



CAMPAIGN UPDATE!



Introduction to Hineynu

Excerpts from Rabbi Melman's Hineynu Kickoff Celebration remarks:

As the Children of Israel approached the Yovel, their 50th - Jubilee - year, they were reminded in the Torah, as we are today, to take responsibility for what is ours. We are reminded to take responsibility for, and to take care of, one another - our community - our synagogue home.

Our congregants have a history of embracing this responsibility and as a result, over the last 50 years, CBS has become a leader in the Conservative Movement, known for fantastic programming and generous community service.



As we look ahead to the next fifty years in the life of Congregation Beth Shalom, we do so with the recognition that we now exist in perpetually changing times and our Congregation Beth Shalom will need to continually evolve over the next half century. Change and innovation will be the constants of our modern 21st Century congregation.

Fifty years ago, when a group of families came together to found Congregation Beth Shalom, needs and expectations were, for the most part, consistent among the membership. Now, as we have matured and added new members with diverse needs, we must learn how to grow and evolve to meet these additional expectations, as well as those that will inevitably surface in the next 50 years. The future vitality of our congregational community is directly tied to our ability to remain relevant to multiple generations. "One size no longer fits all."

Like our founders and other members have done at critical times in our history, we must think of those who will follow us, and work together as a community to secure our and their futures. Hineynu - Here we are! Strong and committed, determined to succeed. Not just for us, not just for OUR children and grandchildren, but for all the families in the future who will be searching for a place where they can discover, explore, and practice their Judaism. They deserve the same good fortune that all of us here at CBS experience. THEY DESERVE BETH SHALOM! And we are the ones who can make that happen.

My favorite Jewish teaching speaks volumes at this moment. **אם אין אָני לִי, מִי לִי**. Hillel would say: If I am not for myself, who will be for me? **וְכִשְׁאֲנִי לְעַצְמִי, מֶה אָנִי**. If I am for myself alone, what am I? **וְאִם לֹא עַכְשָׁיו, אֵימָתַי** And if not now when!

-Rabbi Aaron Melman

On Sunday, June 11, over 200 people attended a festive celebration, marking the beginning of the congregational phase of our Endowment Campaign. The program was highlighted by passionate members of our CBS community extolling the importance of this campaign and how integral our congregation is to the greater Chicago Jewish community. Some excerpts of their inspiring words are throughout our first campaign newsletter. Stay tuned for more campaign updates in the coming months.

My children were influenced by many of you in the halls, by your gentle embraces and your examples of what it means to be active members of a shul.

...The fact that my children have Judaism at their core is in large part thanks to their being brought up here at CBS, and Susan and I are grateful to you.

We all have this opportunity to influence the generations if CBS is thriving. More of your families need to take advantage of this and more families outside of CBS need to be made aware of what CBS can mean to their family's life.

Our campaign is more than building rooms, fixing structures, or paying bills. Rather it is about maintaining our essential core, what keeps CBS vibrant and relevant. It is about keeping the neshama of CBS healthy so we and others can truly stand the test of time and, like our homeland Israel, be a constant light in the lives of generations of Jewish families and influence the world around us for good.

-Cantor Steven Stoehr



After attending the United Synagogue sessions and, more importantly, assessing the long range future of CBS, it became abundantly clear that it was imperative we take steps now, while we are still a strong and successful congregation, to build an endowment to secure the future of our synagogue.

Additionally, we have determined that there are a number of areas of the building that require our attention to ensure the comfort and safety of all when they are inside these walls...

Among the most special elements of our community is the talent, commitment, and generosity of our members. More than 70 people have said Hineyni and volunteered to serve on our campaign committee.

-Brad Shaps, Campaign Co-Chair

We are grateful to all those who joined us for a truly special evening of celebration!

In the coming year, we will be contacting all members to talk about CBS, the importance of the campaign and how each family can be an integral part of its success. Thank you in advance for taking our calls and welcoming us into your homes for these vital conversations.

We are all so blessed to be members of such a vital and warm synagogue whose leadership works to address the needs of all its members. It is imperative that we honor the efforts and vision of our founders and earliest leaders... They had no idea who would be part of the synagogue 50 years later... All they knew for sure was they wanted their dream, a Conservative synagogue whose existence would provide a spiritual home for generations to come, as well as being a formidable voice in the movement as a whole. A half century later, it is our turn to ensure that CBS will be here so that future generations of families can feel connected to and inspired by Judaism within these walls.

-Lily Zoberman, Campaign Co-Chair



The Hineynu Campaign seeks to address two major challenges facing CBS today. The first is to build an endowment that can meet the identified challenges of an aging membership and declining affiliation rates as well as to provide a new revenue stream to support and develop new programs and services while assuring that CBS remains affordable to all. In short, a well-funded endowment will provide CBS with long-term financial stability.

The second aspect of the campaign is to address the physical needs of our building and campus. 16 of our 17 air conditioning units are operating well beyond their projected lifetime, our parking lot is in serious need of repaving, and our flat roof requires significant repairs or replacement. These are not sexy projects, but they are critical elements of having a fully functional safe and secure facility...

50 years ago today the treaty ending the 6 Day War was signed. I have to believe that was an incredibly energizing time for our 17 founding families about to launch their dream that has become our reality. In these challenging and uncertain times, we need to recapture and channel the energy and optimism of that time for the future. You are here today because CBS is an integral part of your family and your life. Your participation in Hineynu guarantees that opportunity for those who will follow us. Our founders gave CBS life. You can help make that life eternal.

-Larry Grossman

If you have question about the Hineynu Campaign or would like more information, please contact one of our Campaign Co-Chairs: Brad Shaps or Lily Zoberman.

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We are pleased to honor the initial donors to our Hineynu Campaign. Their support is an expression of what Congregation Beth Shalom – and the greater Jewish community – means to them. We are grateful to them for taking the lead in ensuring our future, and we invite you to join them in this sacred responsibility.

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