Editor’s Note: This space has been one of the many homes that Harold has invited us into as he shared his thoughts on a variety of topics over the years. I can’t help thinking that this column would give him joy to see his efforts carried forward by Eva who has a deep appreciation of the importance of the human dimension he both valued and modeled.

It feels strange to be writing this column. As long as I have been reading The Illuminator, this article has been written by Harold Londer, our Madrikh Emeritus. Since Harold died in late July, I, like so many of you, have been grieving. Harold co-founded this community and poured his energy into helping it thrive. He drew people with his humor, his intellect, his caring, and his commitment to Humanistic Judaism. He made life cycle events special and personal. He brought patience and enthusiasm to his work with Or Emet members and friends of all ages. He imparted meaning and relevance to holiday celebrations. He and Jan generously opened their home for Or Emet gatherings. He penned beautiful columns for this publication. When I reflect on the impact this had on my life, I see how Harold was instrumental in building a Humanistic Jewish community that made me want to devote my life to serving it.

Harold’s impact in so many spheres beyond this congregation was also outsized. Certain details from his memorial service stand out to me: his son, Noah, describing how his dad came to every one of his and his sister’s games and performances; his former coworker, Kate, telling how Harold patiently mentored her and supported her growth as a health professional; the husband of one of Harold’s former leukemia patients talking about how Harold’s care added years to his wife’s life. Because he cared about people, and because he believed in their ability to succeed, to grow, and to heal, he helped others to reach their fullest potential. The good that these people will do in the world, the ripples that they will send out, is a part of Harold’s legacy.

It was good but also strange to honor that legacy over Zoom with a memorial service on August 8. Harold’s family and many others felt this acutely. I wish that we could have come together in-person to say goodbye to Harold and to comfort each other. The fact that hundreds of people around the world were able to participate in the digital service offered a silver lining.

I think Harold would have found humor and meaning in having his memorial service online. Harold’s childhood friend Marshall reminisced about how Harold, connecting with the summer of 1960 zeitgeist, organized a “Junior Olympics” as well as a mock Democratic National Convention for the kids in their North Minneapolis neighborhood. A 1966 newspaper clipping describes Harold, then a 19-year-old University of Minnesota student and part-time disc jockey, turning part of his student radio show into a live-broadcast “dating service.” From these imaginative efforts as a young person to his later-in-life embrace of Humanistic Judaism, Harold was a man of his times. He felt the energy of new ideas, technologies, and cultural possibilities and used his vision and organizational talents to bring people together. A Zoom memorial service in the midst of a historic pandemic is exactly the kind of thing he would dream up. Zikhrono Livrakha — may his memory be a blessing — and may we be inspired by his goodness and vision.
Suddenly, Harold died on July 29, 2020. Since founding Or Emet in 1983, along with the late Dr. Larry Garfin (1934-1993), Harold dedicated himself to guiding the congregation with energy and vision. Ordained as a Madrikh (ritual leader) in 2007, he officiated at lifecycle events and services until transitioning to Madrikh Emeritus in 2018. Harold’s death is an incalculable loss to Or Emet and to Humanistic Judaism.

~ May his memory be a blessing ~

Reflections about Harold

Harold’s Hebrew name was Chanoch, which means “dedicated.” Harold truly embodied this name in the way that he dedicated himself to building our community and bringing Humanistic Jewish meaning into the lives of so many people. For him, I think, Humanistic Judaism offered a powerful way to weave together the things he found meaningful in his Orthodox Jewish upbringing with his deep commitments to science, rationality, and humanistic ethics. His passion for sharing this way of being and doing Jewish certainly shaped my life in profound ways. Many, many others would say the same. The Jewish world, and the world more broadly, is a better place for his dedication. -Excerpt from Eva Cohen’s tribute

On July 29th, when Harold died, there was a meteor shower. How fitting that when my husband Paul and I stood on a hill, stargazing toward the eastern sky, we saw an incredibly bright shooting star, called a fireball, so low on the horizon that it seemed to zip by at eye level. I imagined Harold’s excitement, maybe with his buddy Einstein, looking at that wonderful sight. I will carry that image of Harold with me along with these words . . . There are stars whose radiance reaches the earth only when they themselves are extinguished and are no more. There are people the splendor of whose remembrance lights the world, while they are no longer among us (Hannah Senesh). -Excerpt from Janet Mayer’s eulogy

