

MINUTES, KOL AMI ANNUAL MEETING, June 12, 2011, 4 – 6:30 p.m.

The meeting started with introductions of each person present, including name and involvement in the community. There were approximately 37 members in attendance. Elizabeth Lower-Basch during the introduction process suggested the formation of a junior congregation. Mary Kuntz indicated that she was interested in this idea. Two brand new members were introduced, Susan Cadieu and Noel Leavitt.

The President, Don Kraus, indicated that Kol Ami had a good year, with organic growth and the implementation of the strategic plan. A new brochure developed for the community was presented and passed out. The steering committee was thanked for a job well done. Clip boards were passed around giving members opportunity to sign up for tasks or activities they are interested in.

The Rabbi described the range of activities she carried out during the year. She thanked the community for the unexpected thanksgiving bonus. She also thanked those members co-leading and participating in High Holy Day services. The Rabbi led two B'nai Mitzvah (Hilary Kraus and Rebecca Linick), and guided four families with loss and bereavement. She continued her consultation and counseling activities. She led two tisches after services, part of adult education activities. She hopes to be more active in adult education and intergenerational activities in the future. She represented Kol Ami at National Reconstructionist activities and at the local federation.

Committee reports began with Marcel Infeld (for adult education) describing the Hebrew reading (7 students graduating) and the cantillation (6 students graduating) classes offered weekly during the year. Both had graduation ceremonies held at Shabbat services. Marcel mentioned the importance of reintroducing a Torah service on Saturday, keeping it to two hours. He will take a break from adult education in the upcoming year.

Janice Cooper Levy reported for the Care and Comfort Program, reviewing what it has been involved with; mentioning the need for additional volunteers to collaborate with the Program. She would like to spend more follow-up time with people during the upcoming year. Harriet Epstein volunteered to help with this Program. A comment was made about the need for reminding members about yahrzeits online, adding this as a new service. This suggestion will be considered by the Care and Comfort Program.

Hope Warshaw spoke about children's and family programs. Her committee includes Mindy Rudell and Erica Falk. Laura Dines will be the liason to the ritual committee. Hope mentioned three aspects of the Program: holiday celebrations, JCEP and b'nai mitzvah. The aim has been to have family ownership of different holidays, for example, the Falks for Purim, the Dines for Pesach, Goldfarb/Achtermann for Hannukah. JCEP with 25 kids enrolled and great teachers

handled two Saturday morning services, which went smoothly, were well attended. Rabbi Gilah comes in as a guest in JCEP, and will continue to work with the religious school. The B'nai Mitzvah group had a planning session, with two b'nai mitzvahs planned for the fall of 2012.

Carolyn presented a report on the Ritual Committee, which has integrated kids activities in its planning, scheduling Shabbat services through the summer until September. Description of the services has been posted on the website. Guidelines for Shabbat Babayit services were created. The scheduling for these services focused on filling in the gaps when services were needed. Ritual responsibilities for High Holy Day and other services were identified and described. A succession plan was developed, a policy for volunteerism for services, as well as a service leaders' evaluation form.

Mary presented a report on strategic planning, focusing on the implementation process. The aim of sending out a program audit form was to identify needs and gather useful information for budget planning from the different Kol Ami committees and programs. The form was sent out in April and returned in May, late in the budget preparation process, so that the timing will be revised in the future. Results were reflected in the budget; indicated a need for more people to help out with various committees, for example Tikkun Olam, outreach, and the care and comfort program.

The aim of outreach activities was to make Kol Ami a presence at events in the local area. An example was the participation in the Israeli Street Fair in Fairfax, Fund raising is a related need, focusing on ways of bringing in resources. Two new members of the community, Noel Leavitt and Abbot Hilleson volunteered to work on fundraising.

Tikkun Olam, an area that needs volunteers and ideas for projects, is an ongoing process. Peggy indicated in her report the success of the most recent homeless shelter project which fed people, and involved many members of the community. There was also a gleaning project carried out during the year.

