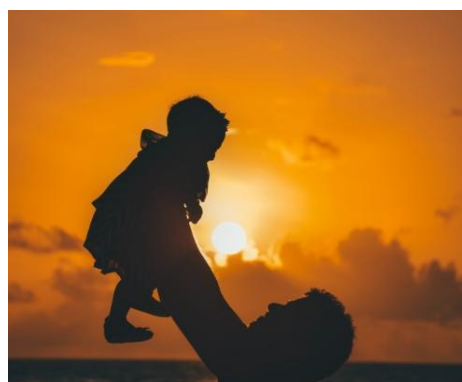
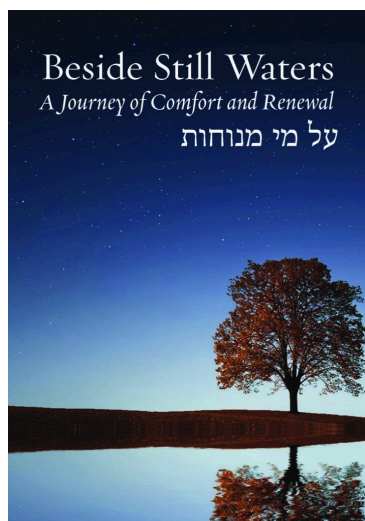


2019 Annual Report of Bayit: Building Jewish



Jewish Doorways [f](#) [t](#) [DONATE](#) [Q](#)

[HOME](#) [ABOUT US](#) [LIFE EVENTS](#) [FAQ](#) [CONTACT US](#)

Welcome To
Doorways

Inspirational Ways to Add Meaning
to Your Life Events

The image is a screenshot of a website banner for "Jewish Doorways". It features a background of a patterned rug with a central doorway. The text is arranged in a clean, modern layout, including a navigation menu with links for Home, About Us, Life Events, FAQ, and Contact Us, as well as a "DONATE" button and a search icon. The main headline reads "Welcome To Doorways" and the tagline below it says "Inspirational Ways to Add Meaning to Your Life Events".

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Calling All Builders

If you're reading this, you're a builder of the Jewish future. That's the guiding premise behind our work at Bayit. Building the Jewish future isn't a job just for rabbis, nor just for people of any particular denomination, gender, or orientation. It's work that we all get to do -- an obligation, a calling, an opportunity, a joy.

At Bayit we build tools for meaningful Jewish lives, and we aspire to share them with all who need. We aim to uplift the work of wise, thoughtful, open-hearted, ethical builders across and beyond today's denominational structures. We strive to build the tools that we ourselves yearn for -- and the tools that others yearn for, too -- so that we can use those tools, and evaluate how they work, and refine them, and try again.

2019 was a year of spadework to support future building. It was a year of digging foundations and pouring concrete: not the most glamorous part of a construction project, maybe, but necessary in all kinds of ways. In 2019 we evaluated our organizational structures, adapted our blueprints for internal governance, and made certain we're walking our ethical talk in ways that are both safe and sound.

In 2019 we also brought our first book into being (a tool for the mourner's path), and we laid groundwork for future publications. We launched and revamped two websites; we published resources and essays and rituals; we convened conversations about innovation; we started new initiatives. We can't wait to tell you about what last year's labors have brought into being -- and we hope you'll join us in building what's next.

Thanks for reading... and for building with us.

The Board of Bayit

Rachel Barenblat
David Markus

Bella Bogart
Mike Moskowitz

Evan Krame
Steve Silbert

Bayit's Mission and Vision

Bayit is building a soulful, inclusive and meaningful Jewish life for all ages and stages. Partnering broadly with individuals and communities, Bayit develops, tests, refines and distributes tools for a Jewish future always under construction.

Everyone in Jewish life can be a builder. A living Judaism – building one's own home in Jewish life – naturally builds Judaism for oneself, others and the future. Hands-on building is the call of Jewish history, and the call of the Jewish future.

Bayit's root metaphor is building, from Talmud (Berakhot 64a):

“Students of the wise increase shalom (peace, completeness) in the world, as it is said (Isaiah 54:13): ‘[Thus.] all your children will be taught of God.’ Don’t read it as ‘your children’ (banayich) but as ‘your builders’ (bonayich).”

A Judaism in which everyone can be a builder naturally offers rooms and building tools for all, without exception. This kind of Judaism is passionately egalitarian. This kind of Judaism draws from and flows through all streams of Jewish life.

This kind of Judaism craves experience and meaning more than dogma. This kind of Judaism fuses ancient designs (text, personal and communal prayer, social justice, rhythms of Jewish time) with modern tools, structures and systems.

Building this kind of Judaism always must be a work in progress, always leaning forward, always “under construction.” Judaism always has been and must be a wise and playful “remixing” of tradition with innovation – what’s been and what’s coming next.

This kind of Judaism uses design tools of research and development. Effective builders must courageously try, measure, tweak and try again – mindful of both subjective experience and best practices, historical trends and modern demography.

Judaism (like spiritual life writ large) must be inwardly real. People know what inspires and what alienates, what’s honest and what’s tone-deaf (or worse). Together we can build a Judaism that is compassionate, authentic, and a spiritual home for all.

Year At A Glance

In 2019, we...