He was so honest, authentic and unencumbered by extraneous emotionality. I came to know that Harold’s impulses and ideas were based on a profound and deep consideration of the facts that always included both an understanding of factual reality, as well as the emotional reality and consequences of any scenario. I will always be grateful for our exchanges over the years — grateful for his intelligence, his clever humor, his enormous generosity, and his vision for the future. -Excerpt from comments by Rabbi Miriam Jerris, Society for Humanistic Judaism

Making Ritual Meaningful

Among my most cherished memories are the times that Harold and I performed baby naming ceremonies together. We met with new parents and then Harold created ceremonies fully embracing their ideas, including their favorite readings and songs and the involvement of whole families from great-grandparents to very young children. He created booklets complete with photos and artwork for everyone who attended. -Margo Fox

Harold and Margo did an amazing baby naming ceremony for us, which was our introduction to Humanistic Judaism. I’m grateful for all Harold has done for us and our community. -Dave Musicant

The first time I attended an Or Emet service — it was Rosh Hashanah, I think 2006, I was moved by Harold’s leadership, his ability to take a ritual I had frankly always thought of as rote and rather numbing and bring meaning, humor, and relevance to it. I came to value Harold as our leader and as a friend, and learned much from him in the brief times we shared. -Arty Dorman
"Creating a Welcoming Place"
Without Harold, there would likely be no Or Emet. He was our co-founder and madrikh and his memory will live on in this congregation.  -Scott Chazdon

I knew Harold since the beginning of the establishment of Or Emet. He and Jan opened their home innumerable times to the congregation for celebrations and various holiday dinners.  -Muriel Sterne

Harold (and Jan) hosted early Or Emet Passover seders in their home when we could all fit. Harold was a founder and an ongoing supporter and contributor in so many ways. He will be greatly missed.  -Allan Malkis

"Humor, Warmth, Wisdom . . . and so much more"
Harold was a mensch in the truest sense of the word. Kind, funny, warm, gracious, generous, and quick-witted. May his memory be a blessing.  -Lisa Gardner-Springer

He was a stand-up guy. He stood up for his patients. He stood up for his principles. He stood up for those of us in the Humanistic Jewish world. . . he was also a pretty darn good stand-up comedian and he understood how important humor and laughter were.  -Richard Logan

Harold was one of a kind. His wisdom and leadership were vital to our congregation.  -Sarah Berman-Young

One of my fondest memories of Harold was him standing in front of my young children and other Or Emet children telling the Purim story. It was like they were sitting at the feet of the wise Zayde.  -Carrie Dickson

We will miss this incredible mensch who was key in building and holding together a small congregation spread all over the Twin Cities and beyond.  -Michal Moskow

I hope we can carry some of Harold’s spirit and ethos with us moving forward in this turbulent, unpredictable world.  -Rachel Wexelbaum

Harold Londer’s Voice by Alan Miller
No matter how long Or Emet exists, the voice of Harold Londer will echo during every service, every function. No matter how many people lead the congregation, the shadow of Harold Londer will forever hover behind them.

When we first attended a service and before we joined (hard to believe it was two decades ago), Harold immediately made it his business to engage us in conversation, asking all the questions he could think of to make us comfortable. "Sports fan?" he said, “Well, I have tickets to the Timberwolves this week, and I just happen to have an extra ticket, so would you like to go?” I'm sure that Jan was surprised to find that she had been pre-empted.

The holidays were extra special, whether it was Break-the-Fast or even just a get-together since the congregation in those days was small enough to enjoy the festivities at the Londer home. Harold and Jan were generous hosts, and we'd all gather in the living room after feasting and be amazed at Harold's grasp of Jewish history, or other remarks relevant to the day.

One of the memories I will cherish most is Harold's quick and sharp sense of humor. It never deserted him, and his imprimatur will always be a part of Or Emet.
About Or Emet’s Origins and Fostering Jewish Identity
by Michael Persellin

One winter in the early 80s, I saw a notice in the American Jewish World about something called Or Emet. I had pretty much given up on finding a community that said “Jewish” without also saying “religion.” The hook in the AJW notice was the word “humanist.” Harold led the meeting—you couldn’t call it a service. I remember Ralph Lessin making jokes about everything, and I’m sure that had a lot to do with my coming back. Anything that seriously engaged Jewishness, didn’t mention a deity, and allowed for cracking wise seemed good to me.

