

Board of Directors

2021-2022

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November 20, 2021

Dear Kol Haverim Members and Friends,

The interesting times we continue to live in have highlighted one common need – to be part of a community, to help and support each other, to celebrate, mourn, and take action together.

Kol Haverim is a community for Humanistic Judaism in Ithaca, New York. Together since 1999, we explore and celebrate what it means to be Jewish from a Secular and Humanistic perspective. Kol Haverim provides a welcoming approach to Jewish celebration for all people who value Jewish identity by birth, by choice, or by association and desire to express their connection to Jewish heritage and culture consistent with a humanistic philosophy of life. We engage in self-reflection and take responsibility for working toward “Tikkun Olam” – repairing the world. We are an inclusive congregation that welcomes all kinds of families, whether blended, traditional, interfaith, intercultural, or interracial, and people of all races, genders, and sexual orientations.

The Humanistic principles upon which Kol Haverim is based continue to be highly relevant. We have been working together with the “Jews for a Secular Democracy” organization to support legislation that strengthens the separation of church and state, and freedom from religion, in New York State, and made a contribution of \$500 to support the work they are doing in other states. We also made a \$500 contribution to the Finger Lakes Land Trust to support their work in protecting and preserving wild habitats in our region.



Kol Haverim is affiliated with the Society for Humanistic Judaism (SHJ) as a Havurah. This designation recognizes that we are a small egalitarian group depending on participation by the entire community. SHJ is a national organization of more than 30 Humanistic Jewish Communities around the country. SHJ provides us with support as a group and enables us to feel part of a larger community.

We have continued to adapt Kol Haverim’s events and celebrations to the changing conditions and safety considerations of the pandemic. We had a fantastic virtual Purim Spiel and celebration last spring, a virtual Passover, and were thrilled to be able to gather in person for Rosh Hashanah at Stewart Park in September. We are planning a virtual Hanukkah celebration in December and hope to be able to gather in person for Passover in April 2022. For details and updates, check our website www.kolhaverim.net.

Kol Haverim pledges to never turn anyone away for lack of ability to pay. To keep that pledge, we need the support of those who are still able! To recognize a greater level of support, we have a Sustaining Member category. Those who wish to financially support Kol Haverim but do not wish to participate as active members may choose to be an Affiliate Supporter. With your generosity, Kol Haverim will remain a strong and vibrant community, and the only community in the Finger Lakes that offers a secular and humanistic way to honor and celebrate Jewish identity.

We look forward to your joining Kol Haverim for the 2021-2022 season! Please fill out the attached membership form, make your check payable to Kol Haverim, and send it to the address below by November 30. We look forward to “seeing” you!

Warmest Regards,

Irina Chernyakov, Chair
Kol Haverim
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