

Kol Ami Steering Committee minutes, October 19, 2014

Attending:

Rayna Aylward
Ed Bomsey
Rabbi Leila
Susan Freiband
Carolyn Grey
Marcel Infeld
Herb Cooper-Levy
Janice Cooper0Levy
Mindy Weisenblum
Elizabeth Lower-Basch
Emily Greco
Mindy Rudell
Mark Graboyes
Jim North
Lynda Erinoff
Jane Petkofsky
Sharon Sterling
Eleanor Hodges
Betsy Greer

Agenda accepted with amendments to shorten timeline in order to have executive session at end.
Minutes from September 15, approved without change -- Herb to post.

Rabbi update -- 2 upcoming B'nai mitzvah.
November 9 Jewish Genealogy session at 5pm.
Her classes will begin soon -- November 23-- Kaballah -- 4 worlds.

Herb's report – Full community coordinator report distributed by email and attached. Updated calendar, reorganized/cleaned closets, solicited yizkor book, made new nametags, sent out Kol Amite. Invited visitors to add themselves to the outreach email list. It was suggested that it would be helpful to have room information in the newsletter when possible.

Follow-up: Herb agreed to provide room information if possible.

Emily reported for the Outreach committee. They have built list of people who have attended high holiday services but are not members. Outreach list is now around 80. Trying to track participation over time (e.g. do some people come to high holidays for multiple years without joining?) Just had the Meet the Congregation event. Had 7 new/prospective members attend. Got good response to high holiday ads. Next step is to update the website.

Follow-up Outreach will follow-up with the people who attended the Meet the Congregation event.

Mindy Rudell reported for JCEP -- Have a bunch of new families who joined this year. Have about 25 kids -- 3 jewish studies levels, 4 Hebrew. Melanie led children's services for high

holidays. She just moved to this area. Has another job that conflicts with JCEP classes, but would be interested in doing other services. Joan offered to coordinate hanukah celebration-- will reach out to parents of younger kids to get them to help. Some parents have requested adult Hebrew classes at same time as JCEP. Marcel might be interested in teaching again – but he is thinking about doing it in 2 years, after finishing the tanach cycle.

Follow-up: Is anyone interested in teaching an adult Hebrew class sooner? Joan will reach out regarding Hanukah celebration.

Carolyn reported for Ritual -- . Ongoing process of updating the calendar. Will add at the end each time what has changed from last version to make it easier to review. Asked question of whom to include in updates. Answer: send to steering committee, committee chairs, Herb.

Lynda – We do not have host for this Friday. Going ahead with hostless event. Carolyn -- policy was to cancel services when don't have a host. Need to take seriously the principle that everyone is expected to volunteer. Rabbi talked about model from Adat Shalom -- need to orient people to the expectation and create a culture where people take norm seriously.

Follow-up: Discuss at community meeting.

High holiday recap -- Notes sent around and attached. We need to discuss budget, time line earlier -- June not August/September. Early planning would support our ability to make decisions more as a group, less last minute decisions. Need to be sure to clean sanctuary after services. It would be helpful to have checklist of to-dos. Suggestion made that we should perhaps move congregation to a smaller space than the sanctuary earlier in the day, to allow for intimacy and clean up

Follow-up: Lynda, Mindy and Carolyn agreed to work to develop book of steps that need to be made as part of the planning process to be used by next year's committee.

Erv's treasurer report had been mailed. We are in good shape. Basically on budget. Have some money left over from High Holidays that can be used for advertising for Passover seder. We received a \$1000 anonymous donation from a high holiday attendee.

Carolyn -- We received an invitation from UUCA to participate in their interfaith dialogue on Israel.

- She had attended meeting at UU where Landrum spoke, was not comfortable with his position.
- Rabbi thinks we need to get more educated internally and hearing from a range of positions before we could participate. (JUFJ, Americans for Peace Now, Israeli embassy), separately and then together? Don't recommend starting with the Quaker position.
- Rayna -- many groups already doing this work -- we can participate, without having to recreate from scratch.
- Rabbi -- suggests MD group -- Jewish Islamic Dialogue, read My Promised Land Betsy -- another book -- Lemon Tree
- Elizabeth -- can interact with UU in other ways, not just this. But wouldn't want to rule out participating in an event with a speaker whom we don't agree with.
- Herb -- don't have to come to a communal position.

- Mindy -- is there a specific decision we need to make about participating? Mission statement seemed biased.
- Rayna – Perhaps add as topic for January community meeting? People might choose to attend as individuals not as Kol Ami. UUCA does have interfaith group -- Voices. Maybe reach out to UU ministry -- what are the opportunities to interact.
- Rabbi -- wants to start having dialogues about how we feel, where we're coming from. Don't want to avoid the topic.
- Follow-up: Will decline immediate invitation from UUCA. Steering will consider, propose dates for internal discussions on Israel. Emily offered to see if we could get an outside facilitator on a pro bono basis to manage the process. Rayna/Herb will reach out to UUCA for other opportunities to interact.