In the innumerable meetings I attended with Harold, he was always the same energetic colleague, listener, resource. He was clearly a very smart man, but he was not didactic. He was our resource on Jewish religion and ritual and common sense. Harold didn’t raise questions, but he answered them.

As time passed, I felt, insisted, that we needed structure. Harold had been president for some years, but there wasn’t really an organization. We went through the process of enacting by-laws, appointing leaders, acquiring non-profit status. Harold never pushed back, it just wasn’t his particular interest. He became president of a real congregation, but there was nothing bureaucratic or authoritarian about Harold. He let others push the agenda, and he was agreeable, supportive.

Harold had inexhaustible energy and patience. I don’t think anyone ever figured out where he got the time from. When I was president, our big project was to get a Sunday school. We knew we had to get families into the congregation. We were big on wanting, not so big on knowing what it was going to look like. There were huge things that in the beginning were almost entirely up to Harold. The biggest were bar/bat mitzvah, holidays, marriage. He and all of us did so much work during the years when membership growth was slow.

We went from community to congregation. Harold was always the center. His warmth and intellectual acuity were exactly what a growing community of searchers needed. He was a brilliant man, yet always approachable. In some ways he was a typical Jew—he loved sports, humor, food.

There was a bit of comedy to Harold completing his training as madrikh. He just could not get his thesis paper done. I used to joke that he was a science guy, not a humanities guy; yet his occasional AJW essays on Jewish holidays were right on.

Harold was my mentor. He mentored everyone at Or Emet who ever took on a leadership role, or a project, or worked on a committee. He made it all happen. He taught and brought together. He taught us how to live a life.

We know that death is an ending. I so much hope that Harold felt proud and satisfied of what he achieved while he was alive. I’ll miss him very much every time I think about being a Jew. I can’t begin to say how much he means to me. It’s very hard.
Focusing energy on rabbinic courses and Or Emet has been positive and anchoring as so much of daily life has been upended. With my work at U of M completed, my remaining coursework is through the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism (IISHJ). Normally IISHJ classes are taught in-person over the summer. This year they happened over Zoom. In June I wrapped up a two-semester modern Jewish history course, and then took part in a week-long course on lifecycle ceremonies co-taught by Rabbi Miriam Jerris and Rabbi Adam Chalom. Rabbi Jerris focused on the nuts-and-bolts of designing and officiating at Humanistic Jewish lifecycle ceremonies; baby namings, b mitzvahs, weddings, and funerals. Rabbi Chalom’s portion covered the historical background to these ceremonies and the Jewish textual tradition that informs them. I came out of the class feeling prepared to officiate at the lifecycle events that will fall under my purview as a rabbi-in-training and, ultimately, as a rabbi. In July, I participated in another intensive course focused on Jewish education and taught by Rabbi Chalom. Even though this subject is more familiar to me because of my experience with Or Emet’s Jewish Cultural School, I still found it helpful to get instruction in both teaching and a range of new ideas for Humanistic Jewish youth and adult educational programming. In October I will start a two-semester weekly course focused on Second Temple Judaism.

While continuing rabbinic coursework, my work as Or Emet’s ritual leader has been an ongoing crash-course in online service design and officiation. With support from our president, Scott Chazdon, and in partnership with many others, I have been learning how to lead effectively over the Zoom interface; how to share and navigate through services, managing both PowerPoints and other audiovisual components; how to coach new Zoom users through turning on their mics and cameras before speaking…the list is long. Minor glitches aside, I think we have been largely successful in translating the warmth and meaningfulness of Or Emet in-person ritual into the digital setting. The August 8 memorial service for Harold Londer, which I discuss more in my cover article, offered a particularly moving example of this translation. I want to express my pride in this congregation as we continue to navigate the challenges of physical distancing while making Or Emet activities happen online. We are making choices that safeguard life and health without compromising our commitment to community. We are being creative and resilient. In doing these things, we are embodying the ethos of Humanistic Judaism.

