



# BEKI Annual Meeting

June 22, 2026

# Agenda

- Welcome
- D'var Torah
- Year in review: Committee reports
- Treasurer report
- 2026-2027 Board of Directors slate
- Engagement grant opportunity
- Presidential Updates

# Year in Review: Committee Reports

# Sisterhood

– submitted by Jesse Palumbo, Sisterhood Treasurer

**Sisterhood members** and the **Gift shop** are pleased to donate **\$2,000 for Youth education and activities**.

**A special thank you to outgoing Sisterhood President Mimi Glenn for years of leadership, always with an educational focus on Israel and Jewish life.**

## **2025-2026 Highlights:**

- Gift shop for beautiful Judaica gifts, educational books & fun toys
- The pre-Rosh Hashana program “How bees make honey” (with CT Agricultural Station)
- Dinner & program: “Neurodiversity” Sara Silverman & Lana Gad
- JHS Movie “9to5: The Story of a Movement”, BEKI women’s experiences
- Conversation with Authors’ series, interviews by Karen Kassap
- Day trip & tour of the Yiddish Museum in Amherst, MA
- Yellow candles provided to light for Holocaust Memorial Day
- Annual Donation for WLCJ education programs and JTS

**Sisterhood Board:** Co-presidents: Harriet Friedman & Karen Kassap. Past President: Mimi Glenn. Treasurer: Jessey Palumbo. Advisor: Marjorie Wiener. Gift shop/ Author Series/ Programs: Harriet, Karen, Tema.

BEKI Sisterhood is an affiliate of Women’s League of Conservative Judaism.

# Art Committee

– submitted by Helen Rosenberg, Chair

Held several exhibits:

- Summer 2025 (upstairs): Amy Reichert Judaica – in recognition of Amy’s Sanctuary Ark design
- Summer 2025 (downstairs): Helen Rosenberg retrospective
- High Holidays 2025: Member exhibit – ‘A Sense of Place’
- Winter 2026: Calligraphy featuring Jerise Fogel (who provided the lettering adjacent to the Ark in the renovated Sanctuary) and BEKI member Tani Cohen-Fraade
- Spring 2026: Heather Stoltz fabric art

# Education

– submitted by Rachel Doft, Board Liaison & Annie Norman-Schiff, Education Director

- Parents of BINA students started a committee which met frequently to give feedback and collaborate on a vision for the school.
- BINA hosted a Hanukkah party and a Purim carnival, both with large turnouts.
- BEKI held Friends and Family Shabbat in December 2025 and March 2026 (formerly BINA Shabbat).
  - BINA students participated in the Friday night service and enjoyed a communal Shabbat dinner.
- At BINA Graduation Shabbat, the oldest BINA students were presented with their own Lev Shalem siddur to use in their b'nai mitzvah studies.
- Youth Advisor Miri Rosenberg led well-attended Kadima events (4th-8th graders) at the trampoline park, ice skating rink, and cat cafe. BEKI USY (7th-12th graders) started a new series of teen Shabbat morning hangouts.
- Next year, BINA will adopt a new curriculum, developed by the Conservative synagogue Anshei Emet in Chicago.
- Also next year, with many autumn chagim falling on the weekend, we will host a series of special children's programs called "Shanah Tovah Sundays".
  - These holiday celebrations for children will help bridge the gap while BINA cannot meet in the classroom on Sundays for a full month.

# Green Team

– submitted by Rebecca Weiner and Sascha van Creveld, co-chairs

- New this year, BEKI Green Team:
  - Got new & used stainless flatware & got BINA & JYCM involved in kashering it, to reduce use of disposables
  - Worked with Peggy, Amer & Fatima to replace most plastic disposables with compostables
  - Got Board permission to join forces with Ezra on commercial composting
  - Added new recycling/composting station that has kept many pounds of compost/recyclables out of the waste stream
  - Completed JYCM bird-safe libraries initiative (BEKI kids in the news!)
- The BEKI Green team continues to:
  - Monitor BEKI solar array/seek other energy cost & efficiency savings
  - Work w/other committees to plan energy-efficient upgrades (thanks to House for mini-split planning!)
  - Manage compost/recycling programs for BEKI kitchen + herb garden + perennial HHD plantings
  - Organize our membership in Adamah & seek funding/advice on best practices from them
  - Provide adult advisors for local JYCM youth group & Ezra JCLC
  - Join JYCM/BEKI youth in JCLC T'u B'shevat & other annual lobbying

# Hesed

– submitted by Rob Lettick, Chair

- Provided welcome baskets to 14 new member units
- Provided meals to 3 families observing shiva
- Several families have also prepared meals for those observing shiva and due to illness
- Continue to call families who have experienced the loss of a loved one to offer a Hesed Shabbat meal and additional meals from congregants, plus rides and visits
- Always looking for new members to join the Hesed Committee and suggestions and help to improve the process
- In addition, could always use help setting up Lots of Helping Hands and/or a Meal Train.
  - This would really help outreaching when a congregant needs a ride, a visit, a meal due to illness etc.