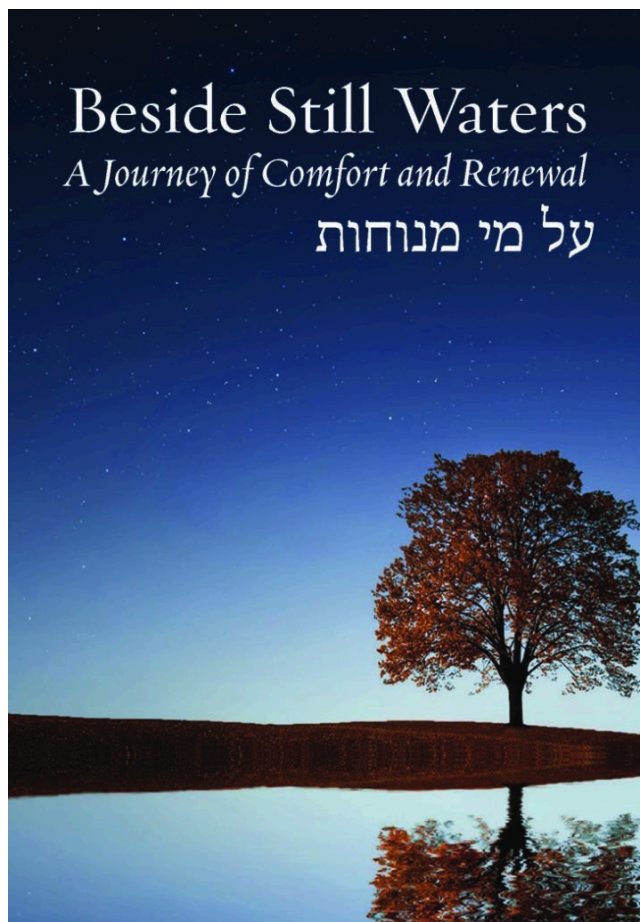
- Brought [Beside Still Waters](#), a volume for the mourner's path, to print in partnership with [Ben Yehuda Press](#);
- Shared *Beside Still Waters* with communities across and beyond the denominational spectrum;
- Collected **submissions** for a [Siddur for Shabbat Day](#), now in the copyediting stage, also in partnership with Ben Yehuda Press;
- Began spadework on **four more publications**, now in the pipeline;
- Officially launched [Doorways](#), a curated collection of resources for life moments both classical (birth, b-mitzvah, marriage, death) and contemporary (changing jobs, coming out, retirement, etc);
- Completed a full year of *parshanut* (Torah commentary) through a building-focused lens on [Builders Blog](#), uplifting voices from across and beyond the denominations;
- Offered liturgical **resources & tools** geared to the flow of the festival year;
- Held our first [clergy retreat](#) for rabbis interested in the spiritual work of innovation;
- Engaged in **Board visioning and strategic planning**, where we delved into the values that underpin our building, and brainstormed not only *what* we want to build but more importantly *how* we want to build in years to come;
- Laid the groundwork for [#MenschUp](#), a new initiative aimed at fostering graceful masculinity, rooted in Jewish texts and Jewish values;
- And laid **foundations** for a wide variety of work in 2020.

Read on...

2019 Building Work

During 2019 we published [our first book](#), and continued digging foundations for forthcoming publications. We revamped our [website](#) and launched [Doorways](#), a curated ritual resource. We published regularly at [Builders Blog](#), including a new Spanish-language video series, and first essays exploring #MenschUp themes. And we laid the groundwork for building work both internal and external in the year to come.

Bayit Publishing



Beside Still Waters

Bayit's first book, *Beside Still Waters* (published jointly with [Ben Yehuda Press](#)) entered the world in March of 2019. The volume spans illness, death, grief, and remembrance, offering an elegant, easy-to-use textual companion for before death, *aninut* (between death and burial), shiva, shloshim, yahrzeit, and more.

Beside Still Waters contains full shiva liturgy (for both *mincha* / afternoon prayer and *ma'ariv* / evening prayer) in which classical prayers are accompanied by contemporary poems and reflections. It also contains materials for yahrzeit and yizkor, poems of remembrance, and prayers and poems for a variety of difficult circumstances (e.g. mourning an averse parent, miscarriage, when there is no grave or

the grave is too far to visit, etc.)

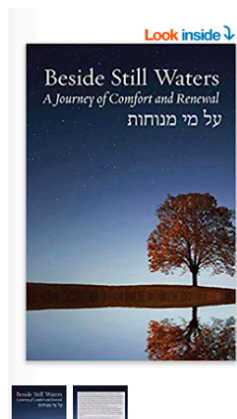
Praise for Beside Still Waters

Before the volume was published, we received words of [advance praise](#) from Rabbi Marcia Prager, Rabbi Brad Hirschfield, and Rabbi Jill Hammer.

Here are words from a [recent review](#) by Rabbi Jack Riemer:

“...[T]he meditations in this book fill a real need. Ours is a death denying culture, in which we are taught to ignore the oncoming of death so as not to make those around us feel uncomfortable, and so it is good to have a few different versions of the Vidui here, which is the prayer that we are supposed to say before we die. Ours is a culture that tries to repress pain and anger, and so it is good to have a prayer to say in memory of someone who has hurt us, and whom it is hard to forgive. Ours is a society in which most of us stand before the yahrtzeit candle with no idea of what to say, and so it is good to have a meditation for this sacred moment that can help us give expression to the feelings that we have inside. ...”

#1 on Amazon



Beside Still Waters: A Journey of Comfort and Renewal (Bayit: Your Jewish Home) Paperback – March 4, 2019

by Rachel Barenblat (Editor)
Be the first to review this item

#1 New Release in Jewish Life

See all formats and editions

Paperback
\$18.00 ✓prime

1 Used from \$24.16
9 New from \$18.00

Beside Still Waters: A Journey of Comfort and Renewal is a book for mourners, for those who will someday become mourners, and for those anticipating their own journey out of this life. It offers liturgy both classical and contemporary for different stages along the mourner's path, from prayers for healing (even when "cure" may be out of reach) and prayers to recite before dying, to prayers for every stage of mourning: from *aninut* (the time between death and burial), to *shiva* (the first week of mourning), to *shloshim* (the first month), the culmination of the first year, *yahrzeit* (death-anniversary)

For a time after the book was released, it was the #1 release on Amazon in Jewish Life!

Wide reach

Beside Still Waters is being used in

congregations across the United States, from Massachusetts to California. It has found a home in communities affiliated with all of the major denominations, as well as communities that are independent or unaffiliated. In 2020 we'll continue sharing and promoting the book to help it reach more people who need it.

Currently in the Pipeline

A [siddur for Shabbat Day](#) entered copyediting in 2019. A [manuscript of #VisualTorah and parshanut](#) (Torah commentary) entered the design stages. We also began planning toward a volume of liturgical poetry in partnership with [Congregation Ner Shalom](#), and began laying foundations for a [book about Jewish sketchnoting](#). Here's an update on the two projects currently in the production pipeline:

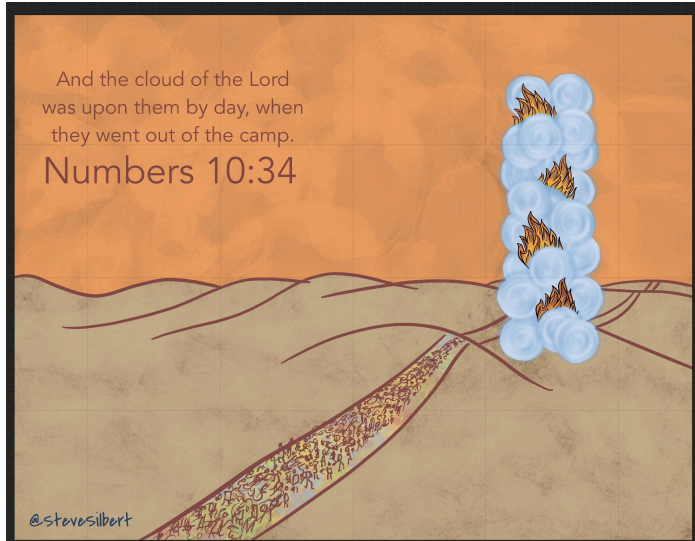
Renew Our Hearts

Bayit's second liturgical volume will be a siddur for Shabbat morning, afternoon, and night. Its current working title is ***Renew Our Hearts: A Siddur for Shabbat Day***, and it is our second joint liturgical publishing project with [Ben Yehuda Press](#). *Renew Our Hearts* balances tradition with innovation, featuring liturgy for morning, afternoon, and evening, along with curated works of poetry, art and new liturgies from across the breadth of Jewish spiritual life.

