

Walking on Your Way:
A Path to Prayer and Spirituality for Children at Jewish Summer Camp

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DIGEST

Few people in academia recognize the great impact of Jewish summer camping on the American Jewish population. The current leadership of the American Jewish community, across denominational lines, is mostly made up of individuals with Jewish summer camping experience. While Jewish philanthropists have invested money in studying this phenomenon, and in funding the way for more Jewish children to experience summer camp, academics for the most part have not invested their time nor energy in studying the history and impact of these camps. The few that have all recognize that there is more material to analyze than they themselves can do.

This thesis looks at Jewish summer camping, both its history as well as its current state, through the lens of developing spirituality practices in children. Jewish summer camps have the opportunity to help build not only professional Jewish leaders but also Jewish adults who understand their faith and their personal practice in a deeper way. One way in which to guide camps to a success in this area is to use worship services to explore the issue of spirituality in its many forms. The third and final chapter of this thesis does this through the creation of a template *shacharit* Shabbat service for the Union for Reform Judaism's Greene Family Camp.

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INTRODUCTION

The experiences of young Jewish children at Jewish summer camp has been shown over the past few decades to be of extreme importance in instilling in them a sense of Jewish identity. Many rabbis, cantors, Jewish educators and other Jewish communal leadership point to their experience at Jewish summer camp as an important factor in their chosen career path. The author is one of these people and the goal of this thesis is to explore how to better understand this phenomenon, and especially to discover how one could build on the success of Jewish summer camp in regard to the development of spirituality in children.

When this project was undertaken, the author felt that the best approach would be to:

1. Understand the history and development of prayer at Jewish summer camp
2. Consider the impact of regional environment on the choices made in regards to prayer at Jewish summer camp
3. Compile a service which takes into consideration all that was learned for Greene Family Camp as a model for what camps could do if they desire to make prayer a central piece of their mission and not only an expected aspect of the Jewish summer camp experience.

In order to accomplish these goals the following issues, topics, and questions would need to be addressed:

1. How has prayer changed at camp?
2. Why were the changes made?
3. Is there a connection between the changes made in the camp and the choices made in the Reform Movement at large?
4. What are the unique needs of the campers and staff that led the camp to create their own materials?

5. How have the choices made at the camp been brought back into the congregations and communities to which the campers and staff return?

In practice, this work took a different approach to reach the same destination. Exploration into the research on children and spirituality led the author to write Chapter One on spirituality in order to ground the service and its commentary in an understanding of children's development. In comparison, Chapter Two on camp history grew to encompass not only the history of Jewish summer camps in the United States but also the development of denominational camps and especially the creation of Greene Family Camp (GFC). Building upon the author's experience on the staff of GFC, as well as on her experiences as a camper and counselor at Camp Young Judaea, also located in Texas, Chapter Two explores the deeper reasons for why Jewish summer camping has had such a significant impact on the American Jewish population.

Chapter Three takes all that is learned in Chapters One and Two and applies it to the creation of a new *shacharit* Shabbat service for GFC. The purpose of the service is to show one way in which both campers and staff can be exposed to creative Jewish liturgy while also recognizing that one of the goals of a Reform Movement-affiliated summer camp, GFC being one of them, is to help increase membership and affiliation with the Reform Movement and specifically with Reform synagogues.¹ The service uses both materials written specifically for the service and materials collected from a variety of *siddurim* to create a creative and enriching experience for the participants. The accompanying commentary, which follows the service booklet, explains in detail the reasons for the choices made throughout the service booklet.

The goals of this work remain the same as were first put forth in the proposal but have come to fruition in a different form, one which the author hopes will both add to the scholarship on Jewish

¹ This was an underlying theme of much of the scholarship read but also was stated plainly by GFC Executive Director Loui Dobin in a phone interview the author conducted.

summer camps as well as being an inspiration or jumping-off point for further scholarship, as is discussed in detail in the Conclusion.

CHAPTER ONE

Spirituality

Introduction

This chapter will discuss the role of spirituality in the lives of children from both a general viewpoint as well as from a more specifically Jewish viewpoint. The role of spirituality in the lives of children has been discussed, applauded, and yet overlooked throughout most of human history, but as the study of spirituality has evolved so has the understanding of the role that spirituality plays in the lives of children. The information in this chapter serves as the foundation upon which the Shabbat morning service for Greene Family Camp is built.

Edward Hoffman

In his book, *Visions of Innocence: Spiritual and Inspirational Experiences of Childhood*, Dr. Edward Hoffman² speaks of the acknowledgment by biblical writers, both in Psalms as well as in Isaiah, that children are closer to the divine than adults. He also states that “Jewish mysticism has for millennia taught that during our fetal existence we are exposed to the radiant secrets of the universe, but at the moment of birth we are made to forget such knowledge in order to fulfill our purpose here on earth.”³ This tradition, it would be reasonable to assume, would lead to a culture that embraces and discusses the spirituality of children on a regular basis, but unfortunately this has been untrue. According to Hoffman, outside of a few examples, including the use of children for divination during the Middle Ages (both by Kabbalists and by Christians), Western religions have not generally been oriented toward the spirituality of children. Non-Western religions have been

² Dr. Edward Hoffman is an adjunct associate professor of psychology at Yeshiva University in New York City. A licensed clinical psychologist in private practice in both New York and New Jersey, Dr. Hoffman received his B.A. in psychology from Cornell University and his master's degrees in developmental psychology and special education from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. He received his PhD in educational psychology from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor: (<https://www.dredwardhoffman.com/about-me/> Accessed 10/21/2017)

³ Edward Hoffman, *Visions of Innocence: Spiritual and Inspirational Experiences of Childhood* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1992), 3.

much more open in this regard.⁴ Westerners have left the discussion of the spiritual to clergy and artists, and Hoffman shows this by discussing the poets Blake and Wordsworth. He goes so far as to call them “our guides” about childhood innocence and spirituality.⁵

Hoffman shares that Blake had an impactful childhood filled with experiences of the spirit that helped shape who he would become as the creative individual whose poetry has affected the lives of so many. Hoffman states,

In portraying childhood as a spiritually dazzling period of life, Blake drew from his own experience. He had sublime visions almost as soon as he could speak, and they came to him throughout his life. When only four years old, he told his wife decades later, he saw “God’s face” at the window of his room and screamed in fear. As a child Blake was beaten for relating that he had seen the prophet Ezekiel sitting in a nearby tree. On another occasion Blake beheld a tree filled with angels, who sang and waved their radiant wings in the branches.⁶

These experiences were viewed by others as either harmful or outright lies. Adults around Blake could not fathom that his experiences were anything more than childhood fairytales but he knew them to be real and held on to the experiences throughout his life.

When discussing the life of Wordsworth, Hoffman states that “[m]ore than any other poet in the English language, Wordsworth was enraptured with childhood experience. For him, childhood by its very nature had an ineffable splendor, imbued with a glory associated with its fresh and pure perception.”⁷ Hoffman’s words help to draw out the impact of Wordsworth on the lives of his readers. Not many people wanted to explore the lives of children when they themselves were adults busy with adult responsibilities. Hoffman continues, “In this regard, Wordsworth viewed children as oracles, capable of seeing truths that we adults can no longer discern, or have

⁴ Ibid., 4-5. Non-Western religions will not be further discussed in this chapter as it does not play an important role in the overall theme of the thesis.

⁵ Ibid., 6.

⁶ Ibid., 9.

⁷ Ibid., 11.

forgotten, as a result of our mundane, habit-worn lives.”⁸ This insight, both of Wordsworth and of Hoffman, recognizes the impact life has on individuals. Whether or not one has a difficult life path, however that is experienced, it is the joy and wonder of childhood that is most often forgotten. It is also often romanticized in retrospect, such as in the story of Peter Pan, even though childhood is not always a joyful and wonderful time of life.

Wordsworth’s poem “Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood” is an excellent example of his recognition as an adult of his childhood spiritual experiences. Hoffman writes, “In this poem Wordsworth conveys his mystic conviction that during our childhood the gates of heaven lie open all around us. We may not be able to verbalize such awareness - even as adults, we can scarcely articulate our “peak” or transcendent experiences.”⁹ Children, as Wordsworth helps his readers explore, may be unable to express themselves verbally but adults are often in the same predicament. For this reason, Wordsworth uses the medium of poetry to express the inexpressible, to give form to the unknowable. Hoffman explains,

Seized by such a potent vision of human spirituality, Wordsworth insisted throughout his life on the right of every child to enjoy happiness and freedom within a loving family. Like Blake, he railed against the suffering and degradation brought by industrialization and protested the moneyed outlook that sought to justify child labor. For Wordsworth, we must fulfill our purpose on earth when we venerate childhood, both in ourselves and others.¹⁰

To venerate childhood is not to say that the best years are behind us, as adults, but rather to recognize childhood as an important period in the development of a human being. Research by psychologists has shown us that there are critical periods in development that shape personality, and much of what causes damage to a child is a lack of connection, of understanding, with adult

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid., 11-12.

¹⁰ Ibid., 12-13.

figures around them.¹¹ Throughout his book Hoffman reiterates, through the stories shared with him by adults from a variety of backgrounds and religious beliefs, that children are unwilling to share their thoughts and experiences with adults if they feel they will receive a negative, or perhaps even mocking, response. This is a failure of many adults, and could be combated, in the context of summer camping, through the training of both counselors and staff at URJ summer camps, along with faculty members. Executive Director of Greene Family Camp (GFC) Loui Dobin shared that he believes that at camp we already have the buy-in of the children and we should use it to our benefit. They are willing to sit in services because of the recognition that those to whom they look up, the older campers, the counselors and staff, are sitting there and participating. The campers are also willing to share personal stories with their counselors because of the connection they make with them, and as educators we should embrace this opportunity to build a foundation of sharing spiritual experiences with others.¹²

In each chapter of Hoffman's book he chooses to explore a different location where a child, now an adult, had a spiritual experience. At the beginning of each chapter he explores what he views as the background understanding and larger question that he is asking with the individual stories of the childhood experiences as potential answers. For the purpose of this chapter on spirituality only three chapters of Hoffman were read in detail - Chapter Five, "The Wonder of Prayer;" Chapter Eight, "Within Religious Walls;" and Chapter Eleven, "Understanding and Honoring Childhood Spirituality."

¹¹ John T. Chirban, "Critical Periods and Critical Moments for Attachment." (<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/age-un-innocence/201312/critical-periods-and-critical-moments-attachment>) Accessed January 3, 2018.

¹² Loui Dobin. Phone conversation. October 3, 2017.

Hoffman explains his thoughts on authentic prayer in his introduction to Chapter Five. He muses that many of us see prayer as “a beautiful abstraction with little personal applicability.”¹³ He suggests that our ancestors may have found prayer easier because they were both closer to one another and closer to nature. He acknowledges that many people find themselves with the desire to pray but that:

we tend to feel awkward and unsure of how to do so meaningfully. Sensing that rote habit is destructive to this sacred endeavor, we may seek to express ourselves spontaneously. But to do this well seems no easy matter. Often, we compromise with half-hearted praying during formal religious occasions and hope that something worthwhile has emerged.¹⁴

Hoffman appears to have put in words the struggle that many religious leaders have with their communities. Congregants rarely attend and when they do, their participation seems less than complete. Yet, there is also the desire for more, and as religious leaders do we not have the responsibility to act and to reach out to those who are searching and unable to find a spiritual home? The question arises whether adults may be lost to us but their children may in fact have the opportunity, the chance, to have a spiritual life that is fuller, more personal, more fulfilling than their parents were able to achieve.

Hoffman continues in a different vein; he now asks the question “Is prayer a natural activity for us?”¹⁵ The stories in the chapter that follow all show that spontaneous prayer appears to be “an important feature of childhood spirituality,” that “[t]he act of praying intensely for others can help youngsters to overcome the trait of selfishness. It can also serve as a trigger for transcendental experience as well.”¹⁶ If children are having these experiences, we as the adults in their lives have a

¹³ Hoffman, 78.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

responsibility to be a safe space for children to share their experiences. Hoffman states that he believes adults have built up “armor” or perhaps a wall of “emotional defensiveness” and that this leaves adults “less capable...of entering the exalted world of heartfelt and healing prayer. In this regard, we have much to remember and relearn from our earliest years.”¹⁷

Two of the stories in Chapter Five are particularly important illustrations of Hoffman’s thesis. The first, titled “Longing to Pray,” is about Carol, a former synagogue president in her mid-forties. The youngest of two, Carol grew up quite observant but, since she was a girl, she received no religious education. She grew frustrated as a child and longed for a bedtime prayer though she told no one of her desire. One evening she found her father’s prayerbook and searched through it until a page stuck out to her because of its unique formatting. She read the following words: “Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.” Carol concludes her story:

This childhood experience was probably my first effort to reach for something that I could call my own, in my limited Jewish life...It represented my small voice calling out for divine guidance, for I believe I’ve always been searching for the answers that feel right to me. Though the episode occurred many years ago, it had led directly to my involvement with Judaism today.¹⁸

Carol’s story teaches educators and rabbis an important lesson - that there are children in our communities who are searching for a connection, searching for understanding. Many children find traditional fixed prayer, what we refer to as *keva*, uninteresting and uninspiring, as do many adults. They are searching for connection, for meaning, and for the past 40 or so years many have found what they are searching for spiritually at summer camp. Whether it is the opportunity for prayer outdoors or for creative prayer experiences that differ from previous experience in a synagogue, camp has inspired people, the way Carol was inspired by her father’s prayerbook, to be

¹⁷ Ibid., 78-79.

¹⁸ Ibid., 87-88.

involved in community life. If we wish for the Jewish community to continue, we must make space for those children who are both looking for and experiencing spiritual moments in their lives.

The second story in Chapter Five that is relevant to the discussion is the story of Jonathan, a professional singer from the greater New York area for over thirty years, titled “The Answer of the Trees.” He too grew up in an observant home, the middle brother of three. His experience occurred at an overnight camp located in the Catskill Mountains when he was fourteen. He explains:

One morning I woke very early and felt that I needed to be alone. As I walked to the nearby woods, I inwardly asked for guidance from above. I took along my prayerbook, found a quiet, leafy spot, and began to utter the Hebrew words aloud to God. Suddenly the woods began to rumble. All the trees around me began to sway, as though there were a sudden storm. As soon as I became aware of this situation and looked around, everything stopped just as abruptly.¹⁹

Jonathan specifically remembers that he asked God to show him “His presence as a clear sign. The instant I returned to reciting my prayers aloud from the prayerbook, the rumbling and swaying resumed, then immediately subsided.”²⁰ This was the spiritual confirmation that Jonathan was searching for and he left the woods with a new sense of confidence as well as a sense of purpose.

But the experience wasn’t just fleeting...It made a profound impression on me. I became convinced prayer is real and important, just as the Bible teaches. That summer I spent at overnight camp became a turning point in my life toward spiritual things, and toward my approach to communicating with God on a regular basis.²¹

Jonathan’s experience impacted his life in a positive way. His spiritual experience at age fourteen helped him overcome his struggles and give him direction. The fact that decades later, just like Carol, he still remembers the exact moment and how he felt shows the importance these moments can have on shaping a child into the adult they have the potential to be. As clergy and as educators we must embrace the opportunities we are given to connect with children; we are the adults in

¹⁹ Ibid., 89-90.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

their lives who have the skills to recognize these important moments and give the child the time and space they need in which to process them.

Though we have only explored two examples in detail, it is important to note that Hoffman's research showed that children have experiences of the spiritual in a variety of settings, from "exposure to nature on both a large and small scale, near-death or crisis phenomena, informal prayer, simple epiphanies of everyday life, and even philosophical musings."²² Hoffman's interviews also uncovered that "[m]any individuals have recounted acutely meaningful, even ecstatic, childhood experiences that took place during worship services or the reading of Scripture."²³ As often as clergy and educators try to create meaningful, spiritual, experiences for children that do not look like the typical worship service or occur in some space unique to the moment, this is not always necessary for children to have spiritual experiences. Hoffman's further commentary is a warning for educators, as he states that a number of children:

vividly recall being misunderstood or criticized by poorly qualified religious teachers for relating such personal events, but this fact hardly invalidates the religious traditions those teachers represent. Instead, such instances raise the question: How do we revitalize religious training so that it truly nourishes rather than suppresses the child's innate spirituality?²⁴

This question is at the center of what separates Jewish summer camps from summer camps with Jewish campers. As Jewish institutions, the staff of the Jewish summer camp has the opportunity to create an environment where staff have the training to speak with children about their experiences as well as help create meaningful spiritual experiences for the children in their care. Spiritual experiences cannot be forced but when they occur they must be given the space in which to be experienced, and children must be given the space in which to share. This is why Jewish

²² Ibid., 126.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

summer camps, which already have built up their credibility with the children in regard to being a fun and safe space to explore themselves, have the leeway to incorporate more education and more ritual experiences.