# House

– submitted by Evan Wyner, Chair

- New lawn equipment for Amer
- Repairs to hallway lighting
- Carpet replacement is pending
- New windows for the basement, lobby, coatroom, and Rabbi's office
- Ordered new planters for security barriers to replace broken unit and fill gaps
- Regular elevator repairs
- Repaired soffit over exterior door to driveway

# Kiddush Committee – submitted by Ellen Cohen

- This is the second year that a full Kiddush Lunch has been served at BEKI every Shabbat, even on logistically-challenging weeks when Mini Kiddushes historically had been served.
- Last year's increase in the charge for sponsoring a full standard Kiddush lunch from \$320 to \$400 is currently covering costs.
- Leadership of our 4 kiddush teams has remained stable under dedicated team captains Jennifer Myer, Tema Leviter, Diana Firestone, Marge Wiener and Susan Epstein.
- Abby Fraade continues to coordinate sponsorships for Shabbat Kiddush Lunches and is also taking on sponsorship coordination for Mini Kiddushes.
- A big welcome to Eden Gerson, who is now shopping and coordinating set-up for Mini Kiddushes.
- Led by Jennifer Myer and Susan Epstein, the BEKI Baking Team continues to convene regularly in the BEKI kitchen to prepare a variety of delectable desserts for Kiddush lunches (and Purim bags), offsetting costs (and including chocolate!)
- Thanks to Sarah Berry's hard work, the BEKI herb garden is flourishing and enhancing our Kiddush meals.
- Becky May's recycling and composting efforts have significantly reduced our kitchen waste.
- Fatima and Amer continue to keep the kitchen and social hall organized and sparkling, ensure that food is on the serving tables by the last verse of Adom Olam, and support our Kiddush teams in so many ways.
- Thanks also to BMKC Coordinator Lesley Frame and Office Manager Peggy Hackett, whose organization and attention to detail contribute to workable kitchen scheduling for all.

# Kiddush by the Numbers

- **41** Shabbat kiddush lunches prepared by Kiddush Committee
- **12** b'nai mitzvah kiddush lunches:
  - **9** prepared by B'nai Mitzvah Kiddush Collective/ BKMC
  - **3** prepared by outside caterers
- **42** volunteers regularly participating on one of 4 teams
  - shopping and prepping in the BEKI kitchen
- **9** weekday mini-kiddushes for holidays, prepared by ad hoc teams
- **3** ad hoc team preps for Sukkot BEKI Apizza, Leil Shavuot Tikkun refreshments, and Saturday evening Shavuot Fabrengen Seudah
- **55** individual member units participated in kiddush sponsorship
- **2** special events prepared by Kiddush Committee teams: Yom Kippur break-fast and Elm City Kallah
- Weekly kiddush lunch attendance currently ranges from **100** to more than **150** people.

# Programming

submitted by Shoshana Zax, Chair

- Musical Programs
  - Ongoing - monthly Niggun Shabbat Schmoozes
  - 1/10/26 Reynhartsik Concert- Saturday evening musical event
  - 3/8/26 Elm City Winds performance
- Book talks
  - 9/14/25 Book talk with Kelly Osgood -author of “Godstruck”
  - 3/15/26 Book Talk - with BEKI Sisterhood - Mark Oppenheimer talked about his new biography of Judy Blume
- Synagogue Skills Workshops-With Ritual Committee
  - 2/21 Shabbat Schmooze - Hagbah workshop - training new BEKI members to safely perform Hagbah
  - Upcoming - dates TBD - Haftarah and High Holiday Trope classes with Cantor Shoshana Lash for experienced Torah readers. Contact Cantor Shoshana for details



# Programming (continued)

- Special Programs:

Sep 13, 2025	Elul Shabbat Schmooze - Annie Norman-Schiff - “Turn it Again: Torah Study as an Infinite Cycle”
Oct 12	BEKI Apizza - annual event - pizza in the sukkah
Oct 18	Shabbat Schmooze with Ruth Halperin Kaddari - Discussing her work which seeks to recognize and work for justice for victims of sexual violence in conflict, particularly the events of October 7 in Israel
Nov 5	BEKI green team Zoom presentation about available home energy solutions
Nov 7-9	Shabbaton with Professor Arnie Eisen - A full weekend of learning and meals, including Friday night dinner and talk; Shabbat kiddush lunch and talk; Sunday brunch and talk
Feb 8, 2026	New Haven Jewish Historical Society and BEKI presented the documentary film, “9 to 5” as well as speakers from BEKI members who participated in labor movement work in New Haven.
Apr 19	Shorashim - Speakers discussed the group’s ongoing work in Israel to promote dialogue and peace among Israelis and Palestinians.
Apr 24-26	Annual Elm City Kallah Scholar in Residence Weekend - with Rabbi Shai Held, President, Dean and Chair in Jewish Thought at the Hadar Institute, which he founded in 2006 with Rabbis Elie Kaunfer and Ethan Tucker.

# Ritual – submitted by Bruce Spierer, Chair

- Continues to operate mostly through sub-committees within the larger committee offering guidance, perspective, and approval when needed.
- **Daily Minyan** (Alisa Levine): We have a captain for every weekday minyan, a growing list of regular minyanners, and welcome more regulars to ensure that minyanim remain a steady ESER!
- **Tefillah** (Sylva Kroeber): Tefillah leaders group is meeting in shorter, more focused series, starting with one on weekday nusach, in partnership with the daily minyan committee. The goal is to increase skill and confidence in leading throughout the community.
- **Hiddur Mitzvah** (Outgoing, Jess Bod; Incoming, Laura Glesby and Yana Kozukhin):
  - Joyous Simchat Torah dancing was had with a set list of both circle and Israeli folk dancing.
  - Purim had an optional theme (Purim at the Beach) and a lot of people participated!
  - Shavuot Tikkun: Run without B'nai Jacob, which created more opportunities for BEKI community members to teach. We had 7 amazing shiur leaders and the program lasted past 1am with great turnout throughout. Additionally, R' Eric piloted a Kids' Tikkun prior to the holiday which was a huge success. The sunrise hike continued with more participants and we tried out a potluck and farbrengen, both of which had great intergenerational participation.
- **High Holiday Ritual:** This was piloted to lighten the load of more general High Holiday Committee, though it got a later start was able to help coordinate many pieces of the holidays. They are already meeting to plan the upcoming holidays and successfully introduced duchanning at the spring festivals (first time in 30 or 40 years!) to prepare for bringing it to the High Holidays.
- We studied topics on gender and prayer with the rabbi.



