



FIRST HEBREW CONGREGATION OF SOUTH HAVEN NEWSLETTER

Connecting Tradition. Building Community. Enriching Lives.

SIVAN/TAMMUZ 5786 | AUGUST 2026

Dear Friends,

Welcome to August in South Haven.

This month's message is all about gratitude. We want to thank so many wonderful volunteers who have given their time and support to the synagogue and its ongoing summer activities. I am going to try to include everyone but if I miss someone, please drop me a line so that I may include his or her name in next month's message.

We started a new tradition this past June and I hope more congregational members will get involved in future years. Under the leadership of Shelley Sommerfeld and the hard work from Renee and David Kaplan and others, the kitchen has been extensively cleaned and restocked with new cooking tools. Shelley and Karen Riffer-Reinert served as hostesses for our first ever kitchen shower. Many thanks to Trevor Slom, Kim and Lou Price, Debbie Zuckerman, Debbie Erlich, Linda and Alan Cohen, Julie Rubin, Michelle Bitoun, Renee Kaplan, Fran Raffel, Sharona Shapiro, Shelley Sommerfeld, Carrie Kaplan and Karen Riffer-Reinert for outfitting our kitchen this summer. Our wishlist is on Amazon if anyone else would like to help with this endeavor.

We've had quite a spectacular Friday Kabbalat Shabbat line up of visiting

Rabbis this summer and all of them, Rabbi Anita Silvert, Rabbi Joe Klein and Rabbi Ellen Dreyfus have enriched our Shabbat experiences in ways that we can not even measure. I also want to give my heartfelt thanks to Lou Price and Sharona Shapiro for stepping in when needed and express appreciation to our wonderful violinist Cheryl Warren. Lenore and Joel Wineberg and Nina Bell were this summer's oneg sponsors. Shabbat morning orthodox services under the leadership of Rickey Rothner continue to be an integral part of our summer offerings. A chat group has been organized to ensure that each Saturday morning has a minyan. If you'd like to be added to the chat group, please email firsthebrewcong@gmail.com and reference Rickey Rothner. In addition, Carol Silverman has organized a rotation of volunteers to help provide a kiddush following services. Saturday morning services will continue through the last weekend in August. Some of you may know that we also offered a Tot Shabbat experience. We welcomed nine youngsters this past Saturday afternoon during our final session for this season. Many thanks to Robin Gold, Lenore



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Wineberg and Sharona Shapiro for making sure our community's littles have opportunities to enjoy shabbat with stories, songs and popsicles.

Renee and David Kaplan are this year's sponsor of Rabbi Silver's upcoming educational program (this Sunday beginning at 10:30 am) "Leaving Eden When Art and Midrash Connect". Yes... we are serving bagels and lox. And speaking of lox- This year's Lox Box was a success. Many thanks to Barry Fidelman, Renee and David Kaplan, Shelley Sommerfeld and Lou Price for making sure that everyone could enjoy this year's offerings. David Kaplan has spearheaded an online adult learning program which members can easily access and Rabbi Mordechai Haller from Chabad of Kalamazoo has offered in person classes as well.

This summer's programming also included a Celebrate Israel evening at which we welcomed six young Israelis. Many thanks to the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit for this great opportunity to hear about their future hopes and dreams. Over 100 attendees from Lily of the Valley Church in Covert, St Joseph's Temple B'nai Shalom, First Hebrew Congregation of South Haven and locals attended our screening of Old Heart. We very much appreciate that Roger Rapoport from Muskegon's Jewish community and producer of the film brought this story to our attention. Our synagogue has been acknowledged as a supporter of a traveling Anne Frank teen focused

public schools exhibit in Allegan County. More information will be forthcoming as plans are in formation to expand our engagement in the future. And many thanks to Muskegon's Congregation B'nai Israel's rabbi, Rachel Van Dyke and congregational members who joined a South Haven delegation for a lovely potluck brunch and visit to Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park in late July.

2026 Cocktail party co-chairs: Rose and Steve Sallen, Allen Shechtman and Stephen Wright, Carol Silverman and Rickey Rothner and Lenore and Joel Wineberg are working with me and my wife Julie to make sure this year's party is a success. If you haven't made your reservation, please do so in the next few days! You don't want to miss it. (Bonus- I'm offering a private tour of my antique advertising collection.)

Visit our website which has all of our upcoming programming listed. You can also become or renew your membership on-line or via the link below. Many thanks to Larry Hoffman, Dan Rosen, and David Kaplan for their hours of work in making sure we receive the information we need through our website and our MailChimp alerts.

We are saddened to announce that long time First Hebrew Congregation member and

Board of Directors member, Michael "Chicago Mike" Slotnick passed away on July 13th. May his memory be a blessing.

Finally, I want you to know how hard working our board members are- making sure that the building is kept up, that we have security and cleaning crews and great program and educational offerings. I'm excited about next year's plans for First Hebrew Congregation's 100th anniversary year and want to acknowledge leaders like Dana Hullinger, Debbie Ehrlich, Vicki Freedman and John Marcotte who are working on this project. Stay tuned about a Facebook page being launched with Dan Rosen's help and an oral history compilation from Joe Ashen and Barry Fidelman. Volunteers are very welcome to get involved. Please reach out. I'd love to have you help shape our community's next 100 years!

It's been an exciting summer. And it's only August. Enjoy the remaining days of summer. Hope to see you soon.

B'Shalom,

Remey Rubin, President
First Hebrew Congregation of
South Haven