Like *Beside Still Waters*, this volume features classical prayers as well as contemplative variations. Alongside traditional prayers are contemporary poems arising out of the themes of the liturgy, visual art and photography designed to open the heart and stir the soul, and new prayers composed to bring the tradition's themes and imagery to life. In service of maximum accessibility, every word of Hebrew is paired with transliteration and with clear, pray-able English translation. *Renew Our Hearts* is designed for use in homes, in congregations and independent minyanim, on Shabbat hikes, in contemplative Shabbat settings: wherever you experience the rhythms of Shabbat day, from morning until night.

Contributors include: Trisha Arlin, Rabbi Rachel Barenblat, Ze'ev Barkan, Rabbi Leila Gal Berner, Rabbi Daniel Brenner, Rabbi Lewis John Eron, Rabbi Shir Yaakov Feit, Rabbi Lev Friedman, Jonathan Gibbs, Rabbi Jill Hammer, Rabbi Burt Jacobson, Rabbi Laura Duhan Kaplan, Rabba Kaya Stern-Kaufman, Rabbi Evan Krame, Rabbi Janet Madden, Rabbi David Markus, Mark Nazimova, Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi z"l, Susan R. Schorr, Kohenet Taya Shere, Rabbi Jennifer Singer, Donna Tukel, Rabbi Shohama Harris Wiener, and Rabbi David Zaslow.

A Year of Building Torah



A Year of Building Torah is a volume of parshanut (Torah commentary) accompanied by #VisualTorah, mined from the first year of [Builders Blog](#). The volume features a variety of voices (both clergy and lay) from across and beyond the denominations, and each essay is accompanied and uplifted by Steve Silbert's #VisualTorah sketchnotes.

Built on the foundation of Bayit's animating principle — that the Jewish future is always under

construction and that all of us are tasked with building that future — the essays in *A Year of Building Torah* explore Torah through a building-focused lens. What does Torah teach us about building the Jewish future wisely and well? What tools do we inherit from Jewish tradition that can help us build? How can we skillfully build on history's foundations to meet the spiritual needs of today and tomorrow? This volume contains a year's worth of answers to these questions and more.

A Year of Building Torah also collects a year's worth of Steve Silbert's #VisualTorah sketchnotes. These works of art explore and expand upon the essays collected here, and offer their own doorway into Torah and into what Torah teaches about building wisely and well.

Contributors include: Rabba Wendy Amsellem, Rabbi Rachel Barenblat, Rabbi Bella Bogart, Steven Green, Rabbi Cynthia J. Hoffman, Rabbi Evan J. Krame, Rabbi David Markus, Rabbi Mike Moskowitz, Rabbi Ben Newman, Shoshanna Schechter, Rabbi Alana Suskin, Steve Silbert, and Rabbi Jennifer Singer.

Uplifting Innovation

In 2019, Bayit founders took part in [Glean](#), “the world’s first incubator and network for spiritual entrepreneurs,” in conjunction with Columbia Business School, as well as [Kenissa](#), the “communities of meaning network.” The Glean program gave rise to Bayit’s first innovation retreat for rabbis.



Participants at our first innovation retreat.

First Innovation Retreat: February 2019

In February 2019 Bayit sponsored a first rabbinic retreat on the theme of innovation. Via our fiscal sponsor [The Jewish Studio](#) we received seed grants from the [Eleanor M. and Herbert D. Katz Family Foundation](#) to support an innovation-themed retreat, held at Pearlstone Retreat Center. We convened a planning group of seven clergy: Rabbi Debbie Bravo (URJ), Rabbi Jonathan Freirich (URJ), Rabbi Heidi Hoover (AJR-NY), Rabbi Alana Suskin (JTS and Yeshivat Maharat), and three Bayit board members. Programming wove contributions from clergy and lay leaders, from traditionally observant participants and from more liberal contexts. Sessions included:

- **Jewish Doorways: Online Tools for Energizing Ritual Moments**
[R. Evan Krame](#) • Conservative • Founder, [The Jewish Studio](#)
- **Textual Activism: Traditional Texts of Innovation**
[R. Mike Moskowitz](#) • Orthodox • Scholar in Residence, [CBST](#)
- **StorahTelling: Bringing Torah Text to Life**
[Naomi Less](#) • Conservative • Associate Director, [Lab/Shul](#)

- **Making the New Holy: Ritual Lab for Micro-Innovation**
[R. David Markus](#) • Renewal • Co-Rabbi, [Temple Beth El of City Island](#)
- **SketchNoting: Hands-On Training for Visual Torah**
[Steve Silbert](#) • Reform • Entrepreneur & Director, [Visual Torah Project](#)
- **Knowing What Works: Spiritual Analytics and Feedback Loops**
[R. Rachel Barenblat](#) • Reform/Renewal • [Velveteen Rabbi](#) / [CBI-North Adams](#)

The retreat developed and integrated three areas of Jewish innovation – text, ritual, and representation – with focus on skill-building.