# Safety and Security

– submitted by Jay Sokolow and Evan Wyner, Co-chairs

- No serious security incidents despite a worsening atmosphere of anti-Semitism.
  - We had two serious car accidents that involved our property, but these were not deliberate rammings.
- We have used security grants to pay for:
  - New windows on main and basement levels. These are more secure and more energy efficient
  - Improved and expanded camera system that now covers the entire parking lot as well as exterior and interior views
  - Door notification system that alerts when any exterior door is opened
  - More secure doors will be installed in the lobby shortly
- After the attack on the synagogue in Detroit, we increased our Shabbat coverage to have two paid guards so we now have coverage at the approach to both entrances.
- We are working with Mike Shanbrom from Federation to improve our security planning
- Needs:
  - We need more volunteers to serve as greeters. Jay will be away much of the year starting after the holidays.
  - More volunteers to work with Evan and our security team would be appreciated
- Please keep yourselves vigilant and informed. If something seems out of place, let us know.
- Please keep your kids somewhat under control. Running in crowded spaces is dangerous. And running with scissors is a definite no-no.

# Website

– submitted by Eric Dunsker, Webmaster

- Updated the site per completion of the Sanctuary Redesign (Woo-hoo!)
- Due to security concerns, we have stopped posting the weekly BEKI Kids newsletter and removed weekly Happenings and the monthly bulletin from the website.
- On-going maintenance and updating of content per holidays, input from the BEKI officers and committee chairs.
- Thanks to Rachel Bashevkin for edits and updates to website content .

# Shalach Manot (Purim baskets)

- Jennifer Myer is our reigning Queen of Purim Baskets, with assistance from Special Purim Fairy Susan Epstein and an enthusiastic team of basket-stuffers.
- We raised \$18,986, less expenses of ~\$500.
  - Only \$188 less than last year's record!
- Thank you to everyone who supported the fundraiser.

# Report from Treasurer David Levy

## Treasurer's Report – FY 2025-26

- \$490k in Operating Accounts
- Inflation remains a concern
- Loan expenses manageable but significant (5% of budget)
- We expect to run flat or at a slight deficit
- To keep up with rising costs, the Board of Directors has elected to raise dues by \$50 for families and \$25 for individuals, roughly 2% over current dues

### Balance Sheet As of 6/16/2026

#### Assets

##### Bank Accounts

Operating Accounts	\$ 490,414.50
BEKI 120	\$ 65,879.98
BMQC Tzedaka Fund	\$ 6,694.53
<b>Total Bank Accounts</b>	<b>\$ 562,989.01</b>

BEKI-owned Endowments*	\$ 894,253.78
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 1,457,242.79</b>

#### Liabilities

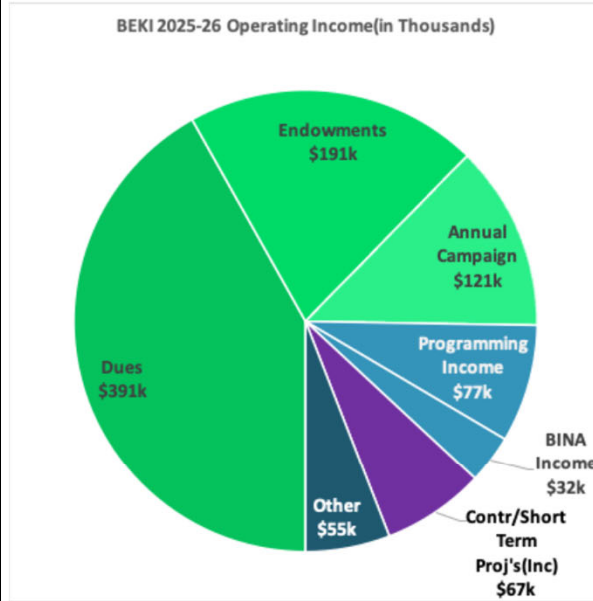
Sanctuary Loan	<b>\$ 363,746.26</b>
Prepaid Dues/Tuition	\$ 47,499.35
Restricted Fund Balances	\$ 10,517.32
Unrestricted Fund Balances	\$ 1,035,479.86
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 1,457,242.79</b>

\*As of 1/1/2026

# Treasurer's Report – FY 2025-26

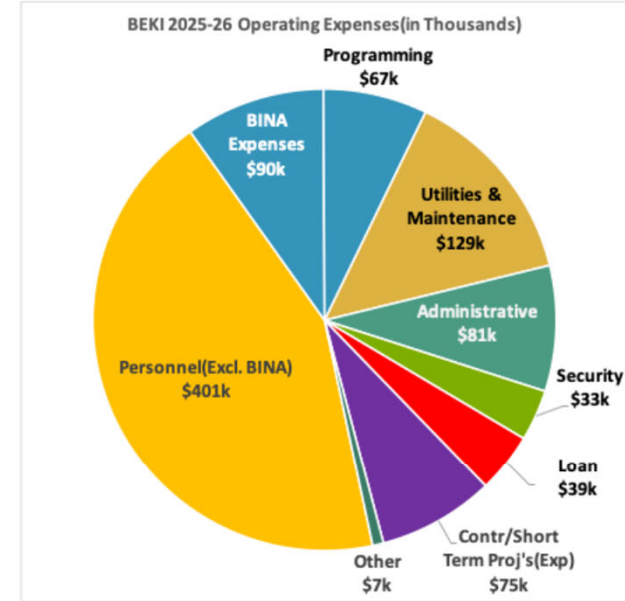
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## Income