Rabbi Liaison Committee Continues Or Emet’s Heritage
by Janet Mayer

Over 30 years ago there was a core group of people who became Or Emet. That group included among others, Harold Londer and Jan Withers and Norma and Larry Garfin. Harold led holiday services and lifecycle ceremonies, eventually completing the necessary coursework to be an official madrikh (ceremonial leader).

Harold cared deeply that we develop a leadership succession plan so that Or Emet would continue beyond his lifetime. While we mourned for him on August 8th, we celebrate his gift to us of a thriving congregation, and a wonderful legacy of Harold’s passion and dedication.

Eva Cohen, who studied and worked with Harold, is now Or Emet’s ritual leader, continuing studies with the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism toward becoming a rabbi. Many people tuned in on Zoom this spring and summer to see her lead Shabbat services, our first virtual b mitzvah, and co-lead Harold’s memorial. He needn’t worry that Or Emet is in very capable hands.

To continue to steer Or Emet into the future, a structure for both Eva and the congregation is now in place to assure that there is a channel for providing rabbinic support as well as for dialogue about expectations of what we want from our rabbi. This Rabbi Liaison Committee won’t meet regularly but may be convened by any member, committee, or Eva.

For further information, refer to Or Emet member directory to contact a Rabbi Liaison Committee member: Janet Mayer, Chair; Natalie Rosinsky, Brendan Moore, Anne Handley
President’s Message

Okay Millennial
by Scott Chazdon

Our 21-year-old daughter was home much of the summer. She’s entering her senior year at Occidental College in Los Angeles and it has been great to watch her gain independence there. Being home this summer wasn’t exactly where she wanted to be. Her big plan for study abroad in South Africa this summer was cancelled due to the Coronavirus pandemic. But she made the most of her time here in Minnesota volunteering at the George Floyd Memorial, delivering food and supplies to collection sites, driving for DoorDash, doing socially-distanced activities with friends, hanging out with her younger sister, and playing cards after dinner with all of us.

But sometimes during those card games, we got into arguments about politics and those often surprised me. I was born in 1961, which makes me a late boomer, but I was proud of the anti-war, anti-racist boomer legacy, even if I grew up in its shadow. But now I get plenty of “okay boomer” comments from both of my daughters. They have no confidence in people of my generation (or even the generations before or after us) to bring about equity and justice in our society, or to address climate change. I was pretty defensive about this at first.

Seeing the world through these kids' eyes is both frustrating and exciting. It’s frustrating because I’m reminded of the decades of stalled social and environmental progress that has marked most of my adult life. That’s where the defensiveness comes from. Yet, since George Floyd’s murder, it feels like there has been an explosion of consciousness, and it’s their generation that has been rallying, marching, and TikTok-ing to the point of seriously threatening the status quo. I’m filled with cautious optimism watching them, and a sense that my path from here on is to find ways to support them rather than thinking of my generation as the agent of change. It’s time to pass the torch.

On that note, I am also hopeful that Or Emet can continue to attract adults in their 20s and 30s to become part of our Humanistic Jewish movement and to move into leadership roles. They’ve got the energy and the idealism we need, and hopefully we’ve got something to offer them — if we elders don’t get caught up thinking we’ve got all the answers.
The 2020 Annual Meeting was held via Zoom on Sunday, June 7th, with 46 adult members in attendance. We held the meeting concurrently with the last Jewish Cultural School session of the year, and it was great to have so many JCS parents involved. Before we sent the JCS students to their virtual classes, we held our annual recognition of their teachers.

Early in the meeting, we reviewed some highlights of the year, including:

- Eva Cohen’s completing her Master’s Degree in Classical and Near Eastern Studies at the University of Minnesota, a major step in her rabbinic studies (and, of course, Eva and Jack’s baby, Freyja, as well!);
- Hiring Diane Walkoff, a long-term member of Or Emet, as our public relations assistant;
- Receiving a $10,000 legacy grant from the Minnesota Historical Society to conduct oral history interviews with long-term members; and
- Creating four ongoing initiatives that we’ll keep working on this year:
  - Strengthening post b mitzvah engagement
  - Organizing more frequent informal gatherings
  - Recruiting in locations that attract cultural Jews, and
  - Expanding social media use

We reviewed our budget, as Eva will be performing more rabbinic duties and working one-quarter time. To that end, we have created a separate Rabbi Fund that will be sustained through donations.