Laying Foundations

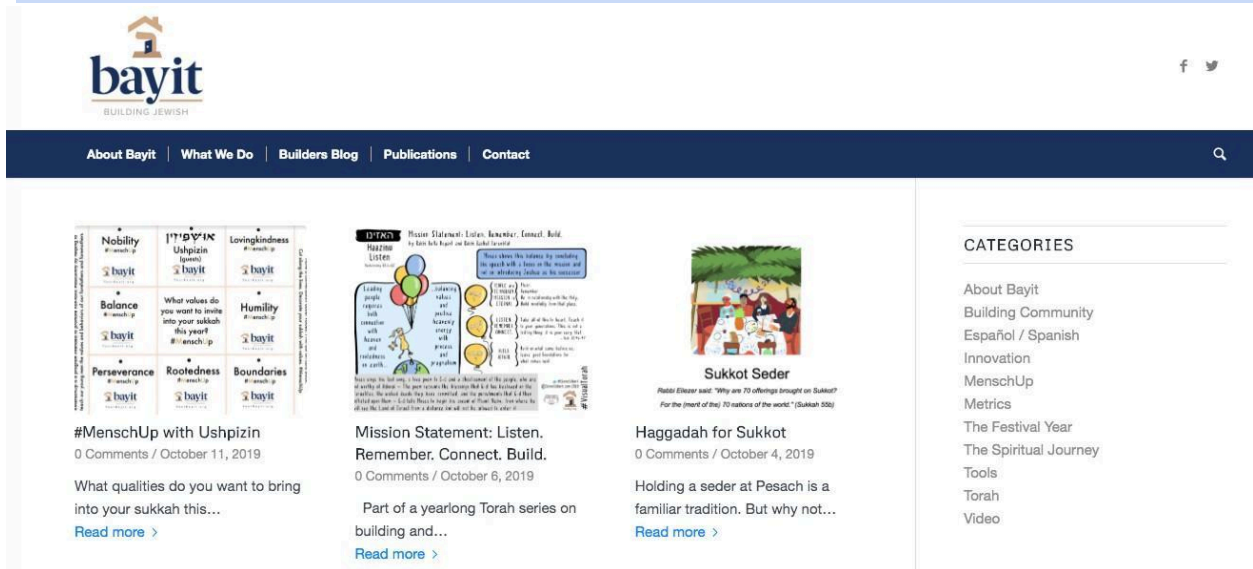
In mid/late 2019 we laid the foundations for our second rabbinic innovation retreat, to be held in early 2020. Like our first retreat, this retreat is intentionally pluralist / trans-denominational, and will be held at Pearlstone.

The theme for our 2020 retreat is “**Being the Change: Innovation and Change Agents in a Complex World.**” Our intention is to explore not only how we innovate, but the spiritual and practical dynamics of being change agents: how do we navigate both change and resistance to change, and the internal and external challenges that can arise from that resistance?



Our featured teacher at the 2020 retreat will be **R' Jeff Fox** (Rosh Yeshiva, Yeshivat Maharat), an extraordinary teacher and innovator who will offer his wisdom on skillfully navigating the spiritual and practical dynamics of creating change. R' Jeff is also a member of Bayit's [Sounding Board](#), and we're excited to be learning with him in 2020.

Pixels and Clicks



A snapshot of the Builders Blog landing page on the Bayit website.

Building Builders Blog

In 2019 we rebuilt our web presence in order to integrate [Builders Blog](#) into the main Bayit website. Our primary project on Builders Blog in 2019 was a year-long cycle of **Torah commentary written through a building-focused lens**, mining Torah's wisdom about building a Jewish spiritual future worthy of our highest hopes.

We also **expanded our roster** of Builders Blog contributors. In 2019 the blog grew beyond our initial core group of Bayit board members to include a more diverse range of voices, among them R' Wendy Amsellem ([Yeshivat Maharat](#)), R' Sunny Schnitzer ([Cuba America Jewish Mission](#)), R' Alana Suskin ([Jewschool](#)), R' Cynthia Hoffman, and pastor Ben Yosua-Davis ([Reports from the Spiritual Frontier](#)).

We published a variety of **ritual / festival tools and resources** on Builders Blog in 2019, among them a [Seder for the Seventh Night](#) of Pesach and a [Red Thread Ritual](#) (R' Evan Krame), a [Haggadah for Sukkot](#) (R' Shoshana Leis), a set of [#MenschUp value cards for Sukkot](#) (R' Mike Moskowitz and Steve Silbert), and an interweaving of [Lamentations and contemporary refugee voices](#) for Tisha b'Av (R' Rachel Barenblat).

In late 2019 we began a new series of *parshanut* posts engaging with the weekly Torah portion through a **#MenschUp** lens. Each of the posts in that series mines the weekly Torah portion and classical commentaries thereon to offer lessons for graceful masculinity, and each post closes with discussion questions suitable for private reflection, Shabbat table conversation, or classroom learning.

In November of 2019, three Bayit board members journeyed in Jewish Cuba with the [Cuba America Jewish Mission](#). While there, we asked Cuban Jewish communities what they most wanted and needed. When we got home, we launched a monthly Spanish-language video series called **Palabras del Torá**. [The first video](#), featuring Chanukah teachings from R' Sunny Schnitzer, went live in December of 2019.

Each video in the Palabras del Torá series is recorded either in English with Spanish subtitles, or in Spanish with English subtitles. The videos are published on Builders Blog along with full bilingual text. We also email the videos and transcripts directly to our contacts in Cuban Jewish communities who share them via Facebook, WhatsApp, and other modalities that work well within the constraints of the Cuban internet.

Expanding Digital Reach

In 2019 we consolidated our two previous websites into yourbayit.org. (We're still on Facebook as [@yourbayit](#) and on Twitter as [@yourbayit](#).) In 2019, Builders Blog posts reached a broad audience. Most people find Builders Blog via Facebook, though we also grew our Twitter following in 2019, and started a mailchimp e-mail list as well.

The [poem and sketchnote](#) that we shared for Chanukah reached about 1000 people, as did our post about [reclaiming the fast of the firstborn](#) before Pesach, and our post [containing our first Annual Report](#). The [downloadable Sukkot materials](#) we offered reached 1700 people. Our [#BuildingTorah post for Shoftim](#) reached 3,000 people.

All of these pageviews came organically through people sharing our work, not through paid advertising. **People find meaning in the tools we share.** We know this because they share our materials freely, and because they tell us that what we offer enlivens their Judaism and their spiritual lives.

Doorways



2019 brought the launch of [Doorways](#), a curated ritual resource designed to make it easy for users to find meaningful texts, readings, prayers, poems, and songs for life events both classical (birth, b-mitzvah, marriage, death) and contemporary (retirement, changing jobs, moving house, coming out, etc.) Only three clicks are necessary to get from the site's main page to the curated ritual resources chosen by our editorial team.

Some of our spadework on Doorways in 2019 was behind the scenes, such as changing web hosts, partnering with new web designers, and adjusting backend design and coding elements. Other changes were front-facing. We added more voices, and more texts and prayers and songs. We added the capability for users to save or print individual prayers, texts, poems, songs, and psalms that they want to use or share.

In 2020, we'll continue building on these foundations. We're also planning to invest in SEO (Search Engine Optimization) with the assistance of our web hosting firm, so that Doorways is easily-findable by those in need.

An evolving contributor list is [here](#).