	FY 2025-2026
Dues	\$391k
Endowments	\$191k
Annual Campaign	\$121k
Programming Income	\$77k
BINA Income	\$32k
Contr/Short Term Proj's (Inc)	\$67k
Other	\$55k
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$934k</b>

## Expenses



	FY 2025-2026
Personnel (Excl. BINA)	\$401k
BINA Expenses	\$90k
Programming	\$67k
Utilities & Maintenance	\$129k
Administrative	\$81k
Security	\$33k
Loan	\$39k
Contr/Short Term Proj's (Exp)	\$75k
Other	\$7k
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$922k</b>

# Finance & Income Development

– submitted by Donna Levine, Finance Chair

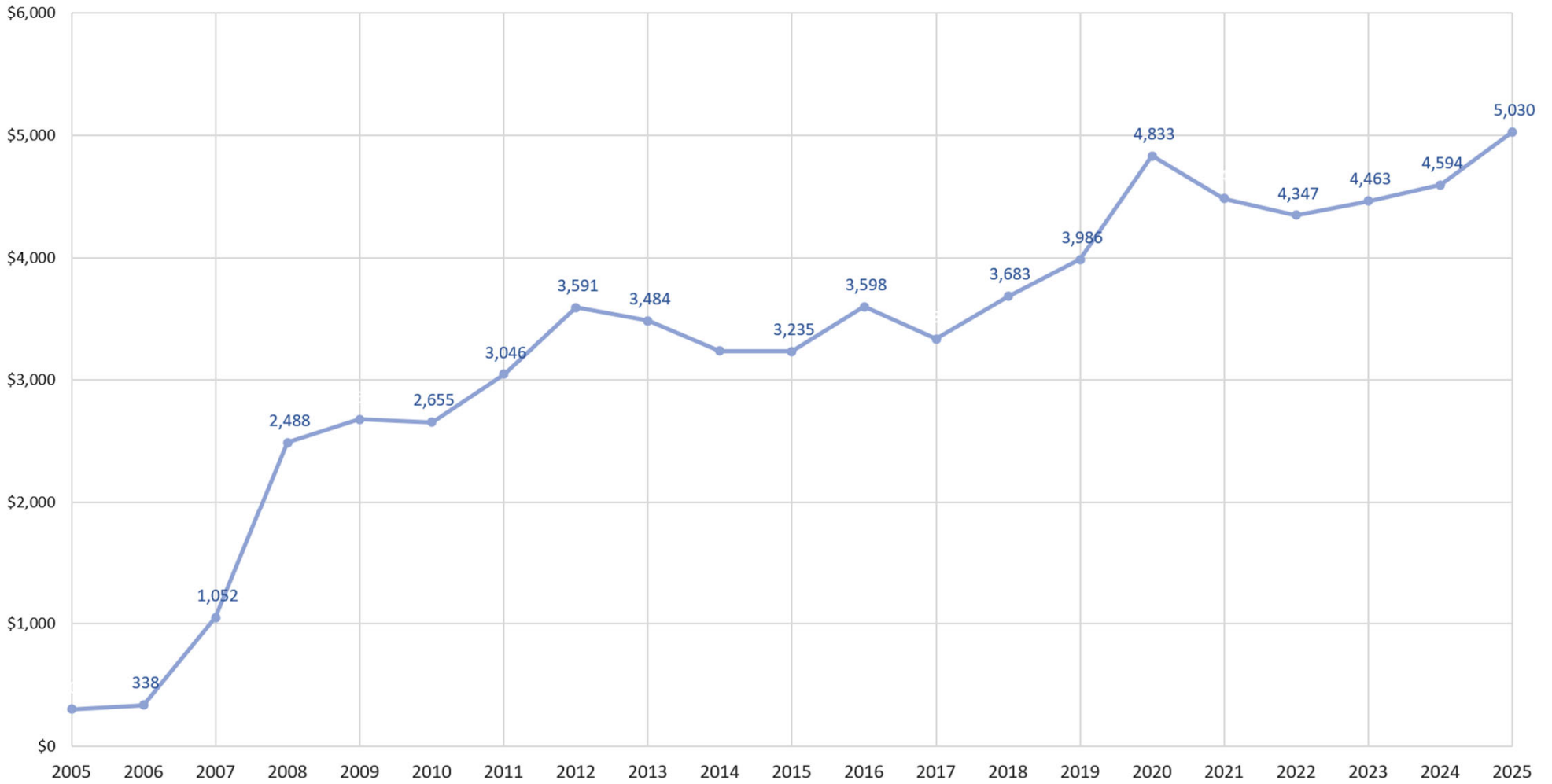
- Grinspoon Legacy Campaign
  - Goals met for December 2025
  - Received \$3,600 incentive grant plus \$360 to sponsor a kiddush in honor of Legacy donors
- Endowment Income
  - Received \$190,529 from the Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven (increase of \$13,427 from prior year)
  - Received \$3,373 from a BEKI owned fund at the Community Foundation of Greater New Haven and \$2,163 from a fund owned by the CFGNH of which BEKI receives a portion
- Endowment Assets
  - Balance of Jewish Foundation Endowments on 12/31/25 was \$4,958,843, of which \$929,080 is "owned" by BEKI (total increase of 7.9%)
  - Current balance of BEKI owned Fund at CFGNH is \$71,254 (increase of 3.8%)
  - Total Endowments now exceed \$5 million!
  - Total annual budgeted income: \$860,147 Dues: 46% Endowment Income: 22% Annual Appeal/Contributions/Miscellaneous: 32%
- Achieved a balanced budget in 2025-26 . Total annual budgeted income: \$860,147
  - 46% Dues + 22% Endowment Income + 32% Annual Appeal/Contributions/Miscellaneous

