



# Bar Mitzvah of Shawn Perry Levinson

פסח שמואל

April 30, 2022  
29<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, 5782  
*Parshat Kedoshim*

**Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation**  
Rabbi Fred Scherlinder Dobb | Rabbi Hazzan Rachel Hersh

## The Meaning of Bar Mitzvah

Jewish children become bar/bat mitzvah (literally, children of commandment) at age 13, when they take on the responsibilities and privileges of membership in the Jewish community. Since the 14<sup>th</sup> century, this transition to adulthood for Jewish boys has been marked by a ceremony in which the boy is called to read from the Torah. Reconstructionist Judaism was the first branch of Judaism to extend this tradition to girls, beginning in 1922.

## Adat Shalom ~ Our Synagogue

Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation was founded in 1987. The name means "Community of Peace." Many of the design elements of the synagogue relate to themes in Jewish history. The pillars and pools at the building's entrance recall King Solomon's temple. The wooden vaulting in the sanctuary are suggestive of the synagogues of Eastern Europe. The tented ceiling wraps the entire congregation in a tallit (Jewish prayer shawl).

## Reconstructionist Judaism

Reconstructionist Judaism, founded in the early 20th century by Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan, views Judaism as an "evolving, religious, civilization" where "tradition has a voice, but not a veto." Reconstructionist communities share and create *new ways of being Jewish* to connect us to the divine and ensure our lives are filled with purpose. This uniquely American movement of Judaism holds these basic beliefs about our Jewish civilization: Judaism changes throughout history; We hold diverse ideas about God, but we share an emphasis on godliness; Jews are not a 'chosen people' (we affirm the uniqueness of the Jewish people and its heritage among the peoples of the world; this implies no sense of superiority); Judaism should be inclusive and egalitarian; The driving force behind Judaism is belonging rather than believing (i.e., the primary way of expressing oneself as a Jew is to see oneself as a member of the Jewish people); Judaism and working for social justice are inseparable; and, The State of Israel is vital to Jewish cultural and spiritual survival.

## Honors

|                                                                          |                                                                          |                                                                                 |                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Parents' Blessings &amp; Presentation of Tallit</b>                   | Dawn & Andy Levinson                                                     | <b>Hagbah &amp; G'lilah</b>                                                     | Matt Biel & Roshana Cohen, Friends and Congregants |
| <b>Opening the Ark</b>                                                   | Aunt Jenna Breitstein, Jacob and Sammy, Cousins, & Aunt Francine Rothman | <b>Haftarah: Amos 9:7-11</b>                                                    | Shawn Levinson                                     |
| <b>First Aliyah: Leviticus 19:32-37</b><br>Member<br><b>Torah Reader</b> | Adat Shalom Community<br>Kayla Niles                                     | <b>D'var Torah</b>                                                              | Shawn Levinson                                     |
| <b>Second Aliyah: Leviticus 20:1-5</b><br><b>Torah Reader</b>            | Pam Foti, Donna & Richard Levinson, Grandparents<br>Rabbi Rachel Hersh   | <b>Poem: Out of the Strong Sweetness - 1959,</b><br><b>By Charles Reznikoff</b> | Aunt Susan Foti                                    |
| <b>Third Aliyah Leviticus 20:6-10</b><br><b>Torah Reader</b>             | Dawn & Andy Levinson, Parents<br>Rabbi Fred Scherlinder Dobb             | <b>Closing the Ark</b>                                                          | Uncle Marc & Aunt Debbie Levinson                  |
| <b>Maftir Aliyah Leviticus 20:25-27</b><br><b>Torah Reader</b>           | Shawn Levinson<br>Shawn Levinson                                         | <b>Etz Chayim</b>                                                               | Shawn & Camp Havaya Friends                        |
|                                                                          |                                                                          | <b>Alienu</b>                                                                   | Bradley Levinson, Brother                          |
|                                                                          |                                                                          | <b>Kiddush</b>                                                                  | Shawn Levinson                                     |

## In Remembrance, L'dor V'dor

On this sacred day, we especially think about our links to the past. We remember with love: Shawn's maternal grandfather, Tom Foti; paternal great-grandparents, Pearl and Max Margolies, and Faye and Bernie Levinson; and Shawn's maternal great-grandparents, Bela and Edith Foti, and Audrey and Leonard Samit. We also remember Shawn's Great-Uncles, George Foti and Bernie Rothman. Shawn was named for great-great-grandfather Sam Wilen and great-grandmother Pearl.

## A Special Tallit (Jewish prayer shawl)

We are blessed to have the tallit of Shawn's paternal great-great-grandfather Abraham Pinchuk here today. It was from his bar mitzvah in Russia in 1894. We will first wrap Shawn in this special connection to his Jewish past, then wrap him in his new tallit from his grandparents, the path to his future.

## Shawn's Tikkun Olam Project

*Tikkun Olam* means 'repairing the world' through social action. Shawn has been very committed to bringing food to the hungry. He has volunteered at local food banks, bagging the food, handing it out to those in need, and helping to load it into their cars.

## We wish to say thanks to...

- Rabbi Fred and Rabbi Hazzan Rachel Hersh for their guidance and inspiration as we prepared for this special day.
- Rabbi Betsy Roth, Shawn's Hebrew tutor, for many years of extraordinary patience, good humor, wisdom, love and support.
- Pam Sommers, Michael Becker and the many other teachers who have contributed to Shawn's Jewish education at Adat Shalom.
- Rena Milchberg, friend and Executive Director and Sarah Herman at Adat Shalom for their support preparing for this special day.
- The Maintenance Staff for preparing the building for today's service and the oneg lunch to follow.
- Our family, friends, and the Adat Shalom community, for your help and encouragement, and for sharing in this joyous occasion.