In Chapter Eight, titled “Within Religious Walls,” Hoffman explores stories of children whose spiritual experiences occurred during traditional religious moments. One such story occurred during David’s bar mitzvah in Philadelphia, fifty years before David shared the story with Hoffman. David states:

I was up on the platform of the synagogue, with my family and relatives below in the audience. As I was called to read the Torah, I suddenly felt I was becoming a different person, or that I was being enlarged within and linked up to all those who had lived before me and studied and read the Torah too. With intense emotion, I then made a speech that I had written myself. I implored God to make me a good man, and I meant it.²⁵

These are the words of a sixty-three-year-old man, but they are the experience of his thirteen-year-old self. David commented, “Far beyond my youthful expectation, the ceremony was an utterly powerful experience. Though I’ve never been ritualistic in my Jewish involvement, this childhood episode remains a foundation for my entire spiritual life.”²⁶ David was not searching for a spiritual experience when he stood up to read Torah. He was shocked and overwhelmed by the emotions that he felt but moved by them as well. Though he states that he has never been observant in his Judaism, he has felt a spiritual connection to his childhood faith for his entire life. One small moment can change a life.

The conclusion to Hoffman’s book explains that “childhood spirituality is finally gaining the long-awaited attention it richly deserves.”²⁷ That psychologists are finally recognizing that the

²⁵ Ibid., 135.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid., 173.

experiences children have impact them for their entire lives, and that often adults have to revisit their childhood memories in order to understand where they are in the present. Hoffman's research falls in line with this way of thinking and helps give credence to the experiences of so many children, many of whom do not have the vocabulary to express their personal experiences until they become adults. These experiences vary but do include near-death experiences. Nature also plays an important role for many children. The recurring theme of the adults interviewed by Hoffman was that they repeated over and over again that they felt they had no one to speak to about their experience. As adults, as clergy and educators, it is our responsibility to build the spaces and the times for children to share their experiences and to process them.²⁸

Hoffman recognizes the role of caregivers and educators and devotes part of his conclusion to analyzing implications for parents and educators. He explains that, as the book has shown, it appears that "every child is born with an innate spiritual essence that parents and relatives, educators and clergy - indeed, all who are involved with youngsters - can do much to enhance."²⁹ Hoffman recognizes that caregivers and educators do not need special powers to be successful at working with children but that rather it is the willingness to make an effort to be present, to listen, to truly hear a child's experience that makes the impact. He explains that there are five topics that caregivers and educators need to know in order to help guide children:

1. The Gateway of Nature (being in nature with children)
2. The Imaginative Journey (encouraging imagination)
3. Rituals (especially in the home, whether religious or not)
4. Dreams: The Open Road (encouraging the sharing of dreams)

²⁸ Ibid., 175-178.

²⁹ Ibid., 179.

5. The Gentle Art of Listening (building in time during a regular schedule to just be present with children, to encourage them to talk and share)

These five topics give insight into Hoffman's understanding of how spirituality manifests itself in children, as well as how important it is to cultivate imagination in children. Jewish summer camps have the opportunity to train their staff in these topic areas, which will help the campers feel comfortable sharing and help the staff work with children in a variety of arenas.³⁰

Steven M. Rosman

In his book, *Jewish Parenting Wisdom*, Steven Rosman uses Jewish *middot*, or character traits, to shape his advice to parents. Chapter Sixteen (or *Ayin*), *Avodah: Worship*, discusses the fact that children are spiritual beings. He refers directly to the rabbinic aggadic tradition that while in the womb, a baby is told all of the secrets of the universe but that upon birth we forget it all in order to spend our lives relearning it.³¹ Rosman's inclusion of this aggadic understanding of the accumulation of knowledge is important to note because it places him socially in a more traditional Jewish background with a belief in the role of the spiritual. He cites Hoffman's work as one of the pieces he is building upon in this chapter before continuing with his own perspective. Rosman states,

Just as we teach our children the language necessary to express themselves in relationship to us, and just as teachers instruct our children in the symbols and expressions of science and art, special adults who know the language of prayer need to reveal it to our sons and daughters as a mentor does with an apprentice....What a fortuitous opportunity for those of us who want to learn along with our children.³²

Though Rosman is writing and teaching for parents, clergy and educators working in a camp setting have an opportunity to help create the environment where children feel that the adults

³⁰ Ibid., 179-182.

³¹ Steven M. Rosman, *Jewish Parenting Wisdom* (New Jersey: Jason Aaronson Inc., 1997), 67. Hoffman also refers to this tradition as cited on page 1. Hoffman, 3.

³² Ibid., 68.

around them will truly listen to them, and wish to help them process their experiences. Camps have an important role to play not only in giving children a positive Jewish experience but also in making sure that the Jewish experience they curate is a valuable one for all children and not just a small select percentage. Judaism is a religion with rituals based around family and community, and camps help teach that in an immersive and fun way.

Rosman continues by explaining that worship, that prayer, “is one of the very few sanctioned opportunities for a child to explore the realm of the spirit and to reclaim the kind of oneness that she or he must have known before entering this world.”³³ Prayer then is the chance to once again connect with the universe on a higher level than is generally experienced everyday. Rosman continues by explaining that while the structure of a worship service needs to be learned, “children inherently know about worship.”³⁴ Research has shown that children are “inclined toward worship even when raised in agnostic and areligious families....”³⁵ Though worship services, with structured prayer, are only one way to practice spirituality they play an important role in the life of practicing Jews. The fact that regular worship services are an expected aspect of every Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) camp, though each has their own way of incorporating regular services, is proof of this. Camps have the opportunity to show another side of worship and a responsibility to not just fall in line with the expected traditions.

Prayers, Rosman teaches, are “public affirmations of the wonderful” and can “help inoculate children against the scourge of cynicism so rampant in our world.”³⁶ Prayer in Judaism is so much more than worship once a week; prayer is an everyday occurrence both in a formal setting as well

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid., 69.

as in one's daily activities. Whether it is *asher yatzar* which is said after using the bathroom, *birkat hamazon* after eating, blessings for seeing a rainbow or an old friend or the bedtime *Shema*, Judaism teaches us to be thankful at all moments for the lives we lead. Jewish communal prayer is written in the plural in order to remind each individual that there is more than the "I", something else which is important for children to learn. Rosman cites Rabbi Eugene Borowitz (z"l) for his understanding that "public worship requires us to stand among those we may dislike or sometimes disagree with, and to see ourselves as related by covenant, peoplehood, and religious heritage."³⁷ The strength of character that we are instilling in children at camp needs to include the understanding that we are in community with people with whom disagree but also with whom we must be able to interact with. We are learning through the reach of social media that it is too easy to isolate ourselves, to create our own echo chambers where we only hear our own point of view reiterated for our ongoing consumption; we must teach the next generation the skills to live in community with those with whom they disagree. Our larger community depends on it.

Misha Louvish and Fayge Cohen

In their book for directors of summer camps, Misha Louvish and Fayge Cohen write that "[s]ummer camps provide a rare opportunity for creating an atmosphere of Jewish living."³⁸ This is no small statement for a book published in 1953, the year after the first Reform Jewish camp, Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute (OSRUI), was founded. Though, as discussed below in the camp history chapter, Jewish camping had been around since the turn of the century, the fact that this work discusses the place of spirituality in a Jewish summer camp setting is forward-thinking. Louvish and Cohen continue by explaining that other Jewish institutions, like schools, youth groups, and community centers, have many other activities competing for their members' time and

³⁷ Ibid., 70.

³⁸ Misha Louvish and Fayge Cohen, *Summer Camps Guide* (Jerusalem: AHVA Press, 1953), 5.

attention. This is in comparison to the summer camp which they call “a community within itself.”³⁹ They continue, “[t]he camper lives in the atmosphere of this self-contained community for a full month or sometimes two. This intensive period can be used to create a strong Jewish consciousness - culturally, spiritually and emotionally.”⁴⁰ This recognition that summer camp is the perfect opportunity to help a child develop their Jewish consciousness, to develop a child’s spirituality, was being articulated in the early 1950s and yet, for many today, this is not one of the pieces being held up as a central goal of the summer camp curriculum. The summer camp is the perfect chance to help instill in a child not only a love for Judaism but to be a safe space in which to explore what Judaism, and spirituality means to them.

Louvish and Cohen explain that this goal, to instill a love of Judaism, can only happen in a camp setting that is also “active, cheerful and healthy”.⁴¹ They continue, “[i]t is fallacious to think that an atmosphere and an attitude can be created in an hour’s discussion group, or at a special evening celebration alone. The whole spirit of the camp and its entire planning should be in accordance with this aim.”⁴² This is one example of the recognized importance of a summer camp curriculum that has as one of its goals the creation of a safe space for the exploration and development of spirituality for both the campers and the staff. Worship experiences at summer camp that do not acknowledge the specialness of the opportunity for all involved are a wasted opportunity. The leadership of the summer camp must utilize all of their resources to make the experience one of both safety and growth for both the campers and the staff.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

Prayer At Ramah Summer Camps

Sylvia C. Ettenberg and Geraldine Rosenfield edited a collection published in 1989 about the Conservative Movement's Ramah summer camps. Ettenberg began her career in the Conservative Movement as the registrar of the Teacher's Institute at The Jewish Theological Seminary in 1946, and, according to Professor Marjorie Lehman, Ettenberg "began to take action by convincing the president that the Conservative Movement needed to develop Hebrew-language camps committed to providing a religious environment for Jewish youth. In 1947, together with Dean Moshe Davis, she founded the Jewish Theological Seminary's Ramah camps."⁴³ Ettenberg's devotion to Jewish education never faltered and she spent her entire life working in the field. Rosenfield was also a devoted scholar of the American Jewish Experience. She spent her life working between the American Jewish Committee and Jewish Theological Seminary, along with editing numerous books. The collection traces the development of the Ramah camps and focuses on various aspects of their curriculum.

In the chapter written by Rabbi Neil Gillman (z"l), who was a professor of Jewish philosophy at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, titled "*Tefillah* as a Religious Obligation," he delves deeply into the role of prayer.⁴⁴ Gillman, Ettenberg and Rosenfield all recognized the role that worship, and specifically prayer, played in the lives of children at the Ramah camps. Required participation in services meant that a significant amount of time was spent in prayer, and Gillman's chapter takes a deeper look into what the goals and stumbling blocks are for prayer at summer camp. He states,

⁴³ Marjorie Lehman, "Sylvia Ettenberg." *Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia*. 1 March 2009. Jewish Women's Archive. (Accessed on December 20, 2017) <<https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/ettenberg-sylvia>>.

⁴⁴ Neil Gillman, "*Tefillah* as a Religious Obligation" in Sylvia C. Ettenberg, ed. And Geraldine Rosenfield, ed., *The Ramah Experience: Community and Commitment* (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1989), 85-96.

No one will disagree that prayer is the very heart of the life of religion. Nor will anyone disagree that prayer is one of the most subtle and complex of human activities. But if it is difficult to pray, how much more difficult is it to teach someone else to pray! “Religious education” is an elusive term, but whatever it means, it must include the attempt to teach children to pray.⁴⁵

If this is true, if teaching children how to pray is more difficult than learning how to pray oneself, how can we teach educators of all kinds to build the safe spaces children need in order to find their own personal expression through prayer if the educators themselves do not know how to pray? Gillman takes up his own challenge and explains that educators today are still building upon the work of Abraham Joshua Heschel in regard to exploring prayer, but that they have had little assistance from “the theoreticians of Jewish religion on which to build educational strategies.”⁴⁶ This lack of new models for teaching prayer has been tackled by more recent scholars. Gillman was writing in 1989, but no one model has proven successful in multiple settings. Each synagogue, each camp, each community has a different starting place and this generates the need for each community to find their own answer.

Gillman continues his discussion by explaining that his audience has caused themselves an extra layer of struggle by using the term “prayer” for “a variety of forms of Jewish religious expression, each of which has its own distinctive theology, halakhic structure, and function.”⁴⁷ He reminds us that there was a reason our ancestors broke prayer up into a number of sections, each with its own blessings and purpose - including the differences depending on when the prayer occurs (day, night, Shabbat, weekday or holiday). Jewish prayer has levels and considerations that are often overlooked by those who do not study liturgy in depth. The issue of *kavanah* (spontaneous) and *keva* (fixed) - referred to by the author as “models of spirituality” - are yet

⁴⁵ Ibid., 85.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

another layer of understanding for educators.⁴⁸ For, while people like structure, and educators are taught the importance of a schedule for children, Judaism does not believe that all prayer must be *keva* (set) but that there must be room for *kavanah* as well. If it is hard to teach another to pray, how much harder must it be to teach another to pray with both *keva* as well as *kavanah*? Gillman addresses this issue by asking what is the goal of teaching prayer at summer camp, acknowledging that the goals “may vary from age group to age group, even from camper to camper and from one model of spirituality to another.”⁴⁹ He then asks if we even know what we want children to get out of the prayer curriculum being offered at the camp. For, there are three different things that could be taught: synagogue skills, liturgy, and the third is “to teach prayer as the paradigmatic pietistic experience, as something that begins when the words drop off.”⁵⁰ Each of these things requires a different set of skills from the educators and has a unique purpose in the lives of the campers. Yet, Gillman also raises the question if the Ramah camp is the right location to teach pietism because camp is a place built on structure, as mentioned before. Gillman states:

There are specific times and places allotted for prayer. There simply is not much room for spontaneity in the camp structure, at least in the younger *edot*. Besides, one of the structures to which Ramah is committed is the halakhic structure, and prayer as emotional expression is in constant tension with *halakhah*. Are we prepared to yield on the latter to accommodate the former?⁵¹

While this is in contrast to the goals of the Reform movement, it is important to explore what the Ramah camps have done and are doing because Gillman and his compatriots bring to light important issues for all Jewish summer camps. This is explored through Gillman’s discussion of the stages of development in children and specifically his reference to James Fowler’s *Stages of Faith*.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 86.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 87.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 88.

⁵¹ Ibid.

Most of the research into how prayer is different at different stages of development has been done by Christians but is applicable in Jewish settings as well.⁵² The research explores the way children explore the world, and discover their individual selves, in a way different than adults who have already been shaped to view their experiences in a certain way.⁵³ The impact of moments of spiritual meaning cannot be overemphasized, as discussed in the section on Hoffman's research, and Gillman notes it as well:

There is no questioning the palpable *religious* impact of these moments - "religious" in a global sense, touching and transforming all of the participants in a genuine way. That's religious education with a vengeance. I only wish we were all more aware of what we were doing at these moments, and striving in a more conscious way to create an appropriate curriculum to teach this approach.⁵⁴

This need to strive to construct worship, prayer, and spiritual experiences for children so that they can feel supported and willing to share what they have seen or heard requires a curriculum and training of the educators involved. We cannot expect children to come out fully formed into the Jewish adults we hope they will be without conscious effort to shape their experiences.

The importance that movement summer camping plays in creating the leaders of the movement for tomorrow is the note on which Gillman chooses to conclude because he believes that "[t]he worship service is probably the most dramatic way we have for conveying the distinctive stance of Conservative Judaism toward Jewish belief and practice."⁵⁵ He continues by stating that he believes "that Ramah is the single most distinctively Conservative of all of our educational endeavors - far more distinctively Conservative than the Solomon Schechter Day

⁵² Ibid., 88-89. James W. Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981).

⁵³ Fowler spends the bulk of the book discussing the developmental stages of children and how that interacts with an understanding of faith. Fowler was instrumental in bringing human development into the realm of the study of religion and faith for all ages.

⁵⁴ Fowler, 90.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 91.

Schools, for example.”⁵⁶ This belief is supported by the research that traces where the leadership of the Conservative Movement arises from, and yet it is also clear to Gillman that most (if not all) campers do not realize the shaping that is occurring at summer camp.

The same thing can be said about Reform camps. They are the basis of training in Reform Judaism. The fact that each one is different is both positive and negative. The differences acknowledge the different ways to understand and practice Reform Judaism. Yet, when people move around the country they often feel lost when they cannot find “their” synagogue which does things “their” way. There is no one, unified, Reform Judaism but there are values we all hold to be near and dear. The desire for one siddur is also part of the conversation. But while the 1994 *Gates of Prayer* was pretty streamlined, *Mishkan Tefilah* leaves a lot of options available. And though many camps have their own prayer books or pamphlets, they also all have *Mishkan T'filah* because it is a Movement publication. The question we need to ask ourselves is whether or not the unification of the movement is what we are trying to accomplish at camp. Are we trying to create a connection between campers and Reform Judaism or are we more interested that campers be Jewish in their identification, regardless of whether that means they belong to a different movement or no movement at all.

Conclusion

Spirituality in children must be cultivated if parents, educators, and community members want adults who are spiritually connected. The development of a child’s personal spirituality grants them the ability to connect with themselves and those around them on a deeper level. An understanding that spirituality and a belief in a higher power are not mutually exclusive is also important for the adults in children’s lives to comprehend. As the stories shared with Hoffman express, interactions with the spiritual come in many different forms and all are true experiences.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

Spirituality is also a gift one can nurture in children, a gift that they can continue to use and grow with throughout their lives. It is a gift in that children are granted an appreciation of the world from an early age. They are granted an understanding of the wonder they experience, and a recognition that not everything can be explained through a scientific understanding. Some things, as many adults have learned, cannot be explained through logic or the scientific method. This does not mean they did not occur or were not real. Rather, it means that there is still so much to be learned and a healthy appreciation of the spiritual allows for the growth of imagination and understanding.