# Income Development

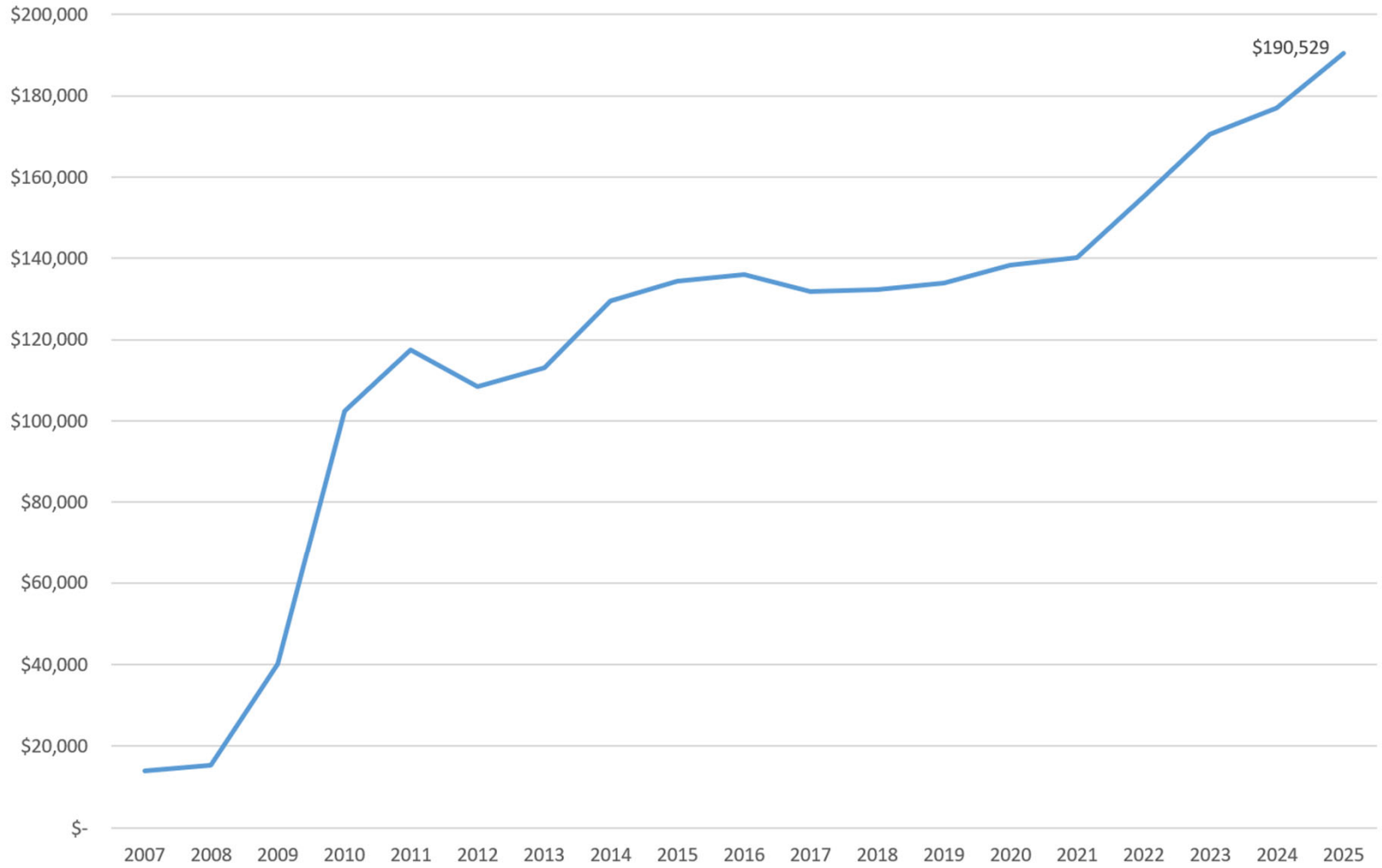
– submitted by Murray Akresh, Co-Chair

- Annual Appeal
  - Donations in 2025: \$131,000
  - Budget: \$120,000
- 2024: \$139,000
- 2023: \$134,000

## Endowment Value (at calendar year-end, in \$000's)



### Annual Distributions from Jewish Foundation to BEKI



# Endowment funds

The Ari Nathan Levine Memorial Fund for the Continuity of BEKI

The Barzillai Cheskis BEKI Youth Israel Scholarship Fund

The Batsheva Labowe-Stoll Fund for the Support of Jewish Life at Congregation BEKI

The Ben & Ruth Marks Endowment

The Bessie & Max Levine Children's Library Endowment

The Beth El-Keser Israel Religious School Fund

The Borick Family Endowment for Special Education for Youth

The B'tzelem Elokim Fund for Congregation Beth El – Keser Israel  
*for programs that educate the community about the inclusion of Jews of Color or LGBTQ+ Jews at BEKI*

