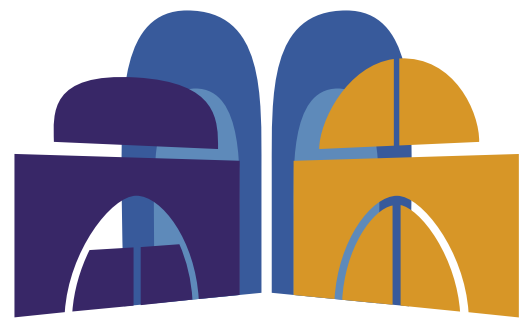




# Synagogue Council



was there in

# 2020-2021

Synagogue Council  
of Massachusetts



[www.synagoguecouncil.org](http://www.synagoguecouncil.org)

The Synagogue Council of Massachusetts builds connections among individuals and communities to promote mutual understanding and respect for Jewish diversity. Synagogue Council serves and strengthens congregations spanning the spectrum of Jewish belief and practice and thereby promotes Jewish unity and pluralism.

# Supporting Congregations During the Pandemic

## What Makes This Year Different from All Other Years? High Holiday Planning

JULY 21, 2020

Zoom meetings with clergy of various denominations: Rabbi Yaacov Jaffe (Maimonides Kehillah, Brookline), Rabbi Daniel Berman (Temple Reyim, Newton), and Rabbi Valerie Cohen (Temple Emanuel Sinai, Worcester).

Participants: 78

## What Makes This Year Different from All Other Years? High Holiday Planning: On-Line Edition

AUGUST 4, 2020

Zoom meetings with panel: Rabbi Daniel Liben (Temple Israel, Natick), Rabbi Rachel Gurevitz (Bnai Shalom, Westborough), and Cantor Lorel Zar-Kessler (Beth El, Sudbury).

Participants: 73

## Managing Expectations and Coping with Uncertainty

AUGUST 19, 2020

Zoom program for Rabbis and Congregation Presidents, facilitated by Rabbi Beth Naditch, Hebrew Senior Life.

Participants: 39

## Successful Fundraising During a Pandemic

JULY 28 – 29, 2020

Zoom open workshop with Lee Rosenfield, President of Rosenfield Consulting, LLC. Sixteen congregations followed up with individual consultations with Lee.

Participants: 57

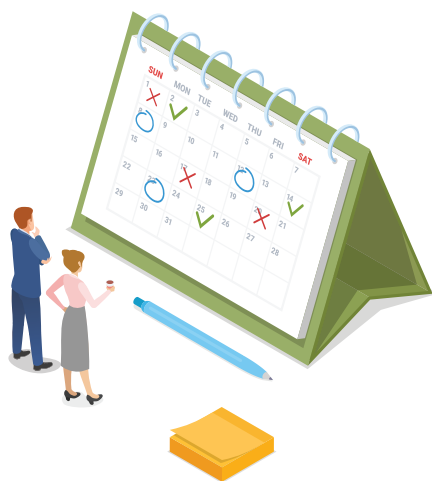


## Preparing for the High Holidays: Especially for Small Congregations

AUGUST 31, 2020

Leveraging the benefits of being a small congregation during these unusual times and sharing approaches to the challenges in High Holy Day planning.

Participants: 22



## COVID-19 Indoor Air Quality Best Practices & Utility Con\$ervation Cost Reduction Action Steps for Houses of Worship

OCTOBER 29 & NOVEMBER 2, 2020

Zoom meetings by Curt M. Freedman, Adjunct Professor of Energy Management and Alternative Energy at Western New England University (Springfield, MA), Certified Energy Manager (CEM), and Registered Professional Engineer.

Participants: 59

## Harvesting Opportunity from the Pandemic.

NOVEMBER 12, 2020 | 12PM & 8 PM

Interactive sessions for Rabbis and Executive Committee members, with Daniel Langenthal, MA in Jewish Professional Leadership (Brandeis University).

Participants: 35



## Synagogue Security: What Should Be Our Current Concerns?

JANUARY 14, 2021

Webinar presentation by Jeremy Yamin, Associate Vice President and Director of Security and Operations, and Dan Levenson, Deputy Director for Communal Security, CJP.

Participants: 131



## Strengthening the Rabbi-President Relationship

**MAY 23 & 27, 2021**

Zoom open workshops facilitated by Daniel Langenthal followed by individual consultation sessions with Daniel for 20 congregations.

Participants: 35

## Considerations for Gathering Safely

**JUNE 22, 2021**

Webinar with Dr. Bruce Weinstock, MD MPH, Pediatric Emergency Physician at Massachusetts General Hospital and Mass General Brigham Salem Hospital and Instructor at Harvard Medical School.