Rabbi -- talked about the possibility of a scholar in residence -- funds in the Mark Weisenbloom fund to support it –

Follow-up: add to the January meeting.

Elizabeth reported regarding plans for November 16 meeting on Dual Affiliation -- Rabbi will check w/ Rachel Berenblatt re skyping in. Short statements back and forth on opinions. Need a timekeeper/facilitator (Ed Bomsey volunteered). Separate notetaker.

Follow-up: Elizabeth and Rayna will draft agenda for meeting, and will finalize speaker plans with the Rabbi. Herb will post materials to the members section of the website.

Elizabeth reported regarding plans for new memorial quilt. Need to have a meeting to work on it, but probably won't happen until February given the number of events already on the schedule.

Follow-up: Will reach out to the artist she knows regarding the cost of a Torah cover. Will work with Carolyn to find a date for a meeting to work on quilt.

Rabbi -- neither of our Torahs are kosher -- they are "black market" torahs. Recommends the process of raising funds to purchase a kosher torah. Rabbi is possibly interested in selling hers -- \$13-14,000 plus \$1,500 in repairs. Ours were \$5,000 for the two of them. Should start the conversation about raising funds for new ones

Follow-up: Need to put on the agenda for a future meeting.

Scheduling -- January 11 is in person steering committee meeting. January 25 is the community meeting. Following dates set for spring meetings:

Feb 23 8.10

March 23 8.10

April 19 -- Sunday 2:30-4:30 pm

May 18 8.10 pm

June 7 community meeting 4.30pm

The full steering committee was adjourned.

Executive session to discuss Rabbi selection process began. Participants were Rayna, Carolyn, Marcel, Sharon, Janice, Elizabeth, Emily, Jim, and Lynda.

Attachment A: Community Coordinator Report

Administration

1. I purchased some needed supplies.
2. I inputted the balance of the Master Calendar for November to the website.
3. I re-organized the closet after the blizzard of High Holy Days was completed.
4. I've posted JCEP reports and homework assignments to the JCEP member pages of the website.
5. I updated the membership of the JCEP list.

High Holy Days

1. I coordinated publicity about the High Holy Day Food Drive, placing copy that Mattie Cohan provided in *The Kol Amite*.
2. I monitored our High Holy Day advertisement in the September 18 and 25 editions of the Alexandria Gazette Packet, Arlington Sun Gazette and the Washington Jewish Week. I obtained tearsheets and processed invoices for payment.
3. I solicited remembrances in the 5775 Yizkor book and arranged for its printing.
4. I maintained the list of High Holy Day attendance. I used it to print name tags both for visitors and for members who had no name tags. Name tags had not been printed for the last 5 years, as best as I could estimate from the content of the name tags.

Outreach

1. I published 5 weekly issues of *The Kol Amite*. Regular features include: This Week/Weekend, Simchas, Upcoming, Volunteers Needed, Thank You, Yahrzeits, Member News, and Community Announcements. This Week's Parsha remains an occasional feature, when there is no Kol Ami service. Other occasional features include specific calls to action, JRC news and Jobs.
2. I talked to several people who inquired about Kol Ami High Holy Day services and Kol Ami membership seeking to warmly encourage these folks to attend and join.
3. I invited High Holy Days attendees to join our Outreach email list.
4. I constructed a list of visitors who attended High Holy Day services to invite these people to the Meet the Congregation event.
5. I participated in the telephone conference call meeting of the Outreach committee.

Attachment B: High Holidays Lessons Learned

(Based on planning team notes and member input)

- We should continue to plan well in advance, with a May “all hands” meeting. We should add a coordination meeting in June, with JCEP and Ritual Committees.
- HiHo budget allocation should have specific line items, such as refreshments, children’s service leader, general supplies, etc.
- For children’s services: Identify service leader by spring (perhaps invite Melanie again?). Also, consider providing child care/supervised activity room.
- Identify room needs for all service elements (including YK daytime groups, Neilah and Break Fast) at least two months before services. Room configuration should also be set. No last minute changes!
- Having refreshments for RH services should be repeated.
- Al Chet submission box is also a keeper.
- Reconsider having meditation room – room rental + supplies were @\$200, for space that was not widely used. (Funds might better apply to child care and refreshments)
- Services should be shorter overall, and KN should start no earlier than 6:30 pm.
- Service leaders need to say (and repeat) page numbers LOUDLY.