The Charles & Violet Ludwig Fund for Congregation Beth El – Keser Israel  
and in honor of Jay Sokolow

The David & Lillian Levine Endowment for People with Special Needs

The Diana Friedman Opton Fund for the Benefit of Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel

The Eric I.B. Beller Environmental Endowment Fund

The George G. Posener Family Memorial Yom Kippur Break-Fast Fund

The George G. Posener Kadima & United Synagogue Youth Fund

The George & Leah Posener Endowment for the Jewish Education of BEKI Youth

The Gilah Benson-Tilsen Fund for Youth

The Gladys R. Lipkin Fund for the BEKI Hebrew School

The Goodwin Brothers Endowment

The Irving Simon Fund

The Rabbi Jon-Jay Tilsen Endowment for the Benefit of Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel

The Leah E. Posener and Betty D. Zelen Memorial Fund for Sisterhood

The Leatrice & Richard Brodner Fund for Advancement of Youth Education & Youth Activities at Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel

The Legacy L'chayim Fund

The Lester & Bernice Margolis Fund

The Liora Lew Endowment for the Advancement of Youth Education and Youth Activities

The Louis & Mary Rosenkrantz Family Library Endowment

The Marvin Missan Fund

The Morris & Sara Oppenheim Fund for Sacred Music

The Noam Benson-Tilsen Fund for BEKI kids at Camp Ramah

The Oscar & Irma Hamburger Memorial Fund

The Saul and Hope Bell Memorial Fund

The Posener Family Memorial Fund (Building)

The Tillie Dworski Horwitz & Edward Horwitz Endowment

The Tova Benson-Tilsen Fund for Animal Welfare at Congregation BEKI and in Israel

The Wizner Family Fund for Tikun Olam at Congregation Beth El Keser Israel

# Thank you to our Legacy Donors!

Murray & Barbara Akresh  
Rachel Bashevkin  
Paul & Carole Bass  
Morris Bell & Raina Sotsky  
Gilah Benson-Tilsen  
Noam Benson-Tilsen  
Tova Benson-Tilsen  
Stephanie & Harold Birn  
Corinne E. Blackmer & Pilar Stewart  
Borick Family  
Kenneth & Linda Buckman  
Gloria Cohen  
Julie Cohen  
Deborah Craig & David Wright  
Barbara Cushen  
Eric Dunsker  
Jennifer Fleming  
Joanne Foodim & Robert Forbes  
Harriet Friedman & Charles Bruce  
Martin & Lana Gad

Miriam (Mimi) Glenn  
Robin Goldberg  
Carl Goldfield  
Richard Goodwin  
Howard Gralla\* & Linda Schultz  
Linden Grazier  
Ruth Greenblatt  
Margie & Jay Hirshfield  
Susan Jacobson  
Karen Kassap & Cary Caldwell  
Karel Koenig & Robert Oakes\*  
Batsheva Labowe-Stoll  
Robert Lettick  
Fania Levine  
Malka\* and Rabbi Murray Levine  
Sidney & Donna Levine  
Liora\* and Yaron Lew  
Patricia Loving  
Alan Lovins  
Rebecca (Seashore) May

Harold Miller  
Mark & Cyd Oppenheimer  
Jessey & Joe Palumbo  
Helen Rosenberg  
Seth Rosenthal & Diane Purvin  
Stephen & Joanne Rudof  
Helene Sapadin  
David Schwartz  
Jay Sokolow  
Lisa Stanger  
Monica Starr & Andy Hirshfield  
Jane Stern  
Corey Stone & Susan McDonald  
Eleanor E. Stutz  
Susan Voigt  
Beth & Dan Weintraub  
Marjorie Wiener  
Stephen and Rachel Wizner

\*z"l (deceased)