The stories shared with Hoffman show that children want to share their experiences in the world, and with the spiritual, with those around them. The need is there but the follow-through is not if the child finds themselves in a space where they feel uncomfortable or not safe sharing. This discomfort often arises from a child's attempt to share with an adult and that adult being dismissive of the child's experience. The adult's discomfort may arise from their own discomfort with their personal spirituality or from a complete misunderstanding of the child's experience. It is common for a person to dismiss that with which they have no experience, even when their dismissal can have a significant negative impact on the other. Children want to be understood and look to the adults in their lives for guidance that what they think, feel, and experience is real. The common thread throughout the stories shared with Hoffman, only a handful of which were shared in this chapter, was that the child (now an adult) had no one to speak to about the experience. They felt that they had to keep it to themselves because no one around them would understand. The closing off of oneself is not a healthy behavior to learn, and therefore creating a safe space for children to experience and share is paramount.

Jewish summer camp therefore has an important role to play in both creating the safe space and helping people develop the skills needed to listen to children and to guide them. As noted, Loui Dobin explained that summer camp is the perfect place to help children develop their spirituality.⁵⁷ For, the fact that children are at summer camp for an extended experience allows for them to develop close relationships with both one another as well as staff members. These staff members then have both the opportunity and time to coach the children through their experiences. It is only through doing that we learn, and spiritual coaching happens best in the breach between things. One cannot script a group spiritual experience and expect that it will touch every participant the same way. Instead, staff members must be taught that any moment can be a spiritual one and the staff must also be given the resources to be able to guide the campers during these moments. It is also important to note that children who have been through something, whether personally or as part of their family system, have a head start on feelings - on spirituality - according to Dobin's experience. This means that not all children who attend summer camp are at the same stage in their willingness to experience or discuss their spiritual journey. Summer camp can also help script experiences for those children who do not have that type of head start. The tools that summer camp has will be further articulated in the next chapter through an exploration of the history of Jewish summer camping. That will then be followed by the application of this chapter through the commentary on the Shabbat Shacharit service compiled in Chapter Three specifically for Greene Family Camp.

⁵⁷ Loui Dobin. Phone conversation. October 3, 2017.

CHAPTER TWO

Camp History

Introduction

This chapter provides background information about Jewish summer camping in general before narrowing down, first to camping sponsored by the Reform Movement, and then to the URJ Greene Family Camp (GFC) in particular. The purpose of this chapter is to give an understanding of the development of Jewish summer camping in the United States. This foundation will then allow for a solid understanding of the need for a new Saturday morning worship service for GFC.

Evolution of Jewish Summer Camping

In January of 1969, a group of leaders in Jewish camping gathered together for a conference titled “Strengthening the Jewish Experiences of Children at Camp.” The National Jewish Welfare Board published the proceedings of the conference which included speeches by a number of important people in the field of Jewish education as well as representatives of the larger Jewish community.

Dr. Albert P. Schoolman (z”l) spoke at the conference on behalf of the American Association for Jewish Education as a Fellow and Board Member of the organization. He was the founder and president of Cejwin Camps, founded after World War I in Port Jervis, New York. His wife, Bertha Schoolman, was “an instrumental figure in its operation” and an educator and philanthropist in her own right.⁵⁸ Dr. Schoolman spoke of the need for a national organization for Jewish camping in order to assist the camp leadership with the inclusion of Jewish education, whether formal or informal, in their camping curriculum. He emphasized that this organization would not be in

⁵⁸ Nancy Mykoff, “Summer Camping in the United States” in *Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia*. 20 March 2009. Jewish Women's Archive. (Viewed on December 4, 2017) <<https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/summer-camping-in-united-states>>.

competition with the American Camping Association but would rather be another asset to the camping community. He explained:

In the concern for the Jewish component in camping, the National Camping Organization should encompass in its program, definition or aims and objectives, and development of responsive program, concern with recruitment and training of personnel, active public relations aimed at expanding Jewish camping, and many of the other excellent elements listed in the program of this conference.⁵⁹

Schoolman, as one of the opening speakers at the conference, gave the gathering a certain sense of importance and his words helped shape the experience of those in attendance.

Emanuel Berlatsky, the Director of Services to the Metropolitan Communities (a position of the National Jewish Welfare Board), also spoke words of welcome at the conference. He dwelt first on the influences of John Dewey, William Kilpatrick and Grace Coyle before focusing specifically on the needs of the Jewish child, who is the one being served by Jewish summer camps. He stated that the camps must shoulder the responsibilities of teaching and passing on Jewish culture and values to the next generation and that failure is an “absence of a direction to our camps.”⁶⁰ The recognition that the Jewish community at large has a responsibility to the camps, regardless of their individual affiliation, acknowledges the role summer camps have come to play in the lives of American Jews. Their role in the creation of leadership for the community and the continuation of the Jewish people cannot be overemphasized.

Lloyd Setleis, who at the time of the conference was a professor of social work at Yeshiva University, spoke on the topic of how to approach camping with the Jewish child specifically in

⁵⁹ Albert P. Schoolman, “Greetings on Behalf of the American Association for Jewish Education” in “Strengthening the Jewish Experiences of Children at Camp: Proceedings of National Conference on Jewish Camping January 5-8, 1969” Issued by National Jewish Welfare Board, 1.

⁶⁰ Emanuel Berlatsky, “Greetings on Behalf of the National Jewish Welfare Board” in “Strengthening the Jewish Experiences of Children at Camp,” 2.

mind.⁶¹ He, along with every Jewish professional then and now, was vocally worried about the continuation of the Jewish people and spoke of the strains of urban living, living away from extended family and how the Jewish summer camp can be used to combat the ills of society. Setleis then discussed the role of camps in helping Jewish children across the religious spectrum to find their own individual way of practicing their Jewish faith:

To negate or minimize the validity and significance of the religious, political, cultural and humanist dimensions of the Jewish community is to deny the child an honest valuing of the differences which together constitute the community of which he is a part and with which he must find some basis of identification as a Jew with some sense of his wholeness as a person.... He cuts his own pattern of identity and selfhood. No one form of Jewish life carries the whole.⁶²

For this reason, Setleis believed that each camp must work to its own specific educational goals but cannot forget that the experience, the content taught, must be integrated into the lived experiences of each individual child. The child is not living Judaism in isolation but rather in a larger community. This is one of the reasons Setleis viewed his position in the Wurzweiler School of Social Work as a platform from which to speak to educators and administrators of summer camps.

Dr. Solomon H. Green, another professor in Yeshiva University's Wurzweiler School of Social Work, spoke specifically about the Jewish teenager at summer camp, not that summer camps have the opportunity through their selection of staff and programming to have a "significant impact on the teenage camper."⁶³ The recognition of the difference in needs of the younger and older camper is important, because too often it is overlooked with a one-size-fits-all approach to the education at summer camp. Green explains that teenagers want to question, want to push, and summer camp

⁶¹ Lloyd Setleis, "Toward an Approach to Camping Services to the Jewish Child", in "Strengthening the Jewish Experiences of Children at Camp," 3-12.

⁶² Ibid., 7-8.

⁶³ Solomon H. Green, "Serving the Jewish Teenager in the Camp" in "Strengthening the Jewish Experiences of Children at Camp," 13.

should give them the opportunity to do so in a safe environment. For Jewish teenagers are living in a majority non-Jewish environment and are bringing their Judaism along with them. This is one of many reasons that the choice of staff is incredibly important for the Jewish summer camp. That the staff are important role models and that they must be well educated in Jewish topics, is well established throughout the literature, along with the recognition that it is hard to find enough staff each and every year.⁶⁴

Daniel Isaacman (whose dissertation is an essential part of this chapter), spoke at the conference about the need for Jewish summer camps to recognize that they have a responsibility to help prepare the children in their care for life-long Jewish living. Isaacman notes, “The Jewish child is not schizophrenic -- Jewish only on the Sabbath and festivals -- but rather he is wholly integrated human being....the goal of teaching our children that living Jewishly is natural and continual, and a relevant and desirable pattern of life in America’s pluralistic society -- 365 days a year, summers included.”⁶⁵ Jewish children, even more so today, have so much pulling at them that they need space in which to find their own identity. While Isaacman believes that Jewish diversity is important, he also sees *kashrut* and Sabbath observance at the camps as essential in order to allow all possible people to participate, as well as to expose children to a variety of practices. This

⁶⁴ Sylvia C. Ettenberg and Geraldine Rosenfield, *The Ramah Experience: Community and Commitment* (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1989); Daniel Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps in the United States and Canada, 1900-1969* (Philadelphia, PA: Dropsie University, 1970); Michael M. Lorge and Gary Phillip Zola, *A Place of Our Own: The Rise of Reform Jewish Camping*. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2006); National Jewish Welfare Board, “Strengthening the Jewish Experiences of Children at Camp: Proceedings of National Conference on Jewish Camping January 5-8, 1969;” National Jewish Welfare Board, “The Future of Jewish Camping - Directions and Emphases: Proceedings of National Conference on Jewish Camping January 10-13, 1972;” Celia E. Rothenberg, *Serious Fun at a Jewish Community Summer Camp: Family, Judaism, and Israel* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2016); Leonard A. Schoolman, ed., “Camp Counselor and Staff Orientation Manual” (New York: UAHC Department of Camp and Youth Education, 1970); Shlomo Shulsinger, Translated by Gideon Tamir, *Massad: The Story of Hebrew Camping in the United States* (New York: Mossad Camps, 1959).

⁶⁵ Daniel Isaacman, “Enriching Jewish Life Experiences in the Camp” in “Strengthening the Jewish Experiences of Children at Camp,” 18.

is an argument that needs serious thought for community camps but the issue is less a concern for movement camps which already have the guidance of their movement on these issues.

Isaacman then notes the importance of camp staff being aware that Jewish concepts and values must be incorporated into the program (the curriculum) of the camp in both formal and informal ways. He recognizes that “the most serious deterrent toward creating and enriching Jewish life experiences in the camp is the lack of adequately prepared, properly committed and motivated staff. Resistance to Jewish programming has to be overcome on the part of the staff, on all levels, before a significant enrichment program could be introduced.”⁶⁶

This continues to be a problem in many parts of the country and has been experienced at GFC. The need to fill positions for safety purposes (enough bunk staff, lifeguards, challenge course instructors) cannot be ignored, but the need to have staff who are also educators, who are also committed to bringing Judaism alive to the campers (and, honestly, to the other staff members as well) cannot be overstated. The need for impressive staff members runs up against the issue of camp not being viewed as an important summer job. Better to have interned at a law firm, better to have traveled the world. The demands on the time of many people who are “of age” for camp work are many and varied.

Dr. Arnulf M. Pins, who spoke in his role as Executive Director of the Council on Social Work Education, built upon Isaacson’s words with a presentation titled “Staff Training for Strengthening Jewish Identification and Practice.” He spoke about the importance of having clearly stated goals and objectives which can be used as the measuring rod against which staff are judged. This must then be followed up by staff training planned with the staff in mind in order to give them the skills they need to be successful in accomplishing the goals of the summer camp. It must be acknowledged by those in charge of hiring that every person they hire comes in with a different

⁶⁶ Ibid., 19.

background and pre-camp training must be personalized to help level the playing field. Pins explains that many camp directors successfully both hire and plan staff training with this in mind, though they do so without realizing it. He continues, “Few camp directors will hire counselors who hate the outdoors or find it difficult to work with young people. Likewise, they should not employ counselors whose attitudes toward Jewish life are negative or who lack minimum Jewish background needed for program.”⁶⁷ His words seem simple but the reality of hiring counselors for Jewish summer camps has only gotten to be more difficult. In many places the counselors are previous campers who love the camp but may not have much more Jewish background than what they themselves learned at the camp.

Pins has high expectations and high hopes for the future of staff training for Jewish summer camps. He explains that,

In order for the training program to have its greatest impact it should, if possible, be more than a one week summer effort. The program should be projected on a year-round experience for the counselor. Counselors in the same geographic area can meet for one or two days during vacation periods for a training session. All staff can be asked to read material during the year, including books and articles of Jewish interest. The training program should also include the supervisory staff. The training program should be seen as a progressive process with long range, intermediate and immediate goals; staff returning for successive years should have training based on but not repeating the previous experience.⁶⁸

This is no small feat, no simple passing remark. Pins is asking for summer camps to recognize that they are not just a camp for children but a training ground for young adults as well. As a senior staff member at GFC, a member of the leadership team as they call it, it was made clear to the author that the counselors were her campers. Though many on the leadership team worked directly with campers, many others did not. The leadership team were the guides for the

⁶⁷ Arnulf M. Pins, “Staff Training for Strengthening Jewish Identification and Practice” in “Strengthening the Jewish Experiences of Children at Camp,” 20.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 21.

counselors in all things. The pipeline for leadership at GFC, and at other camps, would be easier if more training of the kind Pins is advocating came to fruition. Pins concludes by explaining that the training during the camp season must also emphasize Jewish knowledge because if it does not, “counselors tend to assume (and correctly so) that the Jewish emphasis and objectives really do not have priority.”⁶⁹ In business one is often told to “follow the money” when looking for the real mission of a group, since people do put their money towards things that are important to them. The same principle applies to any group when it comes to making choices about what will be included in training, which is viewed as most valuable, and what will not. The evolution of staff training at summer camps would make an interesting study, though it is outside the purview of this history.

The Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC), now known as the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ), published a *Camp Counselor and Staff Orientation Manual* in 1970. This manual sought to give a more unified statement about the expectations at the camps affiliated with the Union. The Manual was edited by Rabbi Leonard A. Schoolman, who was at the time the National Director of Programs for the Union (a position he held for a total of 18 years). Schoolman wrote some of the materials himself, including the introduction, where he expressed the belief that “[c]amp offers a unique opportunity for creative Jewish living. The Jewish atmosphere which pervades the camps can help the child to internalize the Jewish values which he has learned in his home and in his religious school classes.”⁷⁰ As an employee of the Union, it makes sense that Schoolman would discuss the place of camp within the larger setting of home and synagogue. He goes on to explain the purpose of the Manual as a tool to help staff members and counselors better

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Leonard A. Schoolman, ed. *Camp Counselor and Staff Orientation Manual* Department of Camp and Youth Education Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1970, 3.

understand the goals of the Union camps, as well as being a resource of basic information on Jewish rituals that should be kept on hand for regular use.⁷¹

The Manual also included the Statement of Principles Guiding UAHC Camps, which gives important insights into the goals and purposes the Union camps were fulfilling. The introduction states:

Camping is one of the most important and unique American contributions to education and group work, and camping with a specific religious orientation adds a new dimension to this contribution. Starting with its first regional camp in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, in 1951, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations has found that its summer camps present challenging experiences in Jewish religious living. The UAHC looks upon its camps as extensions in a country setting of the Jewish home, the Congregation's religious school, and also as a most significant area in its program of experimental education.⁷²

These are not just passing words but rather an important foundation upon which more camps, including GFC, were opened. The hope that the Union summer camps would help build the Movement's synagogues comes across clearly and has been successful. The majority of clergy in the Movement were impacted, in some way, by summer camp, and the relationship between summer camp and congregational involvement was established in later studies.⁷³

The Criteria for Camp Directors and Program Directors restates the belief that "UAHC Camps are, in essence, model Jewish communities, with a set of values determined by the UAHC and implemented by the camp personnel engaged to administer programming."⁷⁴ The idea of a model Jewish community expresses the same driving mission of earlier writings on Jewish

⁷¹ Ibid., 3.

⁷² Ibid., 8.

⁷³ Steven M. Cohen and Ron Miller, Ira M. Sheskin and Berna Torr, "Camp Works: The Long-Term Impact of Jewish Overnight Camp - Evidence from 26 U.S. Jewish Population Studies on Adult Jewish Engagement" (Foundation for Jewish Camp, 2011); Gary A. Tobin and Meryle Weinstein, "Jewish Camping" (San Francisco: The Institute for Jewish & Communal Research, 2000).

⁷⁴ "Camp Counselor and Staff Orientation Manual," 8.

summer camping, which recognizes that many Jewish campers are not immersed in a Jewish culture the way previous generations may have been. For many Jews throughout the country, the majority of their neighborhoods and social circles are not Jewish. Giving the younger generation the opportunity to live in a fully Jewish environment, as defined by the camp's personal mission and goals, is a unique experience. The criteria are then extrapolated upon, for:

[i]n a very real sense, the camps' inspirational tones and religious and cultural programs are made manifest by the camp directors, program directors, and other members of the staff....the camp directors and program directors set a standard of religious behavior for the entire camp community, demonstrating their concerns for Jewish values and personal integrity.⁷⁵

The differences between the various Union camps are stark and much of that can be traced back to this understanding that the tone of the camp is set by the directors and leadership of the camp. This will be discussed in detail about GFC in a later section.

The Manual is both inspirational as well as aspirational in many aspects. Under "Criteria for Counselors" is the statement "Counselors shall have a sound religious education.... It is also essential that counselors possess a wholesome and positive attitude toward Judaism in particular."⁷⁶ As an outsider, one might say that this is a basic need but for those who do the hiring for summer camps, this is not something that can be assumed. Many camps hire counselors who are able to do camp-specific activities. Examples are: ropes course specialists, lifeguards, coaches for sports or artists of various kinds. The fact that the camp is also Jewish means that the majority of the staff are Jewish but they do not necessarily have a solid religious education. The obvious exception is for positions such as "education director" or "t'filah coordinator." These jobs require the Jewish background the Manual suggests all staff members need.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 9.