Spadework for 2020

Foundations: Governance

At our 2019 Board strategic planning and visioning retreat we delved into big questions: not only what we want to build in years to come, but how best to create healthy structures to support that building.

In our first year we pioneered a structure in which the Board chair role [rotated every three months](#). We modeled this organizational structure in part on “rotating rebbe chair” teachings from R’ Zalman Schachter-Shalomi z”l. By late 2019, it was clear that some things about that paradigm were worth continuing, and others weren’t working as well as we had anticipated. So we went back to the proverbial drawing board.

This process -- try something, measure what works, take stock of what doesn’t work, refine the plan, try again -- is integral to our understanding of skillful spiritual innovation. Innovation doesn’t just mean being avant-garde or throwing ideas at the wall to see what sticks. Thoughtful innovators discern what has worked and what hasn’t worked, revise their plans as needed, and then repeat both the experiment and the evaluation.

As 2019 came to its end, a Board working group was drafting a new set of governance policies for us to implement in the secular new year.

Scaffolding: #MenschUp

One of the ideas that arose out of our 2019 Board strategic planning and visioning retreat was [#MenschUp](#). #MenschUp is a new initiative aimed at replacing toxic masculinity with gracious and graceful masculinity, rooted in Jewish texts and Jewish values.

How boys become men – and the kind of men they become – depend on what they learn to be. Masculinity can be empowering and wise, or toxic and destructive, based on how boys and young men learn into becoming themselves.

Today's epidemic of toxic masculinity – anger, aggression, manipulation, violence, emotional sterility and more – is a spiritual health crisis. It demands an antidote, and a vaccine for future generations. The antidote and vaccine for toxic masculinity is wise use of traditional wisdom and modern best practices on how to rear mensches – good men, who hold their masculinity healthfully for themselves and the world.

#MenschUp will use Jewish tools to develop healthy masculinity for all ages and stages. Leveraging spiritual wisdom, educational best practices, developmental psychology and modern media, MenschUp will offer materials and programs for age-appropriate character development for healthy masculinity, including for gender queerness and men of trans experience.

Parents, synagogues, JCCs and colleges all have pivotal role in mensching Jewish boys and men. MenschUp tools and programs will help all of them be part of the solution to toxic masculinity – and through them help build a healthier and more just world for all.



#MenschUp: Ground Floor

#MenschUp began in late 2019 with a first post on Builders Blog containing a [downloadable #MenschUp Sukkot resource](#), and the first in a new [series of parshanut \(Torah commentary\) posts](#) reading Torah through a #MenschUp lens.

#MenschUp: Building Upward

We're planning a series of essays and articles and a curated collection of multimedia materials. We're also exploring trans-denominational collaboration on designing downloadable curricula for b-mitzvah education, appropriate for adolescents of all gender expressions.

Fiscal Sponsorship and Donors

Bayit continues to be under fiscal sponsorship of [The Jewish Studio](#), which is “seeking to revive the joyful spirit of traditional Judaism in the modern world.”



Deep thanks to The Jewish Studio for serving as the fiscal umbrella beneath which Bayit operates.

Keystone Donors

Bayit extends deep gratitude to our keystone donors who are helping us lay the groundwork for building Bayit’s future. Our 2019 contributors include:

Anonymous

R’ Rachel Barenblat

R’ Jonathan Freirich

R’ Evan Krame

R’ Bella Bogart

Laura Kittleson

R’ Shohama Wiener

All donations to Bayit are fully tax deductible pursuant to Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3).

Closing Blessing

The work of the world is common as mud.
Botched, it smears the hands, crumbles to dust.
But the thing worth doing well done
has a shape that satisfies, clean and evident.
Greek amphoras for wine or oil,
Hopi vases that held corn, are put in museums
but you know they were made to be used.
The pitcher cries for water to carry
and a person for work that is real.

(Marge Piercy, from "To Be of Use")

May our building work together be work that is real, and may the work of our hands
bring goodness into the world. Here's to more building in 2020!

Appendices

Bayit Board of Directors

Bayit is built by an expanding group of builders from across and beyond the denominations. As our core group of builders has grown, we've evolved a two-tiered system in which a growing team of builders works with the organization's Board of Directors as that Board engages in visioning, strategic planning, and legal matters.

As of the end of 2019, six builders serve as Bayit's Board of Directors:



[Rabbi Rachel Barenblat, M.F.A.](#) Rachel, a fellow of Rabbis Without Borders, was named in 2016 by the *Forward* as one of [America's Most Inspiring Rabbis](#). She holds dual ordination from ALEPH as rabbi and *mashpi'ah* (spiritual director). Since 2011, Rachel has served as spiritual leader of [Congregation Beth Israel](#) (North Adams, MA). She also served as past co-chair of ALEPH and interim Jewish chaplain to Williams College. She holds an MFA in Writing and Literature from the Bennington Writing Seminars, and is author of five volumes of poetry, among them [70 faces: Torah poems](#) (Phoenicia Publishing, 2011), [Open My Lips](#) (Ben Yehuda Press, 2016) and [Texts to the Holy](#) (Ben Yehuda 2018). Since 2003 she has blogged as [The Velveteen Rabbi](#), and in 2008 [TIME](#) named her blog one of the top 25 sites on the internet. Her work has appeared in [Reform Judaism](#), [The Wisdom Daily](#), [The Forward](#), and anthologies ranging from [The Bloomsbury Anthology of Contemporary Jewish American Poetry](#) (Bloomsbury) to [The Women's Seder Sourcebook](#) (Jewish Lights). Her downloadable [Velveteen Rabbi's Haggadah for Pesach](#) has been used around the world. She is visiting faculty at the [Academy for Spiritual Formation](#) (teaching both at two-year and at five-day retreats) and has also taught (among other places) at [Beyond Walls](#), a writing program for clergy of many faiths at the Kenyon Institute.



[Rabbi Bella Bogart.](#) Bella's love affair with all things Jewish dates back to her modern orthodox childhood in the Bronx, New York. She holds dear Rav Kook's teaching: "The old will

be made new and the new will be made holy,” and her passion is infusing a Judaism for today with the heart and soul of Tradition. Bella served as chazzan, educator and spiritual leader for congregations in Florida and California for over 30 years. She is a gifted singer-songwriter and has recorded five CDs of original liturgical music; her compositions are included in congregational siddurim and sung at services around the country. She was ordained by ALEPH and is past chair of the ALEPH Alumni Council. She is a member of OHALAH – Association of Clergy for Jewish Renewal and previously served on the OHALAH conference planning committee. Bella and Dillon are alive and well, living in beautiful St. Augustine or in the beautiful Catskill Mountains – depends on the weather – where it is her joy to organize meditation, chanting, Torah study and Shabbat celebrations.