Participants: 208

## Zooming for Jewish Disability Inclusion

**JUNE 27, 2021**

A panel based event featuring Rebecca Redner, Rivka Solomon, Jacob Speaks and Rabbi Ben Weiner (Jewish Community of Amherst).

Participants: 165

## SUPPORTING LEADERSHIP

### Arnold Zaff, z"l Memorial Presidents' Roundtable

Facilitated by Daniel Langenthal

*Synagogue presidents gather for roundtables on the first and third Thursday of each month. While first Thursday roundtables are unthemed, meetings on the third Thursday have themes including:*

**February 18, 2021**

*"How Will We Know When It's Safe To Reopen?"*

**March 18, 2021**

*"Managing Transitions"*

**April 15, 2021**

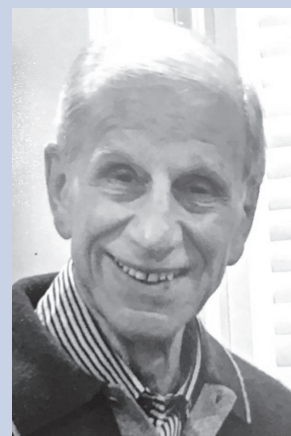
*"Learning From Success"*

**May 20, 2021**

*"Hybrid Events: Ideas For Making Them Compelling For All Participants Both On-Line and In-Person"*

**June 17, 2021**

*"Gathering In Person: Managing Expectations and Dealing With Push-Back"*



Arnold Zaff, z"l

## CONNECTING WITH ISRAEL

### Virtual Trip to Israel co-sponsored with JNF

**NOVEMBER 16 – 20, 2020**

Four-evening virtual tour, guided by Dana Klein, Israel Programs Admissions Director for JNF, and Mordecai Cohen, professional tour guide and faculty member of the Alexander Muss High School in Israel.

Participants: 25

## PRESERVING SACRED TREASURES

### Ma'avar (on-going)

Finding homes for the sacred objects of congregations that are closing, merging, expanding, or facing other major changes.

## SUPPORTING LEARNING

### Daf Yomi (on-going)

Led by Dr. Jesse Hefter, continuing to meet weekly via Zoom, studying tractates of the Babylonian Talmud according to the international Daf Yomi program schedule.



## HONORING OUR HEROES OF THE PANDEMIC

### Virtual Gala

DECEMBER 3, 2020

#### Keynote speaker:

Dr. Ron Wolfson

*"It's All About Relationships"*

We honored 60 nominees—those who made a difference in their communities during the pandemic. Honorees included rabbis, administrators, teachers, technical supports and other volunteers.

Recognition of the three AREV grant awardees for 2020.

Participants: 364



Dr. Ron Wolfson

## SUPPORTING NEW INITIATIVES

### Anita Redner, z"l Empowerment Vehicle (AREV)

A grant making initiative that incubates programs supporting young leadership, female leadership and underserved populations. This endeavor, in memory of Anita Redner, is consonant with our mission to support congregations as vital centers of Jewish life.



Anita Redner, z"l

#### 4 grants out of 22 applicants awarded to congregations in 2021:

1. **Congregation Ahavas Achim** (Independent), Newburyport: Learn, Grow and Thrive at Congregation Ahavas Achim.
2. **Congregation Eitz Chayim** (Independent), Cambridge: Development of a Diverse Congregational Leadership.
3. **Temple Ohabei Shalom** (URJ), Brookline: Temple Racial Justice Initiative.
4. **Congregation Beth Israel** (USCJ), Worcester: BING! Beth Israel Next Generation.

## PLANNING AHEAD

### Strategic Planning

Survey of mailing list: 244 responses

Interviews with influencers: 18

Consultation with Lee Rosenfield

Deliberations on new programs for growth:

- Jewish Leadership Academy
- Enhanced Technology and Support for Multi-Access Programming
- Interactive Synagogue Search Tool

## SUPPORTING K'LAL YISRAEL

### Connie Spear Birnbaum Memorial Lecture



#### Black-Jewish Celebration of the 55th Anniversary of the Voting Rights Act

AUGUST 6, 2020

SCM joined in promoting this program as the Connie Spear Birnbaum lecture for 2020. The 2021 lecture was once again hosted by the Synagogue Council.

### 18th Annual Connie Spear Birnbaum Memorial Lecture

MAY 2, 2021

Yossi Klein Halevi, interviewed by Ben Birnbaum, *"Holding the Jewish Center"*.

Retrospective of the history of the lectureship and its (and Connie's) association with Synagogue Council.

Participants: More than 505 registered.



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Events from July 2020 - June 2021