The role of summer camps, beyond their direct goals regarding their campers and staff, is that as living Jewish communities, as models, they should also be a training ground for the Movement. The Manual states that “Union camps are special camps” and that the Union “looks to its camps to provide inspiration and influences for congregational youth and adults” with the hope being that the camps will inspire the campers to want to continue their Jewish education. The further hope is that some of the campers (and staff) will also want to continue serving their community as formal leaders - rabbis, cantors, educators, non-profit professionals and youth workers.⁷⁷ The camp program should therefore be built upon the goals and mission, built upon the pillars of Jewish life: Torah, Avodah, and Gemilut Chasadim. According to the Manual, Avodah should be interpreted as “both religious service and physical world” and Gemilut Chasadim as “social action in the broadest sense.”⁷⁸ The Manual does not ignore the role of camp activities as important as well, explaining that “a full nature, recreation and athletic program should be incorporated within this framework, permeated by a uniquely creative religious climate and setting.”⁷⁹ There is an implied balancing act in the descriptions in the Manual. In the further explanation of training and the role of Torah study at summer camp, the Manual states that both “[p]rofessional training and the study of Torah are vital for all UAHC camp staff.” There will be both “pre-camp training, an ongoing program of Talmud Torah for all staff” as well as “other staff training during the camp season. These study periods are included as part of the camp day, and all staff are expected to participate.”⁸⁰ Though a survey was not taken for this study to ascertain

⁷⁷ Ibid., 9.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 12.

whether this was or is part of camp culture in Reform Movement camps, it is not the norm at GFC to have regular Talmud Torah as a part of the daily schedule for staff.

The *Religious School Camp Weekend Manual*, another work written and published by the UAHC, and edited by Schoolman, begins by once again expressing the understanding that camp is a unique place where American children can experience and live their Jewish values. Schoolman explains that the immersive experience of the camp allows for more flexibility in educational programming because one is not limited by the four walls of a classroom or the restrictions of a synagogue building. Most importantly, he explains the role of relationships that camp helps to cultivate among campers (and also among staff). He says that,

In the cities where students come from many public schools and sit in a class for two or three hours each week, they generally do not have the opportunity to form close friendships. Thus, the central ideas of camp -- living and learning with others -- have the potential, when used effectively with a religious school program, of enhancing and perhaps radically changing many facets of the child's Jewish experience.⁸¹

This Manual was written to help religious schools incorporate weekend retreats at their local Movement summer camp into their regular academic calendar with the hope that the weekend would both encourage attendance at the camp during the summer as well as enrich the religious school experience. While in 1970 this may have been a new approach, in the past few years GFC has been a model for the Movement in regards to being a “hub” of living Judaism. They have shifted their year-round programming model to become a place not only for religious schools but also for youth of all ages, as well as adults. This approach recognizes the need for a central body to coordinate among the many synagogues in a given region of the country.

Schoolman's explanation of the new approach recognizes the limitations of the weekend-length program in comparison to a summer experience but notes that participants would

⁸¹ Leonard A. Schoolman, *Religious School Camp Weekend Manual* (New York: Department of Camp and Youth Education UAHC, 1970), 1.

still be having the opportunity for living their Judaism “not merely attending worship services or reciting blessings at meals, but being aware of and understanding Jewish attitudes and values...”⁸²

This is where the larger connection to summer camp enters into Schoolman’s writing. He recognized that there was more to be done by educators, clergy, and parents than was being done. By building upon the strengths of summer camp throughout the year, both religious schools and summer camps benefit, but more importantly the individual children benefit because they are being given a holistic educational experience.

In 1972, a conference was held on the issue of the future of Jewish Camping, sponsored by the American Association for Jewish Education, Full Time Executives of Jewish Communal Camps and the National Jewish Welfare Board. At this conference a number of notable Jewish educators, including the director of OSRUI, Gerald Kaye whose topic was “Camping and Creative Jewish Education.”

Kaye first quotes Zalman Schachter in order to explain where he is coming from: “What we are here for is to figure out how to Jew, and how to Jew as effectively as possible and as continuously as possible.” This statement is the root of so much programming in the Jewish community that it is astonishing that it was first uttered so many years ago. Kaye explains that the excitement of camp arises out of “the opportunity to continually develop new or continuous Jewish identities or rather Jewish communities.”⁸³ He is careful to acknowledge that this is both with the campers as well as with the staff, an important reminder that camps do not only serve the campers but serve the entire community which is required to make them run. Kaye continues by explaining

⁸² Ibid, 3.

⁸³ Gerald Kaye, “Camping and Creative Jewish Education” in “The Future of Jewish Camping - Directions and Emphases” Proceedings of National Conference on Jewish Camping January 10-13, 1972, 44.

that Jewish camping is good for the Jews but that everything that occurs must be viewed as a Jewish activity because Judaism teaches life skills and not only theology. He explains,

In fact the waterfront program is a Jewish waterfront. So we have Jewish waterskiing, Jewish sailing and Jewish swimming...In the process of doing that, we take out the Talmud and we say, "you know the Talmud teaches us that you have to teach a child how to swim." Therefore the lesson can take place there as well as in the library as well as in any other part of the camp environment in which we relate to each other.⁸⁴

Kaye understands that Jewish values, texts, and beliefs must be taught in a living way. Meaning, for example, that when one is in the dining hall one can speak about our relationship to food and giving thanks, while in the sports center one can speak about respecting the body, and while in the art room one can speak to the long tradition of Jewish artists. Judaism does not just live in the synagogue or the Jewish Community Center or the home, it is a part of who we are and therefore everything one does is Jewish.

Edward Robbins the director of Camp SABRA in St. Louis, Missouri, spoke on "The Future of Jewish Camping - What Directions and Emphases." He discussed what he viewed as the "principal purpose" or "very important purpose" of Jewish summer camp which is "to build a sense of identity and loyalty to camp, then to transmit that loyalty from the camp to self or to internalize that loyalty in terms of a Jewish self identity."⁸⁵ This desire for loyalty to both the camp and to an individual's unique Jewish identity is only possible if the leadership of the camp believe it is part of their job to help shape young Jewish children into Jewish adults. Robbins not only believes in this mission but argues, like Kaye, that the way to do it is to make everything at camp Jewish. He gives examples, that anything and everything done should be Jewish in tone: music, dance, campfire, including an Ulpan program. Robbins further explains,

⁸⁴ Ibid., 45.

⁸⁵ Edward Robbins, "The Future of Jewish Camping - What Directions and Emphases," in "The Future of Jewish Camping - Directions and Emphases," 18.

This mood of thinking reminds me of something Ben Gurion said about Israel. It was in 1964 when he said that when you come to Israel everything is Jewish. The buildings, the garbage cans, the streets, even the dirt is Jewish. I don't think one really understands it until one has the experience. There is no doubt in my mind that the same kind of experience can be achieved at camp.⁸⁶

Even the use of Ben Gurion in his example shows the dedication Robbins has to the belief that everything at a Jewish summer camp should be Jewish. It is unclear if this subliminal messaging actually works or if it is just an addition that may or may not increase the Jewish vocabulary and identity of a camper. An example comes to mind of young campers coming home and explaining what they did, using the Hebrew phrase “Hadar Ochel” for “Dining Room” but not really understanding that it is a Hebrew term for a room with a specific use just like there is an English term for a set place. Regardless, most if not all camps who advertise themselves as Jewish use the same thought process that Robbins does to make their argument for why they do what they do.

Another speaker at the conference was Shrage Arian, the Superintendent of the Board of Jewish Education in Chicago. The Reform Jewish rabbinic community of Chicago was the driving force behind the creation of OSRUI, the first Reform Movement camp, and the community at large supports a number of different Jewish summer camps to this day. Arian began his presentation by sharing that he was “going to discuss and focus on Jewish experience camping....I mean by it an experience out of the milieu of Jewish tradition and Jewish culture.”⁸⁷ He then explains that he sees three categories of direction that camping has taken, of which the first is overnight Jewish camp and the focus of this study. Arian considers overnight Jewish summer camp “to be the bastion of Jewish education in our country at this time.” This is based on his experience that the majority of children who go on to study Judaism in a serious way have roots in Jewish overnight camps. He

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Shrage Arian, “Camping and Creative Jewish Education,” in “The Future of Jewish Camping - Directions and Emphases,” 39.

then lists a number of the camps including those of the Reform movement as being successful at creating active Jews so care deeply about Judaism.

Arian, in his role as a Jewish educator, also sees a struggle, a “glaring problem,” in regard to the overnight camping experience and this is the “disparity between the ongoing home experience and the camp experience.”⁸⁸ This disparity is the issue that Jewish overnight summer camps have been dealing with since day one, and that some, especially Movement-based camps, are starting to actively deal with. An example is GFC, which views itself as a hub for Jewish life in Texas and Oklahoma (the region that it serves). This has required staff to get creative in their programming and to encourage synagogues to partner with them in retreats, in using summer staff in year-round programming, and to see one another not as competition but as partners (both the camp and other synagogues). “[m]aybe they have not found it because maybe the community does not yet understand the true impact of what is happening Jewishly in these two months’ experiences.”⁸⁹ The idea of the community not understanding is not longer valid, but knowing what to do is an ongoing struggle for both the camps and the communities that they serve.

Riv-Ellen Prell

Riv-Ellen Prell’s short study on the impact of Jewish summer camps on American Jewish culture posits that Jewish communities were reshaped by the experiences children had at summer camp.⁹⁰ Prell’s study focuses on the civil rights movement but her Introduction shows that her understanding of Jewish summer camps can be applied to the Jewish community outside of a specific time, place and cause.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 40.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Riv-Ellen Prell, *Jewish Summer Camping and Civil Rights: How Summer Camps Launched a Transformation in American Jewish Culture* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, 2006).

Prell begins by explaining that the 1950s were a pivotal moment in the American Jewish experience - that for the first time families felt the great need to suburbanize and to join synagogues in unprecedented numbers. The synagogue was the place for children to both receive a religious education, which they could not receive in public school, and also a place for them to build “a peer culture grounded in youth groups and social activities.”⁹¹ The goal of movement-affiliated synagogues (especially in the Reform and Conservative Movements) was to attract children and adolescents to affiliate in order to grow their membership base. Both Movements believed that the socialization of Jewish children in an immersive Jewish environment caused them to invest heavily in summer camp programs. At these camps, the Movements had even more control over the education and understanding of the children of their Judaism, shaped and guided by the values the Movement’s leadership believed to be most important.

Prell makes an interesting observation when she notes:

Scholars of American Jewish life have produced a small, but growing literature on Jewish summer camping that documents the history of some of these camps, their cultural and aesthetic styles, and the visions of their leaders. Less well documented is the socialization that their leaders envisioned. What happened at camp beyond Sabbath observance, crafts, boating, music, and peer culture? The content of the programs and classes that filled the weeks, and for some, the months at camp has not been systematically analyzed.⁹²

Prell makes an important point that scholars themselves have barely touched the surface in regards to the programming at summer camps, though it must be noted that many camps regularly change their programming and that some have little or no records of what they previously did. Since digitization, it may be easier to see a comparison of programming but the likelihood that many camps kept decades of programming materials may be unreasonable to assume.⁹³ The need

⁹¹ Ibid., 6.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ For this project, it was easy for the author to get materials for the past few years but much harder to find and obtain the relevant materials (prayer services, outlines) for the years before that. Only an accident of stumbling

for more studies on summer camping is clear, and with the assistance of the Foundation for Jewish Camp (among others) it may become more of a draw for scholars of American Jewish history.⁹⁴

In order to make her argument, Prell studied a variety of program books and counselor evaluations from two of the major camping movements. She found that the summer camps were fertile ground for some of the most important community conversations: “What was the relationship between being an American and a Jew? What were Jewish ethics? How should young Jews react to the political events of the time?”⁹⁵ These questions and more were pondered by both the educators and the children of the 1950s, as the American political landscape shifted and the physical landscape of American daily life shifted as well. Prell was surprised to discover that many Jewish summer camps actually “focused on the civil rights movement’s struggle for justice for African Americans in the first years of the nineteen-sixties.”⁹⁶ One of her examples came from OSRUI where role-playing was the chosen medium for teaching the campers both the stories about Egypt and slavery and the racism and oppression occurring in the United States. Campers experienced this through the camp staff “turning the camp into a world divided between the oppressors and the oppressed in order to experience first hand the dynamics of discrimination as both victims and victimizers.”⁹⁷ This experience, along with similar ones which Prell discovered,

upon a box that was on its way out brought to light a printed weekday service to match the (currently in use) Friday Night Service.

⁹⁴ This is not to dismiss the work that has been done by scholars but only to say that there is so much still to learn. The work of previous scholars was incredibly important for the writing of this project, and they are all cited throughout the paper as well as in the bibliography. Prell also makes the point, on page 7, that “Jewish summer camps are no less worthy of analysis than synagogues, religious schools, defense organizations or philanthropies, which have received far greater attention by historians and social scientists who look to the key institutions of Jewish communal life in order to understand not only its development, but the issues that shaped American Jewish identity. Nevertheless, summer camps are critical to understanding American Jewish Life, both for those who brought visions of socializing children and for the children who were socialized.”

⁹⁵ Ibid., 7.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

had a significant impact on the later choices the campers made (in regards to not only their practice of Judaism but also their choices of profession).

Prell notes the shift in American Jewish camping by explaining that early on Jewish camps “were neither educational, religious, nor ideological. They were private camps that catered to Jewish children and emphasized recreation.” This reality has not disappeared in today’s climate though the frustration that Mordecai Kaplan felt about this when he asked “why Jews sent their children to camps to learn how to be American Indians rather than Jews” is less relevant today.⁹⁸ The private camps today tend to be focused on sports, arts, and language acquisition rather than on Americanizing the population who attends.⁹⁹ The shift to educational camping and/or denominational camping arose after WWII when the three major denominations wished to continue the school year education of their children during the summer. The first Ramah Camp, associated with the Conservative Movement, opened in 1947, and the Reform Movement, as previously mentioned, followed by opening OSRUI in 1952.¹⁰⁰ The educational focus of these camps was the desire to help the children understand the values and beliefs of the Movement. Prell notes that though these camps opened prior to the rise of Second Wave feminism, they all “encouraged both boys and girls’ achievements, religious knowledge, and participation.”¹⁰¹ This model would help shape the lives of many future Jewish leaders, and Prell notes that therefore it is

⁹⁸ Ibid., 8.

⁹⁹ The competition for campers who wish not to lose skills built up during the school year is one reason for the development and success of the URJ’s Six-Point Camps: Sports, Sci-Tech, and, opening in Summer 2018, Creative Arts. These camps are run on the premises of boarding schools throughout the country.

¹⁰⁰ Daniel Isaacman explains that the first denominational camps were Orthodox - Camp Aguda in 1941 and Camp Bnos in 1946, 136.

¹⁰¹ Prell, 9.

not surprising that “the first women ordained as rabbis in Reform and Conservative Judaism were products of these summer camps.”¹⁰²

The impact of summer camping was also seen in the questions being addressed and the lives being lived while in a fully immersive Jewish community. Many campers, lived their lives as members of a minority and, while they may have lived Jewish lives at home and in the synagogue living by Jewish time was something new and exciting.¹⁰³ Prell notes that the camps used the idea of “liminal spaces” in order to help “address the cultural, religious and social paradoxes facing American Jews.”¹⁰⁴ Some of the questions she saw being addressed in her research were: “Where did Jews belong in American society? What did religious observance and ethical behavior require of a Jew living in America? What was the best way to learn how to be a Jew? What was the relationship between the past and the present?”¹⁰⁵ These questions became the basis for programming and understanding, and helped to shape the experiences of campers. The chance to try new things was also important for campers and staff members alike. It was not unusual for campers arriving home after camp to feel that their synagogue was not offering a spiritual home the way camp did. Often this was because services were held outside and campers were able to help lead. It was the experiences campers and staff members had in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s that helped reshape Reform Jewish practice throughout the country.

Joselit and Mittelman

In 1993, in conjunction with an exhibit on Jewish Summer Camping in America curated by the National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia, Jenna Weissman Joselit and

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ By “Jewish time” the author means the idea of living with the Jewish calendar, observing Shabbat and regularly experiencing living Jewishly in an immersive community.

¹⁰⁴ Prell, 10.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

Karen S. Mittelman wrote *A Worthy Use of Summer: Jewish Summer Camping in America*. This short book included chapters written by a number of notable scholars and is instrumental in giving a layman's understanding of the history of Jewish summer camping.