Rabbi Evan Krume, J.D., LL.M. Evan brings 35 years of experience as a lawyer and Jewish leader. Evan was ordained by ALEPH as rabbi and spiritual director. He is a co-founder of [The Jewish Studio](#), focusing on meaningful and enjoyable Jewish experiences to adults who are unaffiliated, under-affiliated or disaffiliated. Evan has been honored by local and national organizations for his service, most notably receiving the Exemplar of Leadership Award from [Hillel International](#), recognizing his work for [Hillel of George Washington University](#). Evan is a founding officer of the American Friends of the [Anne Frank House](#). Evan earned a J.D. and LL.M. (taxation) from George Washington Law School. Evan is an attorney in private practice, serving as advocate and fiduciary for persons with disabilities. He lives in Potomac, Maryland, with his wife, Jodi, an attorney in Washington, D.C.



Rabbi David Markus, J.D., M.P.P. David brings experience as pulpit rabbi, lawyer, public official, educator and nonprofit leader. He is rabbi of [Temple Beth El of City Island](#) (New York, NY); faculty at the [Academy for Jewish Religion](#) and spiritual direction for ALEPH; and blogger for multiple national platforms ([My Jewish Learning](#), [Wisdom Daily](#), [The Jewish](#)

[Studio](#)). A fellow of Rabbis Without Borders, David publishes widely on governance, management, liturgy and spiritual development in Jewish contexts, and has an active spiritual direction practice specializing in clergy development. He previously served as co-chair of ALEPH. By day, David presides in the New York courts in a parallel public service career that has included presidential campaigns, all branches and levels of government, and graduate teaching in government and public administration for Fordham and Pace Universities. David holds dual ordination as rabbi and *mashpia* (spiritual director) from ALEPH; a Juris Doctor *magna cum laude* from Harvard Law School; and a Masters in Public Policy from Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government, which named David a global “Innovator in Public Service.”



[Rabbi Mike Moskowitz](#). Mike studied at Mir Yeshiva in Jerusalem where he received smicha. He then continued his studies at BMG in Lakewood where he received an advanced degree in Talmud. For the last 15 years, he has been engaged in Jewish outreach and education as the Dean of Students of the Yeshivah of Virginia. Most recently he has served as a rabbi at Columbia University and of the Old Broadway Synagogue in Harlem. Mike is a vocal advocate for inclusivity, LGBT rights, and social justice. He writes frequently at the [intersection of transgender issues and Jewish thought](#). Formerly senior educator at Orthodox social justice organization [Uri L'Tzedek](#), Mike now serves as currently Scholar-in-Residence on Queer and Trans Issues at [CBST](#).



[Steve Silbert](#). Steve is the left-handed youngest son of an artistic mother and a rocket scientist father. He takes after his father in his interest in logic and science. Steve worked hard to not take art classes as part of his education. Even so, Steve has been sketchnoting since 2015, proving that sketchnoting is about ideas, not art. He uses sketchnotes in his professional role as an Agile Coach, where he teaches visual facilitation basics in software development and



marketing. In 2016 he joined a group of Christians who sketchnoted sermons in their churches. Hesitant to use tablet on Shabbat, Steve began the practice of finding an online dvar Torah for each week's upcoming Torah portion.

Bylaws of Bayit: Building Jewish

ARTICLE I NAME AND PURPOSES

The name of the Corporation will be “Bayit: Building Jewish,” and may conduct business as “Bayit” or any other name as the Board of Directors (hereinafter “Board”) may determine. Bayit’s purposes are to promote continuous innovation in Jewish community and spiritual life, empower individuals and communities to build the next radically inclusive and enlivening Judaism for all ages and stages, and as the Articles of Incorporation or Board may further specify consistent with section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

ARTICLE II PRINCIPAL OFFICE AND MEMBERS

Section 1. Principal Office. The Board shall fix an address to serve as principal office, and these bylaws shall be construed under the law of the jurisdiction in which such office is located except as the Board otherwise may determine.

Section 2. Members. Members of the Board shall constitute the Corporation’s members (hereinafter “Directors”), and the Board may otherwise style such names and titles.

ARTICLE III BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Powers. The activities, affairs and property of the Corporation shall be managed, directed and controlled, and its powers exercised by and vested in, the Board.

Section 2. Number. The Board shall consist of such number of Directors, not less than five (5) or more than nineteen (19), as the Board may determine by resolution.

Section 3. Composition. The Board shall comprise persons qualified by experience to advance the Corporation’s purposes, and represent the community

potentially served – taking into account diversity of demography, experience, training, perspective, spirituality and other factors calculated to promote innovation and diversity of approach, perspective, programs and product. No relative of a Board member or a Corporation employee shall serve on the Board.

Section 4. Election. The Board shall elect Directors on recommendation of a Nominating Committee established pursuant to Article VI, section 4. Directors also may be elected by a voice vote to fill vacancies at any meeting of then-existing Directors.

Section 5. Tenure. Each Director shall hold office until the expiration of the term for which selected and until a successor is selected and accepts. Except these bylaws otherwise provide, Directors shall hold office for a term of three years and may serve no more than two consecutive three-year terms, except that the Board by two-thirds vote may reappoint such a Director to third and fourth consecutive three-year terms.

Section 6. Removal. A Director may be removed by two-thirds vote of the Board, with or without cause, provided that written notice of intention to consider removal of such Director is included in the meeting notice and the Director has an opportunity to be heard at such meeting.

Section 7. Vacancies. Any vacancy occurring on the Board may be filled by the existing Directors and the person so elected shall hold office for the unexpired term of his or her predecessor, or for a full three-year term if the office has not previously been filled.

Section 8. Resignation. A Director may resign in writing to the Secretary (or to the Board if the resigning Director is the Secretary). Failure to attend three (3) consecutive Board meetings without excuse shall constitute a resignation from the Board.

ARTICLE IV OFFICERS

Section 1. Executive Roles. There shall be a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, and such other officers as the Board may from time to time establish.

Section 2. Appointment of Secretary and Treasurer. The Board shall appoint from its members a Secretary and Treasurer for renewable terms of one year,

commencing at the Annual Meeting, and may combine the roles into a Secretary-Treasurer. If the Board creates additional offices, the Board shall designate Directors to fill such offices for renewable terms of one year.

