

Dear Adat Shalom,

It has been such an honor to serve as your student rabbi this past year. Although I've only visited once a month, I've been blessed to share so many moments of sacred community making. We gathered en masse for the collective grandeur of the high holidays, as well as in small, contemplative meditation groups. We came together for moments of *simcha* at *b'nei mitzvah*, as well as moments of comfort for funerals and *shiva*. We studied amazing Torah together, spanning the breadth from ancient Talmudic and Midrashic texts to contemporary womanist, feminist, and queer commentaries on the Torah. We sang and we danced and we ate exceptionally delicious food at the Oneg. We hosted elected officials, and important thought leaders, and pushed ourselves to delve deeper into the current social and political moments in Israeli and American society. We debated our most important values with deep respect and careful listening. We made special spaces for praying and learning with our young ones, and with our elders, and we found times to pray and learn all together. To live in the rhythms of a thriving Jewish community is a delightful (and busy!) way to orient one's life.

This coming Shabbat will be my final official visit of the year to Adat Shalom. I had hoped to join for the retreat May 24-26, but it is sadly too close to my partner's due date to safely leave home. Please enjoy an extra toasted kosher marshmallow for me. If you are able to make it to services this Friday night or Saturday, I would love to see you and say a "goodbye for now," but it seems highly likely that I'll be back regularly in the future for visits. I recently began a new full-time job working for the Reconstructionist Movement in our Department of Thriving Communities. I work with a wonderful team who is here to offer help and guidance should any challenges arise, but also to help lift up and share with the rest of the movement all the great things Adat Shalom is doing. Within my department, I specialize in tikkun olam work, so I already know I'll be listening especially closely to all the great social and environmental justice work Adat Shalom has been, and will continue to be doing. Should you wish to be in touch in the future you can reach me at mweiss@reconstructingjudaism.org. I would love to hear from you.

I leave you with the charge to keep on keeping on with joy and thoughtfulness. You have built a truly beloved community at Adat Shalom. We do not yet know what forms Judaism is evolving into in its next emergent iteration, but whatever Judaism looks like for the next generations, it will be rooted in the practices, traditions, and values of communities like Adam Shalom who have made Judaism so life-giving. We are looking to you to be partners in the collective, ongoing process of reconstructing Judaism. I am excited to continue evolving together.

Moadim l'simcha,

Micah