In their introduction, Joselit and Mittelman write that “a significant percentage of the American Jewish community attended these camps over time.”¹⁰⁶ They also note that “the camps themselves provide a window into many aspects of Jewish life, reflecting the range of ideological and religious viewpoints held by members of the community, and the many ways that being at once a Jew and an American has been defined during the twentieth century.”¹⁰⁷ The important role summer camps played in helping Jews become Americans cannot be overemphasized and is noted by most of the writers who have published on Jewish summer camping.¹⁰⁸ *A Worthy Use of Summer* builds upon the historical works that came before it as well as setting the stage for the specialized studies written after it. Too often social histories are ignored in favor of large encompassing histories that ignore the lives of the average person. The history of Jewish summer camps in the United States allows us a glimpse into the lives of tens of thousands of Jewish Americans who have the camps to thank for the people they later became.

In the “Introduction” to *A Worthy Use of Summer*, Chaim Potok writes of his experience with summer camps in the 1930s and 1940s where the main use of the summer camps was removing

¹⁰⁶ Jenna Weissman Joselit and Karen S. Mittelman, *A Worthy Use of Summer: Jewish Summer Camping in America* (Philadelphia: National Museum of American Jewish History, 1993), 2.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Joselit and Mittelman; Prell; Mykoff; Lorge and Zola; Ettenberg and Rosenfield; Seymour Fox and Israel Scheffler, *Jewish Education & Jewish Continuity: Prospects & Limitations: Monographs from the Mandel Institute* (Jerusalem: The Mandel Institute, 1990); Burton Cohen, “The Jewish Educational Summer Camp,” in Haim Marantz, ed., *Judaism and Education: Essays in Honor of Walter I. Ackman* (Beer Sheva: Ben Gurion University, 1998), 245-52; Amy L. Sales and Leonard Saxe, *How Goodly Are Thy Tents: Summer Camps as Jewish Socializing Experiences* (Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2003). Jerry Kaye, “A View to the Past with an Eye to the Future: The Reform Movement Celebrates 60 Years of Camping” (eJewish Philanthropy, 2012). <http://ejewishphilanthropy.com/a-view-to-the-past-with-an-eye-to-the-future-the-reform-movement-celebrates-60-years-of-camping/> (accessed December, 18, 2017).

vulnerable children from the large cities where polio ran rampant during the summer months.¹⁰⁹ He writes, “We fled the cities to save our lives and breathe fresh air and have fun; we did not know we were being educated.”¹¹⁰ But being educated they were, in the ways of how to be true Americans rather than just the children of immigrants. It was out of this reality that the camps with a more Jewish mission arose, such as the Hebrew-speaking Camp Massad and the more traditional Camp Cejwin that was founded by Dr. Albert Schoolman.

The first Camp Ramah, founded by visionaries from The Jewish Theological Seminary in 1951 hoped “to do for the Conservative movement what so many other Jewish groups had already done or were then in the process of accomplishing: open a summer camp and put it to use as a two-month sojourn in a recreational-educational Jewish Land of Oz.”¹¹¹ This goal was a lofty one but the founders of Ramah recognized that the post-war generation needed a different type of summer camping experience than their parents had, for these camps had the lofty goal of “educating the next generation of American Jews in a living Judaism.”¹¹² This would become the central goal of summer camping, true until today, recognizing that American Jews no longer needed to assimilate but rather needed an immersive environment in which to learn to be Jewish Americans. As Joselit and Mittelman write, gone was the need to flee the cities for fear of polio, now was the need to face fears of a different kind. Serious fears of “intermarriage; assimilation; the general shallowness of Jewish knowledge among Jews; the probability of the vanishing of

¹⁰⁹ Chaim Potok, *A Worthy Use of Summer*, 5.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

American Jewry as a uniquely creative culture participating openly in contemporary American life...”.¹¹³

In her chapter, “The Jewish Way of Play”, Joselit writes that the Jewish summer camp was “the greatest contribution made by American Jews to modern Jewish life,” because it transformed the way American Jewish children spent their summers. It also transformed their lives: American Jewish summer camps removed children aged six to sixteen from the “temptations and pettiness of city life,” relocating them to the outdoor, rural equivalent of a *shtetl*, or Jewish small town.”¹¹⁴ This feeling of being part of the Jewish small town, according to Joselit, allowed the development of “a pervasive sense of cultural kinship.”¹¹⁵

As early as the 1930s, summer camp had become a fairly common experience and was hailed as the most successful “instrument for inspiring and remaking individual young Jewish lives.”¹¹⁶ While not every Jewish child attended camp, it was the belief of the community leaders that attendance at a Jewish summer camp was within reach of any Jewish child who wished to attend. This was the shifting point of Jewish learning and living, away from after school programs and synagogues and to the summer camp. The immersive experience, as noted by Jewish community professionals, was Jewish education without children realizing it.¹¹⁷ This was the key component of passing along a Jewish education to a new generation, children who might not have willingly participated if it was not for the fun of summer camp. The summer camp was never built to replace the after-school programs or the synagogue but was to help encourage both. As Loui

¹¹³ Ibid., 8.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 15.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 15-16.

Dobin, executive director of GFC, explained, the Reform movement summer camps were built to assist the synagogues with retention of members.¹¹⁸

Joselit concludes her chapter by referencing Benedict Anderson's concept of "imagined communities" in relation to the experiences of Jewish children at summer camp.¹¹⁹ She states that the Jewish summer camp is "an 'imagined community' made real....Naturalizing the very notion of Jewishness, it [summer camp] produced several generations of young American Jews knowledgeable about and confident in their Jewish identity, whether as cultural Jews, observant Jews, secular Jews, Yiddishists or Zionists."¹²⁰ In creating an environment where an imagined community can become real, if only for a few weeks or months, Jewish summer camp professionals have succeeded at something that few others have. They have given experience, concrete memories, to children who grow into adults and continue to live out their imagined community because of the experiences they had as children.

Daniel Isaacman

The single most important work that was read for this project was Daniel Isaacman's 1970 Ph.D. dissertation (Dropsie University) written while on the staff of Gratz College. Isaacman would spend his entire career at Gratz and was named President in 1973, a post he would hold until his death in 1982. Isaacman was also involved with a number of different Jewish associations and philanthropic committees during his career. His involvement with summer camping would arise after he met his wife, Clara Heller, who was a leader for the Jewish Youth Movements.

¹¹⁸ Loui Dobin. Phone conversation. October 3, 2017.

¹¹⁹ Though not read in its entirety for this project, the author recommends: Benedict Anderson, "Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism" (New York: Verso, 2006).

¹²⁰ Joselit, *A Worthy Use of Summer*, 26.

Isaacman's dissertation, *Jewish Summer Camps in the United States and Canada 1900-1969*, covers an enormous amount of material.¹²¹ It appears to have been looked over by some later scholars who argued that no comprehensive study of Jewish camping had ever been done.¹²² Isaacman's study included a large survey, many tables, as well as analysis covering close to 70 years. As an educator, Isaacman argues throughout his work that education of the staff as well as campers is key, and that more needs to be done to collaborate between those who are being successful in their educational goals and those who are struggling. Isaacman explains at the outset that he sees Jewish summer camp as "an effective ally in meeting the challenges to our youth of Jewish identification, knowledge, and commitment."¹²³

Isaacman begins his work by outlining what he views as the problem and then further breaks down the problematic areas: Jewish youth on campus, including Hillel, social concerns, apathy, intermarriage and the Jewish family. He then deals with the challenge of freedom, which includes: the Gentile world, the Jewish world, the recognition that America is different, no organized Jewish community, the desire to be Jews and abysmal ignorance. Isaacman then explores the challenge to the Jewish educational establishment, which includes: the time factor, the curriculum, the educator, the Israeli teacher, teacher education, elementary Jewish education, a new emphasis on secondary education, the role of home and parent, American-Jewish schizophrenia, fragmentation within the community, the rising encroachment of public education, budgeting and fiscal irresponsibility, and the Jewish school -- by default. This is all in part A of his

¹²¹ Daniel Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps in the United States and Canada 1900-1969* Dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Dropsie University, Philadelphia. 1970.

¹²² Gary A. Tobin and Meryle Weinstein, "Jewish Camping," San Francisco: The Institute for Jewish & Communal Research, 2000. In Spring 2011, Steven M. Cohen, Ron Miller, Ira M. Sheskin and Berna Torr published "Camp Works: The Long-Term Impact of Jewish Overnight Camp - Evidence from 26 U.S. Jewish Population Studies on Adult Jewish Engagement" through the founding of the Foundation for Jewish Camp, a much more comprehensive study which recognizes the previous work done on the subject.

¹²³ Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps*, 1.

work, part B looks to the challenge and opportunities of the summer camp which is the most relevant part for this current study. The entire work is important and it is disappointing that no one thought it was pertinent enough to publish or at least digitize. The only copy is the one held by University of Pennsylvania which holds Isaacman's papers in its archives. This paper cannot cover in depth all of Isaacman's important points and will therefore only touch on those relevant to the topic at hand.

The most astonishing thing that arises out of Isaacman's research for someone reading it over forty years later is that it is still so relevant to the experiences and troubles of Jewish summer camping. Before explaining the major aspects of his work that are important to this study, some time will be taken to give an understanding of the dissertation as a whole. In his section explaining apathy as one of the major problems of the Jewish community, Isaacman quotes Yehudah M. Cohen:

One of our principal problems is the number of students who are and remain apathetic toward Judaism....It is beyond our power to change the Jewish home, to improve the pre-college system of Jewish education, or to offset the failure of the synagogue in the short span of time during which the students are accessible to us.

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Cohen is speaking of a larger societal problem in the Jewish community and Isaacman does not agree that there is nothing to be done. He believes, and argues through his work, that overnight Jewish summer camping can help address the apathy that has the leadership of American Jewry so concerned. Isaacman further explains the apathy through citing comments written by camp directors on the survey he sent out. One of the things that comes to the forefront is the issue of

¹²⁴ Yehudah M. Cohen, *Campus 1966: Change and Challenge*, Washington, D.C.: B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundations, 1966 as cited in Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps*, 4.

college-aged-staff-members who bring poor attitudes to the summer camp environment.¹²⁵

Isaacman continues with some analysis of the comments:

- There is considerable evidence among staff of self-hatred around Jewishness.
- They consider any type of Jewish programming as religious indoctrination.
- Some staff feel quite uncomfortable about anything Jewish, whether it is in discussion, observance or language.
- The major problem in implementing the Jewish educational goals of our camp is the resistance frequently encountered among our counsellors, themselves young Jewish adults, many of whom have not yet resolved their attitudes and feelings regarding their own Jewishness.

Isaacman recognizes the truth of the comments and explains his own thoughts around the issues of the young college student of the 1960s. In comparison, Jewish summer camps today deal less with the issue of self-hatred and more with the issue of college students being told summer camp is a waste of their time. They should rather be working at professional firms, fulfilling internship requirements, taking summer college courses. This has led to a shortage of staff for many camps.¹²⁶

Isaacman articulates his understanding of the larger issues:

The search for identity and an acceptable set of personal values which is characteristic of all young collegians further affects the Jewish student in that the purposes and values of Jewish life, as he childishly understands them, appear to be irrelevant to their daily lives. The idealism and social action interests which he holds seems to find little response in the organized Jewish community. Many of these students view the Jewish community as unrelated to the broad social issues and overly concerned with its own narrow welfare to the exclusion of all else. They lack the most elementary understanding of the purposes and significance of the organized Jewish community and the actual breadth of its enterprise and concern.¹²⁷

In her above-cited monograph, Riv-Ellen Prell shows that during the 1960s Jewish summer camps in the Conservative and Reform Movements (at least) were addressing some of these larger issues.

Isaacman is not interested, at this point, in what is occurring at the summer camps but rather what

¹²⁵ Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps*, 4.

¹²⁶ Schicker.

¹²⁷ Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps*, 5.

Jewish college students were feeling at the time that resulted in their unwillingness to participate in Jewish life - including being positive role models of Jewish living at summer camp. It is important to note that this did not characterize *all* Jewish college-aged youth at the time, but a majority clearly felt or acted in this way. In every generation there is a push against tradition, and the baby-boomer generation being raised in the restrictions of the 1950s and the rebellion of the 1960s was no exception. This rebellion would allow for the creation of a new brand of American Judaism, especially within the liberal movements.

The rebranding of Judaism in America was at its height during this period as well. Isaacman's section title "America is Different" acknowledges a shifting understanding of identity for Jews in America. For, rather than seeing themselves first as a people, they saw themselves first as a religious community. The Jewish communal statistics at the time of Isaacman's writing show that "as many as 50 per cent of Jews in America are not affiliated with synagogues."¹²⁸ According to the 2013 Pew Study, "Roughly four-in-ten U.S. Jewish adults (39%) say they live in a household where at least one person is a member of a synagogue. This includes 31% of Jewish adults (39% of Jews by religion and 4% of Jews of no religion) who say they personally belong to a synagogue, temple or other congregation."¹²⁹ The numbers since Isaacman's study have not therefore changed much and reinforce the importance of the research he undertook.

College students believing that theology is all that makes one Jewish is not a problem that has disappeared, though Reform Jewish leadership has made an effort over the past number of years to open the tent of affiliation wider. Plenty of Jews affiliated with Reform temples

¹²⁸ Ibid., 9.

¹²⁹ Pew Forum, "A Portrait of Jewish Americans," Pew Research Center, <http://www.pewforum.org/2013/10/01/jewish-american-beliefs-attitudes-culture-survey>, accessed December 6, 2017.

acknowledge that they are atheists today, and plenty of Jews are in interfaith relationships.

Isaacman explains the Jewish life he sees in the 1960s:

Many young people, Jews and non-Jews, reject organized religion. The Jewish student, in rejecting Jewish theology, also mistakenly rejects his Jewishness. He does not comprehend that even if religion may be regarded as the basis for Jewish existence, it does not negate Jewish peoplehood. It is conceivable that one may be an atheist and yet remain a part of the Jewish people and participate in its cultural and national life. The Jewish student on campus has rarely found the opportunity to consider his Jewish identity in terms other than religious observance or ritual. Interdating, inter-marriage, inter-racial relations increase. Few or none of the restrictions previously dictated by the gentile majority prevail. The Jewish student faces little gentile pressure on campus to remind him of his Jewishness.¹³⁰

Though the landscape of America has shifted since the 1960s, and it is all too well known that anti-Semitism has not disappeared, it is easier today than ever before to be of Jewish heritage and not have to identify as such in public. Those college students who work as staff members at Jewish summer camps are more often than not the same individuals who spent years as campers and want to continue their positive memories as staff members. This recognition, that the same individuals are remaining at the same camp for years upon years, allows for the development of more substantial training but also restricts the camp leadership in bringing in new blood who may have more Jewish knowledge.¹³¹

In the next section, on the challenge to the Jewish educational establishment, Isaacman comments on the trouble of “American-Jewish schizophrenia.” He cites Marshall Sklare and J.

Greenblum’s *Jewish Identity on the Suburban Frontier*:

Only a minority of Lakeville parents have been able to help their children develop a viable life pattern which will *combine both their Jewish and general identity* (italics Isaacman’s)....Children have fallen heir to only a ‘meager Jewishness’ despite a majority affiliation with synagogues, and despite the frequency of religious school attendance.¹³²

¹³⁰ Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps*, 9-10.

¹³¹ Something that Isaacman will spend a significant amount of time advocating for.

¹³² Marshall Sklare and J. Greenblum, *Jewish Identity on the Suburban Frontier* (New York: Basic Books, 1967) as quoted in Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps*, 29.

This recognition by researchers that, even with regular religious school attendance and synagogue affiliation, Jewish children are not able to merge their identities as Jew and American is worrisome. It is the basis of so many later programs and research (all the way through to the current day). Isaacman notes that the bifurcation of Jewish children's identity, Jewish in synagogue, on Shabbat and on holidays but American at all other times, causes a painful reality. He continues by saying that children "require the experience of living in a well-integrated American-Jewish environment --an environment a good Jewish summer camp can provide."¹³³ This will be the essence of his later chapters.

Isaacman continues his discussion of challenges to the Jewish education establishment by looking closely at the Jewish school. He explains its limitations:

Lack of sufficient time, the very nature of elementary education, a broad curriculum, inadequate teaching personnel, the *Bar Mitzvah* syndrome, the nature of the Jewish parents and the home, fragmentation within the community, budgeting and fiscal irresponsibility, the rising encroachment of public education, freedom and the open society, the weaknesses of Jewish communal organization and life, all mitigate against the efficacy of the Jewish religious school.¹³⁴

These problems have not disappeared in the close to fifty years since Isaacman was writing. They are still at the forefront of many people's minds, and Isaacman's conclusion recognizes the need for more work to be done to address these issues: "The multitudinous problems facing the American Jewish community...make it mandatory that serious consideration be given every medium of education which may further the efforts of the American Jewish community in imbuing its youth with these ideals."¹³⁵ These ideals, these values and beliefs, are what makes American Jews different from their fellow Americans - in a positive way. Without guiding values, Isaacman

¹³³ Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps*, 29.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 36.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

holds (and this author would agree), there is a loss not only of the community but of moral guidance. Religion in 2017 has fallen on hard times, both the Political Left as well as the Political Right have tried to reshape it. Educators of the next generation have a responsibility to teach the skills necessary to live in an ever changing world.

