



Kol Ha'Emek, The Upper Valley Jewish Community

Roth Center for Jewish Life
5 Occom Ridge
Hanover, NH 03755

August 24, 2022

Dear Members of Kol Ha'Emek,

What a roller coaster this pandemic has provided for our community! Are we done with it? Not really. Do we know what to expect? To some extent, but this virus has provided more twists and turns than many of our institutions can comfortably manage; even more twists and turns than described in some of our Torah portions. We adapted to Zoom and hybrid formats for services, study, and activities; dealt with mask and vaccine to-and-fro's while also reaching out to each other through our strong volunteer committees. Many have said they've never felt closer to and more a part of our Jewish community as a result.

With Rabbi Mark and the lay leadership, the UVJC initiated several new programs last year – the learning circle of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, the amazing session with the Parent's Circle Family Forum, and the Eastern European Literature course. Deeper dives into the psalms and Torah portions, as well as instruction in reading Torah, were offered. We are developing a vibrant relationship with the new Hillel leadership, there is a new leadership for the Tots and for new members; and we have been vocal about anti-Semitism in our area. All these and more allow us to continue to meet our community's needs.

While all of this is going on, you can count on Rabbi Mark and the *Ruach Committee* to plan a robust and inclusive menu of religious observances and teachings. You can also count on the Hebrew School to be prepared to deliver Jewish education, come what may. The resilience of the school leadership, staff, the children, and the parents were amazing last year, and our large B'nai Mitzvah student class will show us how they can shine regardless of the circumstances.

As an independent congregation we depend exclusively on our members and friends to provide financial support. Membership dues do not cover our operating expenses. While we try to keep dues affordable to be inclusive, additional funds will support our robust programming, activities, and outreach. In that spirit, ***we sincerely hope that everyone will donate to our High Holiday appeal.*** We are aiming for 100% participation!

As in the past, we will donate a portion of the High Holiday appeal to charity. This year we will donate to Parents Circle Family Forum (<https://www.theparentscircle.org/en/pcff-home-page-en/>) and SHARe (<https://sharevtnh.org/about/>). In addition to emptying our pockets for tzedakah as we enter Alumni Hall on Kol Nidre, ***we hope you will make a generous contribution for your High Holidays donation.*** The High Holiday appeal is a most important source of funds for the UVJC. Our Upper Valley Jewish Community needs your support.

Please join me in making a meaningful contribution to Kol Ha'Emek's High Holiday appeal so that we can continue to meet our community's needs and maintain a strong Jewish presence in the Upper Valley.

Our Board of Trustees, my family and I wish you and your family a warm L'Shana Tova.

Paul Etkind
UVJC President