Section 3. Rotation of Chair and Vice Chair. Unless the Board otherwise determines, the roles of Chair and Vice Chair shall rotate semi-annually among Board members, in alphabetical order by last name. Any Board member may decline to so serve, in which case such role shall rotate to the next Board member. If a vacancy in the office of Chair or Vice Chair arises such role shall rotate to the next Board member, who shall complete the unexpired term and then serve his or her own term unless the Board otherwise directs.

Section 4. Removal. An officer may be removed from an office by two-thirds vote of the Board, with or without cause, provided that written notice of intention to consider removal is included in the meeting notice and the officer has an opportunity to be heard at such meeting.

Section 5. Resignation. An officer may resign in writing to the Secretary (or to the Board if the resigning officer is the Secretary).

Section 6. Authority and Duties. Officers shall perform duties as the Board specifies and the following duties:

(a) **The Chair** shall develop Board agendas, preside at Board meetings, sign instruments in the Corporation's name, and represent the Corporation to outside entities.

(b) **The Vice Chair** shall perform the duties of Chair if the Chair is unable to do so or is absent, and assist the Chair as the Chair or Board may direct.

(c) **The Secretary** shall keep accurate records and minutes of meetings; distribute minutes of the previous meeting in advance of each meeting; cause to be delivered all notices of meetings to those persons entitled to vote at such meeting; and maintain the minutes and a current listing, with contact information, of the Directors at the office of the Corporation.

(d) **The Treasurer** shall ensure appropriate management of fiscal resources and reports to enable the Board to monitor the Corporation's finances. The Treasurer shall

advise the Board of significant fiscal matters requiring action by the Board. If required, the Treasurer shall ensure that the Board engages a qualified auditor for an annual examination of the financial statements.

Section 7. Dual Roles. At any time that the Chair serves as Treasurer, the Chair shall not sign financial instruments on behalf of the Corporation, but rather the Vice Chair shall perform such duties or otherwise as the Board may provide.

ARTICLE V MEETINGS AND PROCEDURE

Section 1. Annual Meeting. The Corporation's annual meeting shall be held at such date, time and place as the Board determines.

Section 2. Regular Meetings. The Board shall hold regular meetings at least quarterly.

Section 3. Special Meetings. The Chair or any three (3) Directors may call a special meeting. Business transacted thereat shall be limited to purposes stated in the notice thereof.

Section 4. Action Without Meeting. Any action that the Board or a Committee properly may take in a meeting also may also be taken without a meeting if unanimous consent in writing setting forth the action taken is approved by all persons entitled to vote with respect thereto. Such consent shall have the same force and effect as a vote and shall be filed with the minutes.

Section 5. Notices. Notice of regular meetings, including the annual meeting, shall be in writing and delivered, to each electronic and/or postal address then on file with the Secretary, at least seven (7) days before the day of the meeting. Notices of special meetings shall state the agenda of the special meeting at least two days prior thereto. A Director shall waive defective-notice objection to a meeting by attending such meeting or by failing to object in writing within two days after minutes of such meeting are transmitted to such Director's record address.

Section 6. Quorum. Except as Article VII, section 4, otherwise provides for ethics or conflict review by the Board, quorum for the Board or any Committee shall

consist of a simple majority of members then serving, whether present in person or by electronic means in which participating Directors can hear each other.

Section 7. Votes. Except as the Board otherwise provides, all matters at meetings of the Board or any Committee shall be decided by majority vote with quorum first achieved; and the Board may allow a vote to be registered by electronic mail or a written proxy.

Section 8. Recusal. No person shall vote on any matter in which he or she, or his or her relative, has a substantial financial or reputational interest, unless he or she shall disclose the same to the Board before the vote and the Board shall approve, in which case the disclosure and approval shall be recorded in the minutes. Consistent with the Ethics Policy and Conflict of Interest policy, the Board may recuse any person from a vote and record the basis in the minutes.

Section 9. Procedure. Unless the Board otherwise provides, *Roberts Rules of Order* shall govern, except that these bylaws shall govern in case of conflict therewith.

Section 10. Calculation of Time. Shabbat and Jewish holidays shall not count toward the calculation of time for any purposes under these bylaws, the Ethics Code, the Conflict of Interest Policy and any other Board policy.

Section 11. Project Delegation and Reserve Powers. If the Board empowers a Director to lead or facilitate a project or other undertaking on the Corporation's behalf, such Director shall have substantial autonomy while consulting closely and transparently with the Board. An action or decision requiring expenditure of Corporation funds, setting price, undertaking risk or legal commitment on behalf of the Corporation, or that substantially may affect the branding of the Corporation or any project, program or product thereof, shall require advance Board approval.

ARTICLE VI COMMITTEES

Section 1. Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. The Executive Committee shall develop recommendations with respect to various matters pertaining to Corporation's affairs and report them to the Board for action. If exigent circumstances require expeditious action between Board meetings, the Executive Committee shall have the power to take

necessary action, subject to any prior limit imposed by the Board. The minutes of the Executive Committee shall include a summary of the circumstances requiring such action and be submitted to the Board within two days.

Section 2. Finance Committee. The Board shall appoint a Finance Committee of at least three Directors (plus such non-Directors as the Board may determine) to conduct oversight of the Corporation's fiscal affairs. Unless the Board otherwise determines, the Treasurer shall chair the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee shall: (a) develop an annual budget and any amendments for Board approval; (b) present financial statements to the Board for approval, at least quarterly; (c) oversee any audit, appoint the auditor and receive the auditor's report; (d) recommend policies for accounting and internal controls; (e) review the quality, substance and dissemination of fiscal information provided to the Board and such Committee; (e) monitor investments of the Corporation and recommend changes to investment and endowment policies; and (f) ensure timely tax filings and other government filings as required by law.

Section 3. Ethics Committee. The Board shall appoint an Ethics Committee of at least three Directors (plus such non-Directors as the Board may determine) to establish and maintain an Ethics Code and Conflict of Interest Policy for the Corporation, subject to Board approval. Consistent with Article VII, section 4, such Ethics Code and/or Conflict of Interest Policy shall provide for Ethics Committee review of matters raising actual or perceived ethical or conflict-of-interest matters for any Director, staff or volunteer associated with the Corporation.

Section 4. Nominating Committee. At least sixty (60) days before a scheduled Board vacancy or promptly upon the occurrence of an unscheduled Board vacancy, the Board shall establish an *ad hoc* Nominating Committee of at least three Directors (other than Chair at that time, who shall designate from such Nominating Committee its chair). Such Nominating Committee shall nominate a person to fill each such Board vacancy. Upon the filling of each such vacancy, such Nominating Committee shall be deemed dissolved. No Director shall serve on more than three consecutive *ad hoc* Nominating Committees.