Isaacman discusses the challenges and opportunities of the summer camp in section B of his work. He builds upon his explanations of the problems apparent in the larger American Jewish community, and especially the issues regarding children and adolescents, and lays out his argument in favor of more attention (money) being paid to educational Jewish summer camps:

Jewish summer camp, whose potentialities as an important instrument for Jewish education have long been recognized, must now receive increased attention. Properly organized, financed, programmed, and staffed, these camps can advance Jewish educational aims. The importance of the Jewish-sponsored summer camp lies in the fact that it controls the child's total environment for twenty-four hours a day, eight weeks a year, and in this time can provide more experience in Jewish living than an entire school year of class instruction. A good camp can create a Jewish atmosphere, impart knowledge, motivate commitment to a Jewish way of life, and demonstrate the relevance of Judaism to the child's and counselor's experience.¹³⁶

Though not all Jewish summer camps are immersive Jewish environments, all camps sponsored by a Jewish movement or organization do believe that a fully immersive Jewish living experience can have a dramatic impact on both children and adolescents as explored throughout this chapter. Isaacman, it is easy to assume, would be pleased with the growth of Jewish summer camping in the United States. That so many of the same issues and troubles, that he identified in his study along, with some new ones, are still around would likely dismay him but that will be explored next.

Isaacman's "Camping - A Brief Review" nicely supplements Joselit and Mittelman's *A Worthy Use of Summer*, filling in some of the latter's blanks. He explains "that the first Jewish sponsored resident camps were organized by philanthropic and Federation agencies, primarily to serve newly arrived immigrant children. The first such camp was probably Camp Lehman, founded in 1893 by

¹³⁶ Ibid., 36-37.

the Jewish Working Girls' Vacation Society and now operating as Camp Isabella Freedman."¹³⁷

Many of the early Jewish summer camps were devoid of anything recognizably Jewish except for a religious service on Friday evening. Yet, it was the success of these camps which led communities across the country to start establishing summer camps which, according to Isaacman, "frequently became the sole Jewish socialization force in the lives of the children from summer to summer."¹³⁸ The shift from the "fresh air" and "good citizenship" (Americanizing) phase of Jewish camping took place in the 1920s into more of an "educational stage" along with non-Jewish camps.¹³⁹ This shift was influenced by the rise of educational theory, John Dewey among others, and a recognition by Jewish educators and educational institutions who wished to offset the frustrations of educating Jewish children during the academic year only for so much to be lost to the summer months. Isaacman notes that "[t]hree camps were founded during these years...and, as one who is familiar with the history of Jewish education might expect, all three camps were the product of Benderly's far-reaching influence in the field."¹⁴⁰

The Benderly Boys

A slight digression is necessary in order to explain Isaacman's reference to the influence of Samson Benderly, an educator who inaugurated the first Bureau of Jewish Education in 1920. Recognizing the need for unification as well as modernization and professionalization of Jewish education, Benderly with the support of philanthropist Jacob Schiff and other important and influential laymen financing his plans, he changed the Jewish educational world. His students, who ran programs around the United States between the 1920s and 1970s were known as "The

¹³⁷ Ibid., 117-118. Camp Isabella Freedman is now the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center and still in operation.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 121.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 122.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

Benderly Boys.” The most in-depth work on Benderly and his boys was published by Jonathan B. Krasner in 2011. In his book, Krasner explains the enormous influence of Benderly on the education of Jewish children. He also mentions his role in “the development of the first Jewish educational summer camps” though he makes sure to clarify that many were the brainchild of Albert Schoolman, one of the “Benderly Boys.”¹⁴¹

Chapter Ten of Krasner’s book is titled “An Environment of Our Own Making: The Origins of the Jewish Culture Camp” and covers in detail the roles played by Benderly’s students in the creation of the early educational Jewish summer camps, and also the important role their spouses played in the running of these camps. The first camp was the Central Jewish Institute Camps (CJI), founded in 1921, and in 1933 became known as Cejwin Camps.¹⁴² Krasner explains how the camp came to be:

The origin of Jewish educational camping in the United States is usually dated to the summer of 1919, when a dozen or, perhaps, twenty girls from the Central Jewish Institute’s Talmud Torah and their teacher spent a two-week wholly subsidized vacation at a Catskills farmhouse near Parksville, New York. That same summer, a similar initiative was commenced with ten children at a farm in New Jersey by the Sholem Aleichem Folk School No. 1. The ultimate outcomes of these experiments were the first Jewish educational camps in the United States: the Zionist, Jewish pluralistic CJI Camps (1921) and the Yiddishist Camp Boiberik (1923). A third Jewish culture camp, Modin, was opened in 1922 on the shores of Lake George in Canaan, Maine. These camps largely set the pattern for those that followed, including the handful of other educational camps of various ideological stripes that were opened in the interwar years....Jewish educational camping hit its stride in the 1940s and early 1950s....¹⁴³

The Benderly influence would extend also to the creation of Camp Achvah in 1927, the first camp established as a Hebrew-only camp.¹⁴⁴ Though all of the camps would struggle through the

¹⁴¹ Jonathan B. Krasner, *The Benderly Boys & American Jewish Education* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2011), 1-10.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 268-269.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 270.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 276.

Depression, their influence is still felt today in the world of Jewish camping. Samson Benderly changed the face of Jewish education, and helped transform American Judaism during the 20th century.

Back to Isaacman

The impact of both educational theory and other branches of academia, such as psychology, played a role in shifting the approaches taken at Jewish summer camps in regard to their Jewish content. Isaacman quotes Miriam R. Ephraim's article "A Look at Jewish Communal Camping" which was published in 1966, but discusses Jewish camping in the 1920s:

Unfortunately, a majority of social work practitioners, while deeply concerned with the individual, minimized, practically to the point of exclusion, the fact that "the personality development of the individual Jew and his adjustment to his environment could be achieved most efficiently through meaningful Jewish, as well as general, group experiences."¹⁴⁵

This disconnect between the needs and experiences of the individual and the group, (a Western and American phenomenon) caused trouble in many Jewish summer camps during the 1930s. So much so that these camps, according to Isaacman, "were almost completely devoid of any meaningful Jewish programming or consciousness during this entire period, despite the unmistakable lessons which should have been apparent to all Jews in light of world conditions and events." Isaacman deems this a tragedy because these same attitudes still persisted in too many camps at the time of his writing, especially the Jewish illiteracy of the staff, even though the upper echelon had changed their thinking.¹⁴⁶ The shift in thinking one may credit to the far-reaching philosophy of Benderly and his students as well as further research into identity as well as education.

¹⁴⁵ Miriam R. Ephraim, "A Look at Jewish Communal Camping," Jewish Education, XXXVI, 2 (Winter, 1966), 99 in Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps*, 132-133.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 133.

In Chapter Three of his work, Isaacman discusses the goals and objectives in Jewish camping. He first explains the various kinds of camps (educational, Zionist, Hebrew-speaking, private, denominational, etc.), and describes their goals. His section on denominational camps goes into detail about Reform-sponsored summer camps, explaining that the camps, “while also technically centrally controlled, have a greater degree of independence” unsurprising as the same thing can be said of synagogues affiliated with the URJ.¹⁴⁷ Isaacman includes the UAHC’s statement of its aims and objectives for their summer camps in order to inform his reader’s understanding of the overall goals that the UAHC leadership was using for all of their camps.¹⁴⁸ His recognition that each type of camp needs to be described separately shows his understanding of the different types of goals the various camps have. Though they may all call themselves Jewish summer camps, they do not have the same goals in mind.

One cannot have a thorough understanding of the development of Jewish summer camping without taking a close look at the training, education and preparation of the camp staff. Without those individuals, there would be no summer camp, and it is the staff who often have the opportunity and ability to walk away after a summer of work with new skills of all kinds but most especially a deeper understanding of what “living Jewishly” means.¹⁴⁹ Isaacman goes into depth about this topic in Chapter Six of his work.

Subsection five of the chapter focuses on the counselors. Isaacman once again references the complaints of camp directors who see an “inability of their staff to deal with Jewish programming...[yet] make absolutely no effort to direct their staff to take courses in Jewish

¹⁴⁷ Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps*, 172.

¹⁴⁸ A comparison of the version of the statement from 1970 and from 2016 may be found in the Reform Movement Camping section of this chapter.

¹⁴⁹ The term “living Jewishly” comes from a statement of Albert Schoolman who spoke of the Jewish summer camps as an “experience in *the art of Jewish living*.” Found in Krasner, 269.

subjects, or to reward those that do.”¹⁵⁰ The idea to reward staff members who come with specific skills has grown in popularity in certain communities and camps but whether one can credit Isaacman for being the first one to speak about it publically cannot be proven.¹⁵¹ Isaacman explains that staff who are knowledgeable on Jewish subjects are often lacking “in general psychological and educational know-how.”¹⁵² The problem is no less severe if a camp’s staff does not understand how to work with children or how to teach even if they hold all the Jewish knowledge possible. Isaacman challenges camp directors to “effect change by giving personal direction and guidance and offering monetary and positional incentives.”¹⁵³ He continues by charging the larger Jewish community to take on the problem as their own: “The overall problem will never be resolved until an agency of the Jewish community, with proper funding, turns its attention to the task of training staff for camps on a year-round basis.”¹⁵⁴

Camp directors have a responsibility to their staff, and to the Jewish community, to educate the staff and to recognize that they too are a “service client” of the camp. While we see the rise in unaffiliated young people today, it was no different when Isaacman was writing in 1970. He says of the college-age staff that they “represent the group in Jewish life which is most alienated from the Jewish Establishment.”¹⁵⁵ He then continues:

A Jewish camp with a staff of 548 college students offers a formidable challenge both intellectually and emotionally with regard to their commitment and identification to Jewish life. The Denominational and Zionist camps and a few of the

¹⁵⁰ Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps*, 447.

¹⁵¹ One example of a community rewarding teachers for their educational accomplishments and experience is Cincinnati, Ohio where religious school and Hebrew school teachers throughout the city are paid on a scale that takes into consideration training, experience, degrees, etc. The community also provides significant ongoing training available to all teachers with a financial incentive as well.

¹⁵² Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps*, 447.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 448.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 468.

Educational camps are well aware of their educational opportunities with staff, since they include their staff in their formal and informal programming.¹⁵⁶

Isaacman's note that it is only some of the numerous Jewish camps that recognize the opportunity they have to work with the staff members is disheartening. Yet, even today, depending on the camp, one may or may not find a focus on the staff member as a key component of the program. There is still work that needs to be done in recognizing the potential impact working at a Jewish summer camp can have on a young adult.

Chapter Eight includes Isaacman's conclusions and recommendations moving forward for those involved in Jewish summer camps. He notes:

In light of the many problems facing the American Jewish community in its struggle to assure creative continuity to Jewish life and Jewish values in the United States, this study illustrates the potentialities of the resident Jewish summer camp as an important instrument and effective ally to existing institutions of Jewish life in meeting the challenges to our youth of Jewish identification, knowledge and commitment.¹⁵⁷

Isaacman is not interested in holding his punches; he wrote over six hundred pages on the topic and sees it as a responsibility to shift the Jewish community's focus onto summer camps because they have so much untapped potential. It is in his conclusion that he returns to the survey given to the camp directors and the problems they see. Isaacman sees three levels of response "to the question of the implementation of the Jewish educational aims of the camps."¹⁵⁸ The three groups are: (a) the refusal to accept responsibility for Jewish concerns, (b) an implied understanding and agreement that the camp program should include a Jewish component, and (c) camps deeply committed to Jewish programming who also have needs on more sophisticated levels.¹⁵⁹ The wide

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 468-469.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 614.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 641.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 641-643.

variety of approaches to both staff and Jewishness at Jewish summer camps should come as no surprise to those who live in and work with the Jewish community. The freedom of America has led to a much wider understanding of what being Jewish, doing Jewish, and acting Jewish means.

In Isaacman's conclusion about the role of the Jewish educator in Jewish camping, he lists six important takeaways.¹⁶⁰ These explain what Jewish educators should be doing and learning with the hope that they will make careers in camping as well as elsewhere in the Jewish education world. Isaacman's goal by including these recommendations is to improve the Jewish summer camps and to impact the next generation of Jewish leadership, both professional and lay, in a positive way. He knows that there will be people who disagree with his assessment, that some of his "findings will be disturbing to many people," but he believes that what is important is "whether or not these findings will stimulate increased attention to the potential of the resident Jewish summer camp."¹⁶¹ Increased attention has been paid since the 1960s to Jewish summer camping, though, again, it is unclear how much of that attention can be credited to the work done by Isaacman in comparison to other leaders. Though we have focused only on certain aspects of Isaacman's work, as befitting the focus of this chapter, it is fair to say that he has not been remembered in much of the scholarship on Jewish summer camps, and that is a failure.

Jewish Living at Summer Camps

Prior to looking at URJ camps specifically, it is important to reflect on the various ways "Jewish living" appears at summer camps which identify themselves as Jewish. Rather than choosing to write about customs, rituals and observances throughout this chapter, commentary from a variety of authors and sources will be discussed in this section in order to see both the development and growth of "Jewish living" at summer camps.

¹⁶⁰ See Appendix B.

¹⁶¹ Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps*, 663-664.

In *A Worthy Use of Summer*, Joselit writes: “Along with romance, the experience of Shabbat or Shabbos, the Jewish Sabbath, figures prominently in memories of camp....Some camps, seeking to demonstrate the timelessness of tradition, adhered strictly to age-old conventions; others improvised, creating new, self consciously modern forms of observance.”¹⁶² This breadth of experience for children at summer camp is also explored and commented upon by Isaacman who devotes a portion of Chapter Seven of his dissertation to the topic of “Jewish Living.” He explains that the goals and objectives of Jewish summer camps differ depending on what type of camp they are: private, Center, Federation, philanthropic, denominational, Zionist or educational. The last three tend to “give more emphasis to his [the camper] cultural and religious development.”¹⁶³ This then leads Isaacman to set forth the Jewish educational goals of camp as he sees them.

Jewish Educational Goals of Camp

1. To develop a sense of healthy self-acceptance as a Jew and clear and positive feelings of belongingness to the Jewish people.
2. To develop a positive attitude toward and a familiarity with the sources of Jewish cultural and religious literature and artistic self-expression.
3. To develop an appreciation for and the adoption of Jewish ethical and religious conduct.
4. To progress in the study and/or use of the Hebrew and/or Yiddish language.
5. To develop habits and skills of participation in Jewish ritual, ceremonial and holiday practices.
6. To promote the acquisition of such distinctive Jewish ideals as “love of learning” and Tsedakah (as distinct from charity), “Tsa’ar Baale Hayyim” (protection of animals, prophetic ideals of social justice, and human brotherhood and the like).
7. To develop an active identification with Israel.¹⁶⁴

These goals are reflected in much of the scholarship on Jewish summer camps, though with differences depending on when the scholar is writing as well as which type of camp is being

¹⁶² Joselit, *A Worthy Use of Summer*, 23.

¹⁶³ Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps*, 559.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 560-561.

discussed. The focus of most of this section is on denominational camps (Reform and Conservative) which includes Greene Family Camp as a URJ movement camp.

Daily Rituals

Isaacman discusses the number of camps that reported scheduling daily services. In 1963, this was 32 percent of camps. He continues by noting that, “[t]his figure has not increased, unless there is a redefinition of what constitutes such a service.” Isaacman then explains that these services are only found in the educational, denominational, Hebrew and religious-Zionist camps - “None of the other categories of camps program such services.”¹⁶⁵ This is supported by other scholarship which reflects on specific camps and their customs. Leonard Schoolman wrote of UAHC camps in 1970, “Each camp handles daily worship according to its program needs and the needs of each group. In some UAHC camps, a brief daily morning service is held in the dining room at breakfast time. Evening worship may be of a more formal nature in the camp Chapel, or more informal in its structure.”¹⁶⁶ This comment reflects both Reform ritual practice as well as the structure of the UAHC which viewed the camps as voluntary members of the organization, and they therefore did not dictate how the camps should incorporate religious practices. Schoolman also comments on the recitation of blessings at meals, noting that both *Hamotzi* and a version of *Birkat Hamazon* have become traditions at UAHC camps. He even includes two different musical settings for *Birkat Hamazon* in the Manual.¹⁶⁷ Sheldon Posen, in a chapter written on song at summer camp for *A Worthy Use of Summer*, noted the recollection of Sharon Cooper who attended

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 581.

¹⁶⁶ Leonard A. Schoolman, ed., “Camp Counselor and Staff Orientation Manual” (New York: UAHC Department of Camp and Youth Education, 1970), 26.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

the Cejwin Camps. She told him that *Hamotzi* and a shortened *Birkat Hamazon* were song everyday “but on Friday and Saturday, you would do the whole *megillah*.”¹⁶⁸

Shabbat Customs, Rituals, and Observances

The rituals of Shabbat at Jewish summer camps vary widely but many also share similarities. The tradition of wearing white arises from the Kabbalists of the seventeenth century who spoke of Shabbat as a bride, though how many campers know this is the basis of their camp’s tradition is uncertain.¹⁶⁹

In Isaacman’s conclusion he reiterates that his study “noted that if there is any vestige of Jewish consciousness or Jewish programming at camp, it is primarily Sabbath oriented.”¹⁷⁰ The extent of Shabbat programing, only Friday evening, Friday and Saturday, when Havdalah is held, what activities are allowed, very greatly between camps. Isaacman makes it clear that he is not judging the choices of content but rather is concerned primarily about “the atmosphere created and the attitudes engendered by the program on the camp population. I am convinced that the success or failure of a camp to achieve a ‘feeling’ of the Sabbath is related to the Jewish sensitivity and knowledgeability of the staff.”¹⁷¹ Isaacman also notes that, while educational camps appear best at balancing “a restrictive approach to the Sabbath and an attenuated approach,” the “most creative and innovative Sabbath programs were found among the Zionist and

¹⁶⁸ Sheldon Posen, “*Lomir Zingn, Hava Nashira* (Let us Sing): An Introduction to Jewish Summer Camp Song in *A Worthy Use of Summer*, 32.