# And we remember these Legacy Donors z’’l

Saul and Hope Bell

Eric Beller

Ida & Abraham Bettigole

Leatrice & Richard Brodner

Barnett Dickstein

Regina Faymann

Diana Friedman-Opton

Ida Goldstein

Paul Goodwin

Robert Goodwin

Goodwin Brothers

Irma and Oscar Hamburger

Tillie Dworski Horwitz and Edward Horwitz

Bessie and Max Levine

Deanna and J. Paul Levine

Lillian and David Levine

Gladys Lipkin

Violet and Charles Ludwig

Bernice and Lester Margolis

Ruth and Ben Marks

Marvin Missan

Sara and Morris Oppenheim

Ruth Pollowitz

George Posener

Miriam (Mikki) Ratner

Mary and Louis Rosenkrantz

Margot Roten

Stanley Saxe

Irving Simon

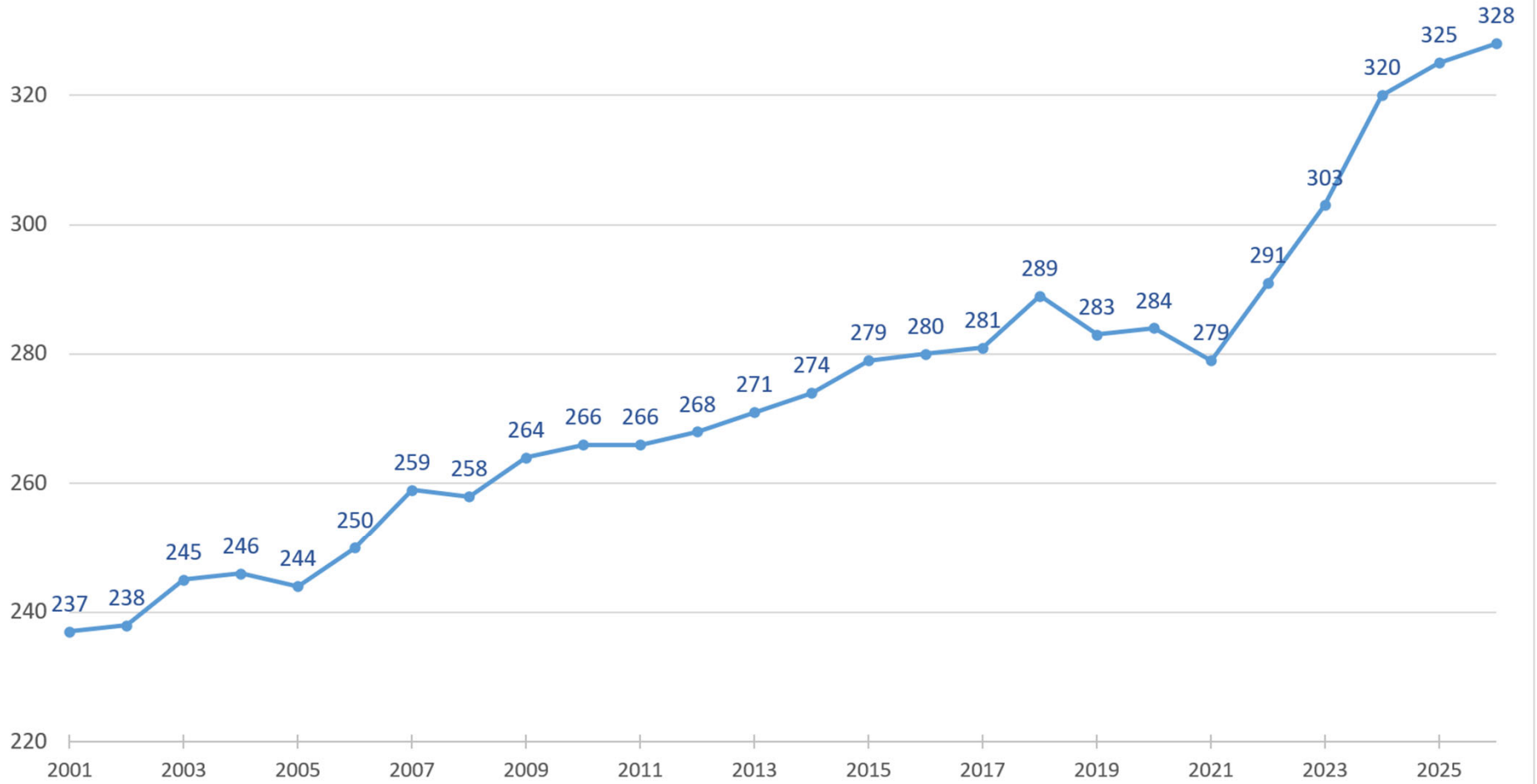
Adele Tyson

Martha Winters

# Welcome to our new members!

- Emma and Charles Kenyon
- Noam Savion and Amit Gaiger
- Blair and Timothy Steinberg
- Keren and Yaron Ayalon
- Benjamin Gerber
- Michael Zimm and Jennifer Czincz
- Pam Kriger and Michael Feinberg
- Jonathan Furst
- Marjorie Marenberg
- Stephanie Safdi and Johan Ugander
- Isadore and Patti Huss
- Alan and Meital Geller
- Joshua Pilchik and Jenn Bergmann-Pilchik
- Rachel and Jeffrey Cohen
- Jacqueline Elise
- Chaim and Ilena Tovia

## Member Units (Households)



# Members and family we lost this year z”l

Sue Driesen	Mother of Naomi Driesen (Nate Bixby), grandmother of Aliyah Bixby-Driesen. She is also survived by her husband, Rabbi George Driesen.
Rhoda Lemkin	Beloved wife of Ed, grandmother and great-grandmother
Rita Sela	Beloved wife of Nadav, mother of Amitai (Rebecca) and Rabbi Ahud (Alisha), sister of Abe (Alice), and grandmother to Yael, Gavi, Jonah, and Eitan
Howard Fiedler	Beloved father of Paul Fiedler (Susan Birke Fiedler)
Renee Gutman	Beloved mother of Rachel Light (Jonathan Freiman) and Ben Gutman (Felice Kelly), wife of Jonathan Gutman z”l, grandmother of Elijah, Malachi, and Ramona. We offer our condolences to the entire Freiman-Light household, including Gabriel, Elijah, and Caleb.
Gail Garfunkel	Mother of congregant Jamie Zubkoff (Ira Zubkoff), grandmother of Arianna and Harrison, wife of Stanley Garfunkel
Eleanor Eisenberg	Mother of congregant Rabbi Richard Eisenberg and his wife, Judy
Michael Ries	Beloved husband of Jennifer Botwick, father of Jake, Shula Pesach, and David
Larisa Elkina	Mother of congregant Jane (Patrick) Rivers, grandmother of Naomi and Dalia
Janis Isenberg	Long-time BEKI congregant
Michael Jennings	Husband of Charlotte, father of congregant Jeff (Miriam) Jennings, Brian (Eileen) Jennings, and Stacey (Steve) Ritz, grandfather of Adin and Fiona Jennings and Dara and Lauren Simanovsky
Micki Pauker	Mother of congregant Seth Pauker (Tina Rose), grandmother of Max and Laina. Micki was also the mother of Heidi Roper, Libby Malka, and Mishy Pittleman