We honored the amazing commitment of our volunteers with a volunteer recognition slideshow, complete with klezmer music. Both Janet Mayer and Anne Handley were recognized for completing their service on the Executive Committee, Janet for five years, and Anne for one year. We also noted the end of Richard Logan’s term as President, and new role as Past President, of the Society for Humanistic Judaism Board, as well as Lisa Gardner-Springer’s continuing role on that Board. New volunteers were recruited for important roles in the coming year with Shana Tanenbaum stepping up to lead our Caring Committee. Many of our other committee leaders are continuing in their roles.

After the formal meeting ended, we had some fun Zoom activities led by Shana Tanenbaum and Arielah King. One of the activities was Jewish Trivia. Who knew that Pink is Jewish? All in all, it was a very good meeting, but it would have been much nicer to be with each other in-person. Let’s hope that happens next year.

The following 2020-2021 Executive Committee members were elected:

- President: Scott Chazdon
- Vice President: Allan Malkis
- Treasurer: Sharon Miller
- At-Large (2-year term): Seth Binder
- At-Large 2nd year: Carrie Dickson
Jewish Cultural School Update
by Arty Dorman
Director of the Or Emet Jewish Cultural School

The Jewish Cultural School (JCS) begins September 13 and will be on Zoom throughout 2020. In April, when we first convened virtually, I doubt many of us expected to be still doing so in the fall. We miss being able to gather, to sing, and break bread (or bagels) together. We will return to those simple but profound pleasures as soon as it is safe to do so.

Our teachers have become adept at planning lessons for Zoom and our kids have become accustomed to using it. We have joyfully come together online, not only for JCS and adult programs, but for a seder, a b’mitzvah, a Havdalah service, the scavenger hunt and Jewish trivia contest that closed our annual meeting, and, sadly, for a memorial service a few weeks ago to honor our beloved Harold Londer.

Harold was a great champion for the JCS, believing that the vibrancy of our community depended on engaging families and nurturing future generations. What better testament to his belief in our youth than to have Eva Cohen, who attended JCS as a youngster, serve as a guide to our students preparing for b’mitzvah, but also as our ritual leader, soon to become a Humanistic Rabbi. Also, Sam Wegner, an alumnus of JCS, will be launching a program for Or Emet’s post-b’mitzvah youth. The first Or Emet b’mitzvahs I attended were the joint celebration of Sam and his cousin. That event got me hooked on the value JCS offers to kids and families.

On August 29, we had our annual summer Havdalah service via Zoom. The service was led by Eva Cohen with song leader Sarah Berman-Young. Eva read the children’s book Havdalah is Coming by Tracy Newman, to acquaint youngsters unfamiliar with the havdalah experience. In Havdalah services, participants pass a spice box with fragrances such as cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg — every household sniffed and described their own variation on the spice box.

We will continue to send handouts in advance to accompany JCS lessons, information on topics each class covers, and note any materials to be assembled in advance. After the class, we will post a summary on the JCS Blog page.

We are expanding to ten monthly sessions, September through June. That gives our students one more opportunity to meet together and our teachers more time to provide content and enriching experiences. It also will enable our last session to coincide with Or Emet’s Annual Meeting, making it easier for parents to participate in decisions about our community’s future directions, leadership, and budget.

If you are a JCS parent, please complete the registration form online at JCSregister.oremet.org. If you prefer a paper form, let me know (at school-1@oremet.org). Be sure to answer the last questions about skills, interests, topics, or experiences you would like to share with your child’s JCS class. We draw from this and may contact you to help strengthen connections with your child’s groups — as requested by many parents in last spring’s survey.

Even on Zoom, we set a welcoming tone, and are happy to have visitors join us with children who may be interested in our Jewish Cultural School. If you or someone you know might be interested, contact me and it will be my pleasure to make the arrangements.

The pandemic caused last year to end on an unexpected note and this year will begin differently than ever before. What remains the same, however, is the warmth exchanged among families, our teachers’ enthusiasm in presenting Jewish culture, heritage and values to their students through a humanistic lens, and the strength of a community we build together. If these times have told us anything, it is that community is not something to take for granted. I look forward to continuing to build that community with all of you in the months ahead.