¹⁶⁹ Joselit, *A Worthy Use of Summer*, 23; Posen, *A Worthy Use of Summer*, 29.

¹⁷⁰ Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps*, 644.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 645.

Denominational/Reform camps.”¹⁷² Joselit comments more specifically about what this would look like, explaining that Shabbat at some camps would last:

the requisite twenty-five hours, from sunset to sunset; at others, “Shabbes ended with breakfast.” Regardless of its length, Jewish camps accentuated the day’s distinctiveness, serving special foods, decorating the dining room with flowers and white table cloths and maintaining a different schedule in which time itself, an integral component of the camp experience, assumed a different salience.¹⁷³

These differences speak to varying levels of observance of Jewish ritual and law but were also not implemented across the spectrum of camps in the same way. At Camp Massad, one of the Hebrew speaking camps that was in operation from 1941-1981, Jewish tradition and values held an honored place in camp life.

The strict observance of the Shabbat...assist[s] in deepening the campers’ and counselors’ religious experience. Shabbat is welcomed by all campers in an outdoor ceremony, followed by singing and dancing reminiscent of both Hassidic devotion and pioneering ecstasy.¹⁷⁴

Shabbat was not just another day of the week during camp but rather a time to celebrate, a holiday, which was felt by the majority of campers at Jewish summer camps. The UAHC’s 1970 manual for camp counselors and staff included the following comments on Shabbat observance at UAHC camps which reflects a similar connection to the celebration of Shabbat at camp:

The UAHC Camp has proven to be the stimulus for the re-introduction of a number of traditional Jewish observances into American Reform Judaism....Many children return to their homes with renewed interest and new insight into the home celebration of Jewish holy days....Creative worship and other outdoor oriented religious activity often widen the gap between the synagogue and the camp....the Sabbath calm which pervades the camp, as well as the rituals themselves.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷² Ibid.; the author is most interested in this statement because her personal experience was growing up at a Young Judaea Camp and was heavily influenced by the siddur written specially for the camp, as well as being active in NFTY during high school and being influenced by the creative services she experienced there.

¹⁷³ Joselit, *A Worthy Use of Summer*, 24.

¹⁷⁴ Shlomo Shulsinger, translated by Gideon Tamir, *Massad: The Story of Hebrew Camping in the United States* (New York: Mossad Camps, 1959), 18.

¹⁷⁵ Schoolman, ed., “Camp Counselor and Staff Orientation Manual,” 25.

The impact of celebrating Shabbat at Jewish summer camp emphasizes the importance of being in an immersive environment where Shabbat can be different. Where the option of changing the schedule, changing the rules, is built into the very fabric of how things are done. The celebration of Havdalah at camp is another place where an important Jewish ritual has been renewed and adopted into the regular life of individuals after experiencing it at camp. Isaacman, writing in 1970, found that Havdalah was less observed in the summer camps than other Shabbat rituals. He commented:

In a number of the camps we visited, again the non-traditional, it is sometimes peculiarly observed. In one camp the writer found it performed *Havdalah* at 5:00 p.m. when the sun was still brightly shining. It was explained to me that it best fitted into the program at this time! Usually perfunctorily read with no visual or aesthetic accompaniments, it makes little impression on the campers. On the other hand, one of the Zionist camps combines the *Havdalah* service with an additional aesthetic experience, listening to a brief selection of classical music, a brief lecture and viewing of art, etc.¹⁷⁶

Isaacman does not discuss the denominational camps in this section but the above-mentioned UAHC manual written by Schoolman explains the UAHC rituals around the celebration of Havdalah in 1970. It emphasizes that “Shabbat concludes with Havdala, the ceremony of separation of the Sabbath from the rest of the week. Just as the kindling of the Sabbath lights and the kiddush welcome the Sabbath, so the ceremony of blessings over the spices, the wine and the twisted candle usher out the Shabbat.”¹⁷⁷ Schoolman also wrote a *Religious School Camp Weekend Manual*, also published in 1970, where he emphasizes the celebration of Havdalah is not a campfire program or regular friendship circle but rather has a “distinctive flavor” which should be emphasized and explained to all present. He extrapolates that “this is a perfect opportunity for introducing

¹⁷⁶ Isaacman, *Jewish Summer Camps*, 579.

¹⁷⁷ Schoolman, ed., “Camp Counselor and Staff Orientation Manual,” 33.

thematic material such as selections from Jewish literature and again, appropriate songs.”¹⁷⁸ This echoes the same feeling as the Zionist camp mentioned above by Isaacman, which also uses Havdalah as a time to explore Judaism and the arts. Greene Family Camp’s current bookending of Havdalah with song sessions at the campfire (first one for the younger campers, second one for the older campers) conflicts with the understandings of these two approaches but is also doing so close to fifty years later. Newer guidelines have been established, and new traditions have been created.

Another aspect of Shabbat celebration at summer camp is where, when, and how *Oneg* Shabbat is celebrated. For many camps it is on Friday evening after dinner and services while others celebrate on Saturday evening after Havdalah. Activities vary from song sessions to Israeli dancing to the singing of *z’mirot*. Whether these activities occur on Friday evening or Saturday evening, they lend yet another dimension of specialness to the celebration of Shabbat, and are often the moments that children remember the most about their time at camp.¹⁷⁹

The fact that children are required, in many camps, to wear white clothing on Shabbat also speaks to the role of expectations. As will be discussed in detail in the section on Greene Family Camp, peer pressure and wanting to impress counselors who are viewed as role models and mentors is social capital that staff, and especially educational staff, can spend on creating positive experiences related to Jewish ritual and especially to prayer.

Reform Movement Camping

The history of Jewish summer camping began over 50 years before the first Reform Movement camp was founded in 1951, as has been explored throughout this chapter. The Union

¹⁷⁸ Leonard A. Schoolman, *Religious School Camp Weekend Manual* (New York: UAHC Department of Camp and Youth Education, 1970), 18.

¹⁷⁹ Posen, 29; Shulsinger, 18; Schicker.

Institute in Oconomowoc, WI, now known as the Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute (OSRUI), was established through the leadership of Chicago-area rabbis and lay people.¹⁸⁰ They were influenced by the success of both Jewish camping and specifically by the impact of the Conservative Movement's Camp Ramah in Wisconsin, which opened in 1947, and wanted to have a similar experience for their synagogue members.¹⁸¹ OSRUI's establishment, according to Jonathan Sarna, would conclude "the most portentous decade in the history of Jewish camping."¹⁸²

Michael M. Lorge and Gary P. Zola write of the early years of OSRUI that even though there was a desire on a national scale, from the UAHC leadership, to have more opportunities in their youth programming, this in and of itself "may not have given rise to a Reform Jewish camp. Although the UAHC's interest in establishing a camp for the movement reaches back to the early 1940s, the efforts to found a Reform Jewish camp bore fruit in the early 1950s only when the project garnered significant local support."¹⁸³ This need for the support of the local Jewish community would be important to the establishment of the majority of Reform Movement-affiliated camps. Lorge and Zola explain that the model and success of OSRUI laid the foundation for the future of Reform Jewish camping in the country. Though the success of Camp Ramah and others were ultimately the push for the Chicago-area leaders, OSRUI was a child of the Reform Movement and the relationship between each of the camps that would follow and the

¹⁸⁰ Michael M. Lorge and Gary P. Zola, "The Beginnings of Union Institute in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, 1952-1970: Creation and Coalescence of the First UAHC Camp" in *A Place of Our Own: The Rise of Reform Jewish Camping* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2006). Further explanation of the name change according to Lorge and Zola: the camp's name changed twice - first to Olin-Sang Union Institute in 1967 and then to Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute in 1972. Both changes were acknowledgments of the generous philanthropy of the families to the camp.

¹⁸¹ Jonathan Sarna, "The Crucial Decade in Jewish Camping," in *A Place of Our Own: The Rise of Reform Jewish Camping* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2006), 40; 43.

¹⁸² Ibid, 28.

¹⁸³ Lorge and Zola, 53.

UAHC, now URJ, would be based upon that model and not the model of Camp Ramah's relationship to the Conservative Movement.¹⁸⁴

OSRUI opened for its first summer on Lac La Belle in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin in 1952, and its success would lead to the establishment of three more Union camps in 1958 (Harlem, Eisner and Institute Union Camp, now Goldman Union Camp Institute - GUCI). This was followed by the opening of three more camps in 1964, 1965, and 1970 (Coleman, Kutz and Jacobs). Greene Family Camp would follow in 1976. Today, there are a total of eighteen URJ-affiliated overnight camps across the United States.¹⁸⁵ The growth from one camp to eighteen means that over 10,000 children and adolescents participate in overnight URJ Jewish summer camp experiences (including Israel trips) every year.¹⁸⁶

Though it has been over sixty-five years since the establishment of the first Reform Movement camp, the similarities in the goals of the URJ for the camps have changed only slightly. The following table compares the UAHC's 1970 Objectives and the URJ's 2016 Objectives.

UAHC (1970, see Appendix A)	Greene Family Camp (Faculty Manual 2016)
1. To provide campers and staff with rewarding, challenging and pleasant experiences in a religious environment, and to aid in the development of knowledgeable, believing and practicing Reform Jews.	1. Provide campers and staff with rewarding, challenging and pleasant experiences in a religious environment, and aid in the development of knowledgeable, believing and practicing Reform Jews.

¹⁸⁴ Ramah was created as an official arm of The Jewish Theological Seminary and their faculty held an important role in the camp's structure, programming, etc. OSRUI and the camps that followed were independent entities that affiliated with the UAHC rather than being a child of it. Sarna, 40-41.

¹⁸⁵ This includes the fact that there are two locations each of 6-Points Sci-Tech and 6-Points Sports, as well as the 6-Points Creative Arts which is opening its doors in Summer 2018.

¹⁸⁶ Jerry Kaye, "A View to the Past with an Eye to the Future: The Reform Movement Celebrates 60 Years of Camping" eJewish Philanthropy, 2012.
<http://ejewishphilanthropy.com/a-view-to-the-past-with-an-eye-to-the-future-the-reform-movement-celebrates-60-years-of-camping/> accessed December, 18, 2017.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. To provide opportunities to study Torah at graded levels of understanding and appreciation. 3. To develop, through the natural setting of a UAHC camp, an awareness of the presence of God in all life. 4. To develop an appreciation and an understanding of the sacred relationships between man and God, and between man and man. 5. To develop an understanding that life is filled with purpose and is good beyond its materialistic manifestations. 6. To provide youth and adults with opportunities to experience the fullness of Jewish life through prayer and other meaningful religious experiences. 7. To provide youth and adults with intensive training for roles of lay and professional leadership within the Reform Jewish community specifically, as well as the Jewish community at large. 8. To translate religious concepts into real experiences, developing or modifying personal character and group behavior in consonance with the ideals of Judaism. 9. To provide a creative setting for Jewish learning and living, through integrated religious camp programming. 10. To implement the awareness of K'lal Yisrael in general and of the State of Israel in particular, and to offer campers the opportunity of finding 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Provide opportunities to study Torah at graded levels of understanding and appreciation. 3. Develop, through the natural setting of a URJ camp, an awareness of the presence of God in all life. 4. Develop an appreciation and an understanding of the sacred relationships between humanity and God and between the peoples of the world. 5. Develop an understanding that life is filled with purpose and good beyond its material manifestations. 6. Provide youth and adults with opportunities to experience the fullness of Jewish life through prayer and other meaningful religious experiences. 7. Provide youth and adults with intensive training for roles in lay and professional leadership within the Reform Jewish community specifically, as well as the Jewish community at large. 8. Translate religious concepts into real experiences, developing or modifying personal character and group behavior in consonance with the ideals of Judaism. 9. Provide a creative setting for Jewish learning and living, through integrated religious camp programming, at each URJ camp. 10. Implement the awareness of K'lal Yisrael (the People of Israel) in general and the State of Israel in particular, and to offer campers the opportunity of finding their own
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their own creative and active roles in this process.	creative and active roles in this process.
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The comparison in the table shows how consistent the objectives of the Union has been over the past five decades in relation to its summer camps, and also speaks to the shifting relationship the American Reform Jewish leadership had with the growing State of Israel.¹⁸⁷ The Manual for Counselors and Staff written and published in 1970 by Rabbi Leonard Schoolman, on behalf of the UAHC, also extrapolates on what the objectives look like in practice. In his introduction to the Manual and its purpose, he states “Camp offers a unique opportunity for creative Jewish living. The Jewish atmosphere which pervades the camps can help the child to internalize the Jewish values which he has learned in his home and in his religious school classes.”¹⁸⁸ He explains that the Manual was created to help guide the counselor and staff member to better “understand the purposes of UAHC camps and to understand their place in the process of Jewish summer camping.”¹⁸⁹ The role of the counselor and staff member in shaping the experience of the campers is at the forefront of Schoolman’s mind as he was developing the Manual, even while he recognized that the leadership staff (and therefore the Union) were just as invested in giving the counselors and staff an experience that fulfilled the objectives for the success of the summer camp.

The Manual also a long “Statement of Principles Guiding UAHC Camps.” The Statement begins by expressing that, “The UAHC looks upon its camps as extensions in a country setting of the Jewish home, the Congregation’s religious school, and also as a most significant area in its

¹⁸⁷ Much of the reading done for this chapter included significant discussions of the role of the State Israel, post 1948, and Hebrew at Jewish summer camps. That topic in and of itself could have been a chapter but was not ultimately relevant considering that the main focus of this study is spirituality and prayer at summer camp and not Israel and Hebrew at summer camp. The bibliography would be of assistance to someone interested in the topic, especially Isaacman’s dissertation as well as the in-depth studies on the individual camps as well as on Hebrew-speaking camps specifically.

¹⁸⁸ Schoolman, “Camp Counselor and Staff Orientation Manual,” 3.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

program of experimental education.”¹⁹⁰ This is a significant leap, and an important one, from the early years of OSRUI when the camp leadership had to convince the UAHC to help them meet budgetary shortfalls.¹⁹¹ The Statement also gave criteria for both Camp Directors as well as Program Directors explaining that:

UAHC Camps are, in essence, model Jewish communities, with a set of values determined by the UAHC and implemented by the camp personnel engaged to administer programming. In a very real sense, the camps’ inspirational tones and religious and cultural programs are made manifest by the camp directors, program directors, and other members of the staff....The camp directors and program directors set a standard of religious behavior for the entire camp community, demonstrating their concerns for Jewish values and personal integrity.¹⁹²

The role of the leadership of a camp cannot be overstated in relation to creating a camp culture that both nourishes as well as challenges the staff and campers to grow and learn. The importance of staff, at all levels, to be fully engaged in the programming of the camp is directly connected to the success of the programming. Without dedicated staff, there is no camp, and without dedicated leadership there is no staff to implement the vision as well as day-to-day necessities of the camp. Schoolman, and the UAHC, recognized the need to train staff for a new world but everything they said then is applicable today as well. The goals, objectives, and measurements of success have not changed. The recognition that UAHC camps were, and are, special is also mentioned in the section on training for leadership:

As model Jewish communities, UAHC Camps should be training centers for leaders in Reform Judaism. Union camps are *special* camps for *intensive Jewish religious and educational influence*. The UAHC looks to its camps to provide inspiration and influences for congregational youth and adults: to imbue young boys and girls with a desire to continue their formal Jewish education through the high school years; to motivate some teen-agers to pursue eventual careers in Jewish life in the rabbinate, Jewish education, the cantorate and youth work....¹⁹³

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 8.

¹⁹¹ Lorge and Zola, 63.

¹⁹² Schoolman, “Camp Counselor and Staff Orientation Manual,” 8.

¹⁹³ Ibid., 9.

The guidance for the creation of camp programming has also not changed as the Manual says it “should be based on the three great pillars of Jewish life 1) *Torah* (Jewish learning), 2) *Avodah* (service -- both religious service and physical work), 3) *Gemilut Chasadim* (which, in this context, should be interpreted as social action in the broadest sense).¹⁹⁴ The three pillars are also the guiding light of the Reform Movement at large. Specific to the camp setting is the inclusion of the need for “a full nature, recreation and athletic program [that] should be incorporated within this framework, permeated by a uniquely creative religious climate and setting.”¹⁹⁵ A camp should not only be built around the pillars of Judaism but should also recognize its role as a summer camp and as a place where Judaism is lived twenty-four hours a day and not only on Shabbat or holidays.