# B'ruchim HaBa'im to BEKI's newest arrivals!

Welcome to...	And Mazel tov to...
Aziza Watten	Rabbi Ora Nitkin-Kaner and Asa Watten
Solomon Telzak-Price	Josh Price and Sarah Telzak (and big brother Ruben)
Felix Herman Gordon	Jonathan Gordon and Jonathan Rohner
Harvey Pilchick	Josh and Jenna Pilchick
Ariel Okhovat	Stephanie Lewkowicz Okhovat and Oren Okhovat (and to big sister Yaara)
Nesiyah Lounsbury	Amanda Lounsbury & Steff Sheehan
Talia Cohen	Jesse Cohen and Laura Miller (and to big brother Zev), and also to Sarah Miller and Lee Cruz (and Pablo and Mateo), Jacob Miller and Keely Colville, and Cathy and Ron Miller
Samson Zuperson	Eden Gerson and Chanan Zupnick, and to big brother Amos
Saul Norman-Schiff	Annie and David Norman-Schiff (and big sister Eve)

# Mazel Tov to this year's b'nai mitzvah!

- Caleb Alvarez
- Anabelle Silverman
- Ari Tovia
- Sam Kaplan-Fay
- Sasha Perry
- Anna Oppenheimer
- Ayelet Baker-Woodward
- Asher Jacoby
- Naomi Rivers
- Eli Grutzendler
- Cora Blessing
- Anna Greenberg
- Mordecai Abraham

# Thank you to the 2025-2026 Board of Directors

President: Russell Epstein

Vice President: Jennifer Myer

Vice President: Jay Sokolow

Treasurer: David Levy

Secretary: Donna Levine

Finance Designee: Murray Akresh

House Designee: Evan Wyner

Immediate Past President: Rachel Bashevkin

Rabbi Eric Woodward (ex-officio)

*Blue text = Executive Board*

*Yellow highlight = retiring Board members*

## 12 At-Large Directors:

- Harold Birn
- Rachel Doft
- Eric Dunsker
- Shelli Farhadian
- Mimi Glenn
- Michael Hurwitz
- Yaron Lew
- Sam Purdy
- Ali Rosen
- Tamara Schechter
- Rob Schonberger
- Rebecca Weiner

# Presenting the 2026-2027 Board of Directors

– submitted by Ali Rosen, Nominating Chair

President: Jennifer Myer

Vice President: Evan Wyner

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*Green highlight = New Board members*

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- Rob Schonberger
- Rebecca Weiner
- Steve Werlin

# USCJ Engagement Grant opportunity

- Since October 7, 2023, many Jewish communities across North America have experienced
  - renewed interest in Jewish life,
  - communal belonging, and
  - synagogue participation.
- Congregations have seen
  - increased attendance,
  - deeper engagement in Jewish conversations and learning, and
  - a growing desire for connection and community.
- With growth comes both opportunity and challenge.

# USCJ Engagement Grant opportunity

- USCJ is awarding grants to 5 American USCJ congregations, funded by a generous foundation.
- Each grant is \$225,000 (\$75,000/year x 3 years).
- Goal is to help congregations build sustainable pathways that transform increased participation into long-term engagement and belonging.
- Application deadline is July 1.

# Grant eligibility

- We check all the boxes.

- ✓ USCJ-affiliated congregation in good standing
- ✓ Demonstrate growth since 2023 in
  - ✓ membership,
  - ✓ attendance, and/or
  - ✓ program engagement
- ✓ Show evidence of financial stability and a balanced budget
- ✓ Have strong and stable leadership, including clergy serving in at least their second year and contracted through June 2029
- ✓ Demonstrate an existing commitment to engagement work
- ✓ Be prepared to lead and sustain a thoughtful multi-year implementation process
- ✓ Be willing to share learnings and best practices with the broader USJC community

# BEKI's Proposal

- Hire our first-ever Engagement Coordinator.
- The Engagement Coordinator would increase engagement at BEKI through three proposed focus areas:
  - Adding professional capacity to BEKI volunteer efforts
    - Building a framework for organizing longstanding committee work and
    - Recruiting and supporting lay leaders
  - Better leveraging our intergenerational community
    - Getting to know members across the spectrum of BEKI
    - Connecting members to one another beyond shul and programming
  - Coordinating with families around major life events
    - Events are increasing in number as BEKI grows
    - They are a major driver of new joiners to our shul

**Brief and/or Interesting Updates**

# Brief and/or Interesting Updates

- Sanctuary rededication ceremony in September
- New sukkah, donated by Jay and Ina Silverman in memory of his mother Marsha Landsberg and in memory of Moishe Schnitman
- Board followed up on 2024 Congregational survey
- Generous gift of \$50K from Goodwin Levine Foundation to help pay down the construction loan and encourage others to contribute to the project
- Laura Miller is heading up the new Tikkun Olam Committee
- \$5K NAA grant received from UI







2025  
NAA Tax Credit  
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# Some important thank-you's

- Thank you to Rabbi Woodward for your amazing spiritual leadership and thoughtful guidance.
- Thank you to Annie Norman-Schiff, Miri Rosenberg, and our wonderful BINA teachers for your development of BEKI's youth.
- Thank you to Peggy Hackett, Fatima Alyasari, and Amer Hassoon for everything that you do, which is pretty much everything around here.
- Thank you to the committee chairs, for all of your time and efforts.
- Thank you to the Executive Board and the Directors for your counsel and leadership.
- Thank you to Rob Lettick for vetting my proposed jokes for Shabbat announcements, and for rejecting most of them.
- Thank you Jennifer Myer for a peaceful transfer of power.
- And, thank you to Susan, Hannah, and Sam.