For more information about Or Emet’s Jewish Cultural School, visit the School Blog on the Or Emet website oremet.org. To visit and/or for JCS-related questions, concerns, feedback, suggestions, contact Arty Dorman at school-1@oremet.org.
Today’s political climate is polarizing and encourages intolerance of people with different beliefs. Instead of just disagreeing, we label them as evil and of lesser worth. This dehumanizing way of thinking may have been sparked by our own holy books. In some circumstances, when someone else’s beliefs are against our morals, we can choose to distance ourselves from them to keep true to our beliefs. BUT, we can’t be afraid to acknowledge when something is wrong and stand up against it. John Lewis talked of the influence of Dr. Martin Luther King Junior. “[He] inspired me to stand up, to speak up, and speak out. And I got in the way, I got in trouble — good trouble, necessary trouble.”

Something that I found both interesting and strange was the repeated instruction to fear God throughout the Torah. Making sacrifices and tithes to God is to show your fear of God. The words love and fear are used together, and it made me wonder why they didn’t just say to respect him. I researched Jewish opinions and found that a common interpretation is that fear would keep you from committing sins and that love would have you praise and make sacrifices to Him. The Torah also says to fear your father and mother. I don’t think a fear-based dynamic is healthy in a family or in leaders. Rabbi Jack Abramowitz offers this interpretation. “We show our ‘fears’ of them through the things we don’t do. We don’t contradict them. We don’t sit in their designated places. The Torah does not command us, however, to hide under the bed when our parents come home. One ‘fears’ a serial killer. What we do to our parents is show deference.” Showing respect and making conscientious decisions are represented as fear. I think that we should do things because we know that they are right and not because we are afraid of the punishment by God, or the government.

My Torah portion illustrates a social contract that is supposed to create moral and political obligations for everyone in society. I also think that it displays punitive rules that are unfair and don’t fit good human morals. We need to stand up against tyrannizing rules even though we may be afraid of the punishment.

*Sascha Katzung’s Commentary: A Blessing and a Curse*

My Torah portion is Re’eh from Deuteronomy. It takes place as the Israelites are about to enter the promised land. Through Moses, God gives them a list of rules, both “a blessing and a curse,” ranging from instructions on how to keep kosher, proper procedures to borrow money and tithe, and how to sacrifice animals and other offerings to God.

Morals that are agreed on can benefit society and push people to be better. One law required tithing, giving a portion of crops, oil, food and livestock to God, the Temple, and the community. Tithing requires us to give to people in need in our communities, building unity and connecting people. Rules about how we treat our environment and our neighbors promote compassion in our society.

Though some of the rules in this parsha are altruistic and help society, other laws are disturbing. They instruct the Israelites to kill those who believe in more than one god and destroy their homes and places of worship, a reflection of the push against polytheism at the time. (Deut. 12:2). A prophet, or a dreamer, who interprets God’s word incorrectly or strays from God’s word is to be immediately put to death (Deut.13:6), and if a mother, a friend, or a brother should share false words with you, “you shall stone him to death” (Deut. 13:11). All of this is horrible and inhumane. A humanistic response to a rule which doesn’t fit our morals, even one dictated by a political or religious leader, would be to resist and protest against injustice.

At each b mitzvah, the candidate delivers their commentary and reflections on the weekly Torah portion (parsha) and also does an individual research project. Sascha’s project was Chagall: Representations of Jewish Life and Community.

*Editor’s note: This article was edited for length.*
Or Emet members are welcome to join the Social Justice/Social Action Committee and offer input on activities and issues.

**St. Stephen’s dinners**
COVID-19 has required St. Stephen’s to temporarily suspend dinners provided and served by community groups such as Or Emet. We’ve had a volunteer commitment to St. Stephen’s for several years and hope to resume when it is safe to do so.

**Pitching in at Second Harvest Heartland to Ease Hunger Has Changed**
For the past several years, Or Emet members, including children age eight and over, have, as a group, bagged produce and boxed groceries for distribution by Second Harvest Heartland. COVID-19 has changed Second Harvest Heartland’s volunteer policies. They are now taking small numbers of volunteers over 18 years. Under current conditions, we won’t organize an Or Emet group but those interested should sign up on their own. Check out COVID-related volunteer guidelines before signing up at www.2harvest.org/get-involved/volunteer/.

