us. You can always get clergy support by calling the office (612-822-1440) during business hours M-F, or the after-hours lifecycle emergency line (612-787-7447). Looking past the summer, I'm pleased to tell you that we have hired a new choir director, Aaron Kapaun! We have been so enriched by Marlys Fiterman's decades of service but I know we will welcome Aaron's work. If you'd like to get involved for the Fall, please contact [Rabbi Lekach-Rosenberg](#).

Executive Director

Welcome to Alison Olig, our new Executive Director. Alison starts at Shir Tikvah in just two weeks—although she's already in communication with the Board—and you'll be able to reach her at [her new Shir Tikvah email address](#). Alison will work closely with our staff and the Board to help our community prosper. Her first few months will be a whirlwind, I'm sure, but I invite you to drop her a note, introduce yourself, and get to know her. She's coming to us as our budget has climbed past \$1M annually and we have almost 550 members!

We look forward to celebrating John Humleker on **June 30th at 4-7pm**. You can still be a co-sponsor/host of this event as a way to show John your gratitude for his 15 years of service! Please email [Barry Epstein](#) or [Jeff Danovsky](#).

Co-location exploration updates

A few months ago, the co-location working group on Jewish Identity and Spirituality concluded its work with a series of insights, goals, and intentions they believe we must understand and strive to meet if co-location is to move forward. The working group was chaired by John Walthour and Tamar Ghidalia, and included Sara Greenhalgh, Julie Jacobs, Aaron Lichtov, Rachel Lipkin, Jane Newman, Lyonel Norris, Stacy Rudoy, Caroline Schultz, and Jessica Wicks, with assistance from Rabbi Latz and Rabbi Lekach-Rosenberg. Their thoughts can be found [here](#). That document was presented to the Board and is part of the conversations we are beginning to have with the architects. It is guidance to which we will return over and over as we consider co-location, not just architecturally but in all things.

At the Annual Meeting, we distributed "A statement of principles for the Joint Steering Committee." The Joint Steering Committee is made up of Shir Tikvah and First Universalist leaders and it guides our exploratory work. You can find that document, which was adopted by both Boards, [here](#).

In the next few weeks, please keep your eye out for a good old fashioned mailing containing a simple and broad summary of our co-location work, commitments and process. Don't forget, there's a co-location [FAQ](#) on our website and we'll always be glad to hear from you by [email](#).

In hope,
Bruce