Section 5. Standing and Additional Committees. The Board may establish and abolish standing committees and additional committees. The Board shall appoint to each such committee at least two (2) Directors and additionally may appoint non-Directors.

ARTICLE VII OPERATIONS

Section 1. Fiscal Year. The Corporation's annual fiscal year shall be January 1 to December 31, unless the Board otherwise specifies.

Section 2. Staffing. If the Board appoints a chief executive officer, then he or she shall appoint additional staff subject to Board appropriations by budget or other resolution. The Board may delegate customary duties and authority by written job descriptions to the chief executive officer and staff. All staff, including a chief executive officer, shall be at-will employees of the Corporation, subject to contract or other instrument approved by the Board. Any chief executive officer shall be subject to hire and termination by the Board.

Section 3. Non-Discrimination Policy. The Corporation shall not discriminate in any policy, procedure or practice against any person on the basis of – but may evolve, publicize and encourage practices and innovations that serve persons and groups distinct in – age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, actual or perceived disability, or political opinion or affiliation. The Corporation shall not affiliate with a religious denomination or movement except by unanimous Board consent on a finding that such affiliation would advance the Corporation's commitment to inclusion and continuous innovation.

Section 4. Ethics and Conflicts of Interest. Consistent with Article VI, section 3, the Board shall adopt an Ethics Code and Conflict of Interest Policy governing Board members, non-Board committee members, staff, and volunteers having authority with respect to Corporation resources and activities. Such Ethics Code and Conflict of Interest Policy shall identify conduct and transactions potentially raising concerns, set procedures for disclosure of actual or potential conflicts, and provide ethics and/or conflict review subject to approval or disapproval by the Board. Where the Board undertakes ethics oversight or conflict review, no Director interested in the outcome as defined by Article V, section 8, shall count toward quorum or cast a vote.

Section 5. Indemnification and insurance. The Corporation shall indemnify its directors and officers to the fullest extent permitted by law including the payment of related legal expenses. The Board shall evaluate the Corporation's needs for insurance coverage as appropriate for its activities including but not limited to general liability insurance, and liability insurance for Directors and officers.

Section 6. Exoneration. To the extent permitted by law, no Director or officer shall be personally liable to the Corporation or its members for money damages, except that Directors shall not be automatically exonerated in the case of intentional misconduct. No amendment of the Articles of Incorporation or repeal of any of its provisions shall limit or eliminate the benefits provided to Directors and officers under this section with respect to any act or omission occurring prior to such amendment or repeal.

Section 7. Compensation and Expenses. Directors shall serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for expenses reasonably incurred on the Corporation's behalf or in its service. Nothing herein shall bar a Director from receiving compensation for serving the Corporation in another capacity, consistent with the Ethics Code and Conflict of Interest Policy.

Section 8. Corporate Records. The Corporation shall keep correct and complete books and records of account, minutes of the proceedings of the Board and all Committees, and keep at the principal office of the Corporation (or online as the Board may direct) a record of the names and addresses of the Directors as well as its Articles of Incorporation, current Bylaws, and Board-approved policies. The Corporation shall make available to interested parties its application to the Internal Revenue Service for tax exempt status, the Internal Revenue Service determination letter, and its most recently filed Form 990. Any Director may inspect the books and records of the Corporation by written request to the Secretary on seven days' notice.

Section 10. Signature Authority. Except as Article IV, section 7, otherwise provides in relation to dual roles: (a) all checks, notes, acceptances and orders for payment of money shall be signed by the Treasurer or otherwise as authorized by the Board; and (b) all contracts, leases and deeds shall be signed by the Chair or any other Corporation agent as authorized by the Board.

ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

The Board, by two-thirds majority of all elected Directors at a meeting of the Board, may amend these bylaws, or repeal them and adopt new bylaws, provided that the notice of such meeting sets forth the proposed amendment, repeal or new bylaws, or a summary thereof. No amendment to these bylaws will be valid that conflicts with

the Articles of Incorporation or would disqualify the Corporation for tax exempt status under law.

ARTICLE IX DISSOLUTION

The Board, by two-thirds majority of all elected Directors at a Board meeting, may dissolve the Corporation, provided that the notice of such meeting sets forth the proposed dissolution at least thirty (30) days prior to such meeting. In the event of dissolution, the Board shall dispose of all net assets of the Corporation to one or more organizations organized and operated so as to qualify as a tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or otherwise pursuant to permission of a court in the jurisdiction including the the principal office of the Corporation.

Conflict of Interest Policy

Article I Purpose

The purpose of the conflict of interest policy is to protect the interest of the Jewish Studio (hereinafter “the organization”) as a tax-exempt organization when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer or director of the Organization or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

Article II Definitions

1. Interested Person

Any director, principal officer, or member of a committee with governing board delegated powers, who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.

2. Financial Interest

A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:

- a. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement,
- b. A compensation arrangement with the Organization or with any entity or individual with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement, or
- c. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the Organization is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.

A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. Under Article III, Section 2, hereof, a person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the appropriate governing board or committee decides that a conflict of interest exists.

Article III Procedures

1. Duty to Disclose

In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the directors and members of committees with governing board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

2. Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists

After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, he/she shall leave the governing board or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

3. Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest

a. An interested person may make a presentation at the governing board or committee meeting, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.

b. The chairperson of the governing board or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.

c. After exercising due diligence, the governing board or committee shall determine whether the Organization can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.

d. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the governing board or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the Organization's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

4. Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy

a. If the governing board or committee has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.

b. If, after hearing the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the governing board or committee determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

Article IV Records of Proceedings

The minutes of the governing board and all committees with board delegated powers shall contain:

a. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the governing board's or committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.

b. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

Article V Compensation

a. A voting member of the governing board who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Organization for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.

b. A voting member of any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Organization for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.

c. No voting member of the governing board or any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Organization, either individually or collectively, is prohibited from providing information to any committee regarding compensation.

Article VI Annual Statements

Each director, principal officer and member of a committee with governing board delegated powers shall annually sign a statement which affirms such person:

- a. Has received a copy of the conflicts of interest policy,
- b. Has read and understands the policy,
- c. Has agreed to comply with the policy, and
- d. Understands the Organization is charitable and in order to maintain its federal tax exemption it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

Article VII Periodic Reviews

To ensure the Organization operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

- a. Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information, and the result of arm's length bargaining.
- b. Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations conform to the Organization's written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes and do not result in inurement, impermissible private benefit or in an excess benefit transaction.

Article VIII Use of Outside Experts

When conducting the periodic reviews as provided for in Article VII, the Organization may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the governing board of its responsibility for ensuring periodic reviews are conducted.