**Stocking the Shelves**  
*by Susan Weinberg based on an interview with Risa Cohen*
On July 12th, Or Emet did a food drive to benefit Northpoint Food Shelf, a holistic provider of health and social services. Accessibility and being culturally responsive is an important part of their philosophy and thus a good fit for Or Emet.

Risa Cohen spearheaded this effort and saw it to a very successful conclusion, contributing 80 bags of food along with materials for household needs. After the George Floyd murder, Risa felt a need to do something concrete to help the affected community. That prompted her to initiate two successful food drives. With this experience, Risa then proposed the idea to Or Emet’s social justice committee.

I was impressed with both the energy and organizational skills that went into this project. Rather than everyone dropping food off at one location, the organizers looked at where Or Emet members lived and asked members who were centrally located to be drop-off points. In lieu of food, people could contribute money for food purchases. Risa took her son Luc along with her to purchase the food and engaged him in this effort.

Risa also created a video which you can watch [here](#). She wanted to create a sense of what the community looked like after the damage, so she began by getting footage of the community. She realized that she needed to include a human dimension as well of those who might use food shelves, but she initially felt a bit shy about approaching people. Those barriers quickly fell aside and curiosity and passion took over as she interviewed neighborhood people about their challenges in getting food.

Upon viewing the video, Stuart Iseminger, Northpoint Food Program manager, replied, “This video is amazing and moving and brought a tear to my eye. It was hard to see the streetscape again and relive those scary days. However, the video also shows how resilient this community is — and how we need one another. Bless you and your congregation for building community and helping us out.”
There’s Something New about Caring Circle!

Shana Tanenbaum is now leading Caring Circle Committee with great energy and new ideas! While Caring Circle continues to send out cards to members in times of illness, loss, and crisis, the Covid-19 pandemic has created new challenges and new needs for members. Or Emet wants to meet those challenges and provide assistance to members. We have members willing to bring food and other necessities to those of our congregation who cannot otherwise obtain these supplies. Shana will create a meal train for those who would benefit from food delivery to their home (e.g., illness, new baby). Strict safety guidelines will be followed.

Or Emet Caring Circle is committed to staying in touch with members via phone, especially those who live alone. Shana is embarking on a program to contact every member to say hello, check in, see if they are able to access our Zoom programs, and ask if there are ways we can help members during this difficult time.

Remember to contact Faith (faitho711@aol.com) to send out cards for illness, loss or other crises. Contact Shana (612-310-1490 or shana.tanenbaum@gmail.com) for meal train information.

And, be expecting Shana’s call to see how you are doing!

We are the Caring Circle Committee:
Shana Tanenbaum, Eva Rose Cohen, Janet Mayer, Faith Oremland

Donations

In memory of Dr. Harold Londer to the Harold Londer Memorial Fund

— Or Emet contributors
Joan and David Barnett
Diana Bergren
Scott Chazdon
Carrie Dickson
Arty Dorman
Tina Edstam
Margo and David Fox
Carol and Richard Logan
Janet Mayer and Paul Petzschke
Sharon and Alan Miller
David Musicant
Faith and Steven Oremland
Bruce Pomerantz
Natalie Rosinsky and Don Larsson
Muriel Sterne
Susan Weinberg
Molly Wilbur-Cohen
David Zarkin

Dr. Londer was also treasured by many people beyond the Or Emet community. We would like to extend our deep appreciation to all who contributed to acknowledge and preserve his memory.

~ May his memory be a blessing ~

Thank you!

To celebrate Sascha Katzung’s b mitzvah
Joan and David Barnett

For the Or Emet Passover Seder
Margo and David Fox

To celebrate the birth of Juniper Lillian Fine, daughter of Seth and Shelly Fine
Janet Mayer and Paul Petzschke
Joan and David Barnett
Seth and Shelly Fine welcomed their daughter Juniper Lillian Fine on July 4.

Juniper joins big brother, Leo (14 years old on the 5th) in Independence Day birth celebrations! Her big sisters are JCS students, Neva (12) and Ilsa (9).

New Member Welcome

Jeff Pipes and Florence Wong have retired to a small farm near Northfield after running a winery in California for 20+ years. They have two daughters: Grace is attending Columbia University Medical School, and Gwen recently graduated from Cornell University and will start a graduate program in soil science at Cornell.