Don formally recognized members of the community who have served on the steering committee or as committee chairs and are stepping down. This includes Hope Warshaw (stepping down from Steering Committee), Carolyn Gray (former ritual committee chair), Marcel Infeld (former adult ed chair), Toni Popkin (former Shabbat hosting coordinator). A resolution was offered indicating that the Kol Ami Community appreciates the work and would like to thank the above mentioned members. The resolution was moved and adopted unanimously.

Elizabeth presented a review of the Kol Ami budget, which was passed around and put up on power point. Items such as the fact that JCEP is designed to be self supporting, that there has been a change in fees for families for different numbers of kids, as well as for the B'nai Mitzvah program were mentioned. An amount (\$4000) has been set aside from the Weisenbloom donation for adult education. It was mentioned that the Rabbi's discretionary fund needs to be bolstered. A vote was called on adopting the budget. It was adopted unanimously.

The slate of officers, the new steering committee, committee chairs and schleppers was presented. It was passed out as part of the agenda. The slate was adopted unanimously. Diane Ivonne volunteered to handle coordination of Shabbat hosting, working with the ritual committee and Amy Stutt.

It was decided to move some of the machzors out of the closet, in order to provide more space for the siddurim. It was mentioned that these should be placed on chairs during services, not on the floor. Tony Lower-Basch will continue as webmaster. Each of the committees needs to post information on the website. Members should check the website at least once a month.

Richard Ruth as JRF liaison for the Chesapeake Region spoke briefly about Reconstructionist federation activities. There is an additional Reconstructionist synagogue in Baltimore part of the regional group, which meets regularly by conference call. There is a new organizational structure on the national level, since the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation have merged. JRF hosts a music workshop every two years, as well as a convention.

Outreach activities mentioned include the new Kol Ami brochure, promoting High Holy Day services, Kol Ami promotion in the Jewish Week and in Schmooze, linking up with the JCC and participating in the recent Israeli festival.

The Kol Ami volunteer policy was presented and discussed, the expectations were reviewed. A suggestion was made to add the phrase “who is capable” at the end of the first paragraph, after the words “adult member”. A couple is considered to be two adult members for volunteering. It was suggested that those of post b’nai mitzvah age need to be included. No consequences have been lined up for those members who don’t comply with the policy. There is no penalty involved, no compelling of volunteerism. It was mentioned that if people don’t step up and participate in Shabbat hosting, which needs to be clearly specified, then it won’t happen, won’t get done. A name change to “Members Participation Policy”, was suggested and agreed upon, along with the term “participation” used in the second paragraph, instead of “volunteer activities”. The word “should” instead of “will” was recommended for the last sentence of the first paragraph. This change was voted upon and passed. The policy as a whole with the amendment and changes (see below) was also voted upon, and approved by the members present. It was emphasized that the policy is fluid and can be changed or revised. It can be reconsidered at next year’s annual meeting.

The annual meeting ended with individual certificates presented to the children involved in JCEP, as well as a formal appreciation and gift certificate for each of the three teachers.

July 10th is the tentative date set for the next meeting of the steering committee, along with committee chairs and schleppers. It will be a Sunday afternoon meeting and barbeque at Don and Hope’s house.

(prepared by Susan Freiband, Secretary 6/16/2011)

Kol Ami Members Participation Policy

Kol Ami is a participatory congregation. Volunteering is one of the core values that guide the goals and mission of our community. Giving our talents, passion and time to Kol Ami every year is not only a responsibility shared by all members but is also a crucial part of what defines our community. In order to ensure that members have a clear idea of this responsibility and that Kol Ami has the volunteers it needs, the community has agreed, as a policy, that each adult member who is capable should contribute every year, at a minimum, the following or its equivalent:

- hosting of at least two Shabbat services (Friday evening or Saturday morning) and
- helping with two High Holy Day or other holiday service or congregation events.

The minimum participation required by each member may be adjusted by the Community at its annual meeting to meet the needs of the Community. Jobs will be found to accommodate members with disabilities.

We also need (but do not require from every member every year) people who are willing to make a year-long commitment to participate in one of Kol Ami's committees or service needs. Every member is urged to share their talents with the community at least once each year by participating in a Tikkun Olam project or other community activity, teaching a class or helping lead a service.

We are all grateful for the contributions of our members, which are crucial to the vitality of our community.