Rachel Wexelbaum was awarded St. Cloud State University’s Inter Faculty Organization’s James Eric Chalgren Award. The award recognizes Rachel’s role in improving the professional lives of LGBTQ+ faculty through leadership and activism at the campus and statewide level. Rachel is currently job hunting after being laid off. She describes herself as a “librarian-at-large, independent scholar, writer, researcher, teacher, mentor, Wikimedian,” and more.

Susan Weinberg is part of a virtual show of the Jewish Artists Lab titled Muddy Waters: Climate Change, the Environment and What We Can Learn from Jewish Texts. The Lab met throughout the year exploring this topic and then produced artwork on the theme. It is housed virtually at the Sabes JCC and you can view the show here. Susan developed a body of work on the theme which you can find on her website.

Susan also continues to be active in the genealogy community and was invited by the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS) to present two lectures to the recent annual conference, now virtual. Susan is president of the Minnesota Jewish Genealogical Society and speaks frequently on genealogy-related topics.

Laura Melnick was featured in an August 27 StarTribune Variety section front page article “Seeds of Creation.” Laura has entered crop art at the MN State Fair for over 20 years and won more than 30 ribbons including eight Best In Show. During this time, crop art entries have doubled. Mark Dahlager, Laura’s husband, is also a crop artist. With cancellation of the 2020 State Fair, crop art will be displayed in a virtual showcase, and no ribbons will be awarded.

B Mitzvah Update

COVID-19-related complications have influenced Or Emet’s 2020 b mitzvah celebrations.

— Sascha Katzung celebrated her b mitzvah on August 15 with a highly successful outdoor event (page 6).
— Eliana Jurgemeyer’s b mitzvah is planned for June 12, 2021.
— Gaian Geldner’s b mitzvah will happen in 2021.
**SHABBAT PROGRAMS**

**Friday, October 9 at 7:30 pm**
Program: The Future of Democracy in America Is on the Ballot in November  
Presenter: Eric Black, award-winning columnist for MinnPost

**Friday, November 13 at 7:30 pm**
Program: Creative Journeys and Transformations  
Presenter: Marcela Lorca, Creative Director of Ten Thousand Things Theatre, former movement director at the Guthrie, émigrée from Chile

**SATURDAY, December 19 at 10:00 am**
Program: What Happened in the 2020 Election and Why It Matters  
Presenter: David Schultz, Hamline University Professor of Political Science, Professor in Hamline and U of MN Schools of Law

**SUNDAY PROGRAMS**

**Sunday, September 13 | 10:00 am - 12:30 pm**
Program: Recognizing and Avoiding Fraud and Scams  
Presenter: Bill Raker, retired CEO of Firefly Federal Credit Union, AARP Fraud Watch Network presenter

**Sunday, October 4 | 10:00 am - 12:30 pm**
Program: A College Movement Supporting Israel  
Presenter: Ilan Sinelnikov or an alternate leader of Students Supporting Israel (SSI). SSI is a pro-Israel student movement with 50 chapters across universities in North America.

**Sunday, November 8 | 10:00 am - 12:30 pm**
Program and Presenter: TBA

**Sunday, December 6 | 10:00 am - 12:30 pm**
Program and Presenter: TBA

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**Special Events / September - December 2020**

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Or Emet-sponsored volunteer and in-person events have been suspended due to COVID-19.

**High Holiday Services**
Or Emet’s High Holiday service schedule is on the next page

**St. Stephen’s dinners**
Due to COVID-19 Or Emet-provided dinners are on hold. Additional information is on page 10.

**Hanukkah Party**
Saturday, December 12 / 5:00 - 7:30 pm  
An online event — Details will be available later.
All High Holiday Services will be offered via the Zoom platform with advance registration. Information will be available on oremet.org calendar.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rosh Hashanah Service</strong></td>
<td>Friday, September 18</td>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Kol Nidre Service</strong></td>
<td>Sunday, September 27</td>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Rosh Hashanah Tashlich Service</strong></td>
<td>Saturday, September 19</td>
<td>10:30 am</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Yom Kippur Service</strong></td>
<td>Monday, September 28</td>
<td>4:00 pm</td>
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In keeping with High Holiday tradition, Or Emet will collect non-perishable food and personal hygiene items during the High Holidays. Donated items will be shared with Hallie Q. Brown Community Center for distribution to those in need. Details will be shared later.