The UAHC/URJ objectives are still actively present in today’s promotional material. The blurbs written about each of the camps on the URJ’s Youth Programs website express this.¹⁹⁶ Each of the camps, the exception being Kutz since it is a specialized teen leadership experience, lists themselves first and foremost as a Reform Jewish summer camp. They then often list things such as the following:

- Camp Coleman has provided a creative setting for Jewish living and learning through innovative camp programming.
- Since 1958, Eisner Camp has embodied the transformative power of Jewish camping, changing the lives of all who walk through its gates.
- GUCI is a place where children grow and mature into responsible, knowledgeable young Jewish adults. Our campers and staff create and live in an atmosphere where it is cool to be Jewish. Our Jewish heritage, history and values are integral parts of our program.
- Since 1970, Jacobs campers have developed new skills, learned from a dynamic staff and engaged with Jewish values.
- Our hope is that every individual leaves [Kutz] with a deeper connection to living an intentionally Jewish life which is made richer because of their personal growth while in this community and a deepened commitment to ensuring the Reform Jewish community of the future.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ URJ Youth Department, “Overnight Camp,” <https://urjyouth.org/programdirectory-type/overnight-camp/>, accessed December, 20, 2017.

Each of these statements builds upon the objectives in its own way. The importance of traditions, customs, and region-based experiences is something that differentiates each of the camps but their basic goal as places where Jewish children can immerse themselves in their Judaism is something that each and every one of the camps shares. The evolution of Reform Jewish camping has come far from its inception in 1952 but the objectives the leadership hopes to reach have remained the same because they are objectives of anyone who wishes to engage young people in continuing to live an active Jewish life.

URJ Greene Family Camp

This section will discuss the development of URJ Greene Family Camp (GFC) both in the context of the Reform Movement and as an independent entity. When GFC was established in 1976, it was the eighth Reform movement camp. In comparison to Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute (OSRUI) in Wisconsin, which was the first Reform movement camp to be established, in 1952, GFC was a lay-led camp, not founded by the rabbis of the region but rather by community leaders. This significantly impacted the culture of GFC and also expressed a different approach to Reform movement camping.¹⁹⁷ GFC's first director was Rabbi Solomon Kahn Kaplan who was the UAHC Regional Director and influence behind Jacobs and Greene. By GFC's second year in 1977, there were 70 campers and by 1978, GFC grew to 148 campers. Rabbi Jake (Lawrence Jackofsky) became the second director in 1978 and left to become the UAHC Regional Director. Then in 1979, the reins were turned over to Loui Dobin.¹⁹⁸

At GFC, the culture has always been one of "let's see what works" according to Dobin, now the former director and current executive director of GFC.¹⁹⁹ This is not to dismiss the role of

¹⁹⁷ Loui Dobin. Phone conversation. October 3, 2017.

¹⁹⁸ Greene Family Camp, "History of Greene Family Camp," 2017, <https://greene.org/about/history-of-greene-family-camp/>, accessed December 20, 2017.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

rabbis and other Jewish professionals, for GFC has always had a strong faculty culture. In more recent years the faculty has expanded to include not only rabbis, cantors, and education professionals but also youth directors because GFC's leadership has come to recognize the importance of bringing to camp individuals from the region who understand informal Jewish education for children and teenagers. Youth Directors are often overlooked because many are part-time or volunteers but the impact they have had on GFC's education in the past few years has been significant.²⁰⁰

The role of faculty at GFC has always been to support the mission and goals of the camp. One of these goals is the goal of all URJ camps - helping to build synagogues. The need to develop new leadership for synagogues (both professional and lay) leads directly to the goals of having religious services at camp. According to Dobin, camp services are about two things: to make campers comfortable with the prayers, and adding value. GFC wants their campers to be able to walk into a synagogue and understand what is occurring but also wants to give their campers more than just synagogue-type prayer. One should go to camp for more than just synagogue skills, there should be more value added. According to Dobin, "In one way, we want them comfortable with the rhythms of the synagogue. In another way, we want them to be disruptive of the rhythms of the synagogue."²⁰¹ This desire, to both understand where one comes from and be able to actively participate in the rituals of synagogue life, as well as to desire and work for positive change in the synagogue, is important to both recognize and explore.

The changes in the structure and style of religious services in Reform synagogues across the country in the past forty years can be directly connected to the growth, development, and experiences of campers in the 1960s and 1970s. These experiences, especially the role of folk

²⁰⁰ Schicker.

²⁰¹ Loui Dobin. Phone conversation. October 3, 2017.

music, impacted campers in a fundamental way and as they became synagogue leaders, both professional and lay, their desire to feel their Judaism the way they did at camp became so strong that they instituted changes in the life of the synagogue. This change can be illustrated through the role of Debbie Friedman (z”l) and the Mi Shebeirach prayer’s reintroduction into the liturgy of the Reform movement.²⁰²

Friedman’s composition worked its way into not only the official liturgy of the Reform movement (published as an option during the Torah Service in *Mishkan T’filah*, as well as in *Mishkan Hanefesh*) but also into a number of communities affiliated with other movements. This development speaks to both the desire by members of the Reform movement to fulfill their individual need for connection on a spiritual level but also, in part, a desire for the music people heard in their secular life, and then heard at camp often with Jewish content, to become a part of their regular worship experience in the synagogue. This desire is what helped reshape the worship experience at so many synagogues and has continued to shape worship at many camps including GFC.

The development of the worship experience at GFC has undergone a number of changes since its establishment, though the importance of music has always been recognized. At GFC there have always been weekday, Friday evening, Shabbat morning, and Havdalah services. The number of weekday services as well as the time of day at which they occurred has shifted over the years but there has always been a commitment to having religious services as a part of the regular camp schedule. When discussing the role of worship at camp, Dobin explained that camp can require religious services because the social capital has already been built up during other times at camp to get the buy-in of the campers as well as the staff regarding the need for their attention and

²⁰² The camping movement is not the only factor of this example but is an easily explained example. The other major factor at play is the reality of the baby boomer generation again and their response to health challenges. Friedman herself suffered many health challenges.

participation in the religious services. Dobin shared that his personal understanding of proof of God's existence is a cabin of 10-year-old boys sitting quietly in services because of the social capital camp has built up.²⁰³ The peer pressure to be attentive and present has an impact on the campers. The difference in Shabbat morning services between 2014 and 2017 included campers who, while not necessarily engaged, were more often sitting quietly in their seats and were not constantly getting up to go to the bathroom. This may have had something to do with the institution of locking the kitchen in order to keep staff out of the kitchen and requiring staff to sit among the campers rather than in the last row. Another new structural innovation in 2017 was having services in the round, with the leaders in the middle of an ever-widening circle of chairs. This brought more people closer to the action as well as encouraging more staff to be among the campers.²⁰⁴

According to Dobin, residential camping is successful because of the intensity of the experience, family dynamics (siblings teaching siblings or better understood as campers teaching campers) as well as the role of *midor lador* - generation to generation. At summer camp there is not always a true generational divide but there are recognizable differences between campers, counselors, specialists, leadership, etc. at summer camp. What makes GFC special, what makes many Reform movement camps different, is a certain spiritual component, the recreation, nature, and the cool kids who lead cool songs and talk about Judaism.²⁰⁵

The business of camp is to provide living Jewish experiences. The importance of ritual cannot be overstated in realizing this. Havdalah is one of the tangible examples, both at GFC and at other Reform movement camps. Dobin explained that Havdalah has always been an important

²⁰³ Loui Dobin. Phone conversation. October 3, 2017.

²⁰⁴ Schicker.

²⁰⁵ Loui Dobin. Phone conversation. October 3, 2017.

piece of the experience of GFC and song session has been a part of it. While Dobin came from URJ Camp Eisner to GFC as its third director and brought some of their traditions with him, he also worked closely with Rabbi Jake, GFC's second director, who was still located in Texas as the UAHC Regional Director. The influence of Dobin's love of music as well as his talent is felt throughout GFC, including the song he wrote as the camp's anthem.²⁰⁶ Therefore, the great importance of song leading, song sessions and the inclusion of music throughout the camp program is unsurprising.

As mentioned in a previous section, the current Havdalah practice at GFC is to have the younger campers at the campfire site for song session first, have the older campers join them just after dark for Havdalah, and then have another song session at the campfire for the older campers. The reason for this double song session is that GFC has grown so large that there is not room for everyone to be sitting around the campfire for song session together. The all-camp song session, starting Summer 2017, occurred after dinner and before services on Friday night while during the week groups of either one or two units would be together. This was a change during Summer 2017 from previous years where all song sessions were camp-wide. Though there was pushback from both campers and staff during the Summer, Rabbi Andrew Terkel, new Director of Year-Round Programming as well as Camp Rabbi, believed that more teaching would occur in smaller groups and allow younger or newer campers the ability to learn without the older or returning campers overwhelming them. There are pros and cons to both systems and it will be interesting to see how the camp culture around singing does or does not shift with Terkel, a former songleader at GFC, on the professional team.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁶ Greene Family Camp, "GFC Song", <https://greene.org/about/follow-me-to-gfc-chords/>, accessed December 20, 2017.

²⁰⁷ Schicker.

Summers 2014-2017

First under the leadership of Rabbi Ana Bonnheim, who is the former Director of Year-Round Programming and former Camp Rabbi, and now under the leadership of Terkel, services at GFC have shifted multiple times. During the summers, first as Summer Education Director and now as Assistant Director, Jessica Dangott was actively involved in planning and executing the education program (including all aspects of religious services) during the summers. The Education Staff, until Summer 2017 when the responsibility shifted to Terkel and the Songleading team, worked closely with both the Songleaders and visiting Faculty to create a cohesive, engaging and meaningful worship experience both through weekday and Shabbat services.²⁰⁸ Weekday services have seen a number of changes over the past few years as GFC tries to figure out the best use of their Faculty as well as the most meaningful experience for campers and staff. In 2014, weekday services were in the morning before breakfast and were held by bunk, mostly led by Faculty but sometimes counselors were asked to lead them. In 2015 the decision was made to shift the services experience to the evening, still with Faculty, and call it *Siyyum* rather than services. This shift allowed the same flexibility as services in the morning, an allowance for the leader (faculty or counselor) to use the time as they best saw fit. In Summer 2016 another shift was made, this time moving the option of *Siyyum* for the younger campers to the afternoon rather than the evening since they go to sleep quite early. Summer 2017 found yet another change in the schedule; this time the decision was to move services back to the morning before breakfast but would be done with the entire unit and always led by a visiting faculty member or a member of the Education Staff.

²⁰⁸ Faculty at GFC come, generally, from across Texas and Oklahoma and are rabbis, cantors, educators, and youth directors. Others have also come on staff: a comic book writer, URJ staff, artists, etc. Faculty are expected to assist with the education program as well as participate in both weekday services as well as Shabbat activities as requested.

Survey of Faculty

At the end of August 2017, the author sent a survey out to GFC faculty members from both sessions during Summer 2017. Twelve individuals responded - seven rabbis, two educators, two youth workers, and one cantorial soloist. Six of the respondents attended Jewish summer camp as children, and one attended “not a Jewish program camp.”²⁰⁹ The other five respondents did not attend summer camp. Where they grew up, and their age bracket, may be the main cause of this. In his interview, Dobin explained that summer camp was a Northern rather than Southern phenomenon in the United States.²¹⁰ This also explains why Jacobs Camp, in Mississippi, was only founded in 1969 and GFC only in 1976. Among the eight who worked at camp, collectively they had worked at fourteen different camps including seven different URJ affiliated camps.

The questions asked in the survey relevant to the experience of prayer at GFC were:

1. How has prayer changed or evolved during your time at camp?
2. Why do you think these changes were made?
3. Do you think there is a connection between the changes made at GFC and the choices made in the Reform Movement at large?
4. What are the unique needs of the campers and staff that led camp to create their own materials? At one point there was a prayer pamphlet for Friday night as well as one for Saturday morning.
5. How have the choices made at the camp been brought back into the congregations and communities that the campers and staff return to? The one/s that you serve.
6. If you were rewriting the camp schedule, where would you put prayer? How frequent would organized prayer occur? Would you give resources for prayerful moments to staff? And why?
7. Do you think the switch from bunk creative morning t'filah to unit t'filah was successful in engaging the campers?
8. As a leader, did you prefer morning tekkes or evening siyyum for prayer?
9. Please explain your response to the previous question (preference for morning tekkes or preference for evening siyyum).
10. Opportunity for other thoughts

²⁰⁹ Responses to survey sent out by Schicker in August 2017. Responses are being reported in this thesis as anonymous.

²¹⁰ Loui Dobin. Phone conversation. October 3, 2017.

The responses to the survey ranged widely and the entire collection of answers is included in Appendix C. Only those comments relevant to the history and changes in practice will be summarized here. Thoughts on changes moving forward will be included in the conclusion.

One respondent explained that this was their eleventh summer at GFC. They explained that early on there was some type of t'filah every day and that it was generally with an entire unit, in comparison to individual bunks, and that, though it was generally in a traditional mode, the prayer itself was creative. In contrast, a respondent who has been at GFC for nine years expressed that “prayer has evolved into more trying to get meaning rather than just doing/fluency.” These differing opinions show that even adults vary widely in how they experience t'filah or prayer at camp. Meeting the needs of hundreds of campers, staff, and faculty means recognizing that one cannot meet everyone in the same way at the same time. Yet, it was suggested throughout the responses to the various questions that those who remember more camper/counselor-organized and led t'filah liked it. That more involvement is necessary, even while recognizing the need for consistency throughout the session that a camper is attending.

This need for creativity balanced with consistency is complicated. The shift from more creativity to more structure is also not evaluated the same across the respondents' answers. Some stated that the change they have seen has been to more creativity, especially in regards to weekday t'filah which has often been more of a “lesson” (yoga, meditation) and less of structured prayer (with a prayer book or without). This shift is seen as camp both trying “to focus more on kavanah than keva” as well as indicating that camp changed the frequency of prayer services because campers did not enjoy them, rather than changing the way they were done.

In response to the question about the creation of camp prayer materials respondents made multiple comments about the fact that children have a hard time using *Mishkan T'filah*. Those with

more years at GFC also commented that the prayer pamphlets were created because of the need for camper-friendly services with transliteration. Campers come from a variety of backgrounds and ages.

Some of the most interesting comments that were shared in the survey responses were those relating to the impact of Jewish summer camp on prayer services back in the communities from which the respondents came. Some stated that there was little impact while others noted bringing songs and melodies back to the community. One respondent explained that they used to include camp services in their requirements for b'nai mitzvah students but no longer do so. Though this respondent did not explain why, it may be assumed that they recognize that camp *minhag* (custom) is different from the home congregation's and therefore attendance at camp services does not play the same role as attendance at services in the congregation.²¹¹

In relation to the shift from bunk t'filah to unit t'filah, seven respondents were in favor of the change, two were firmly against, two were ambivalent and one felt a combination of both would be ideal. This reflects two main ideas - one is that there is safety in numbers and permission to participate as much as one wishes rather than being on the spot, and another is that for many, Jewish prayer occurs in larger groups. The need for a minyan is not just a need for a quorum but is a statement of the importance of community. If camp is about building community, which for many it is, then the majority feeling that a larger prayer community was more successful is unsurprising.

Shabbat Services

In comparison to the constant changes relating to weekday services, Shabbat services, both Friday night as well as Saturday morning, have not had nearly as many changes over the past few

²¹¹ An especially interesting comment was "It is also disrupting that some kids stand through v'ahavtah." This comment, which reflects a difference in minhag (custom) between communities, is an interesting one. The author has mostly seen this trend in individuals who have been to URJ Kutz Camp where they learn of the minhag of standing. It is neither a Classical REform nor Orthodox minhag but appears to have arisen out of the Reform minhag of remaining standing from Barchu through Sh'ma. Whether this has been explained to the campers, or to anyone involved or impacted, is unclear to the author.

years. The custom at GFC is to have Kabbalat Shabbat at the Beit Kneset - which is an outdoor chapel space overlooking Lake Jake - with the entire camp in attendance. Shacharit is held in the Chadar Ochel, again with the entire camp in attendance. One of the main considerations for not holding the morning service at the Beit Kneset is that it is too hot during Texas summers to do so. Another consideration is the issue of using *Mishkan T'filah* for Shacharit but a specially-made prayer pamphlet for Kabbalat Shabbat. The logistics alone are a deterrent to using the Beit Kneset as the sole prayer space.

The construction of both the Kabbalat Shabbat and Shacharit services has remained consistent over the past few years, changes to song melodies notwithstanding. The prayer pamphlet for Kabbalat Shabbat has been in use since 2002 with only minor changes. A Shacharit version of the prayer pamphlet was created but has not been used since 2008 when *Mishkan T'filah* was bought from the CCAR Press. Watching campers use of the full-size *Mishkan T'filah* during Shabbat Shacharit services was a major cause for the author choosing to write this thesis. Being a member of the Education Staff in both 2014 and 2017, she saw the need for an easy-to-use, engaging, and relevant Shabbat Shacharit service booklet. Further discussion about the construction of the service, and commentary on why these changes are necessary, will be included in the third chapter as part of the annotation of the service.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to help the reader understand that Jewish summer camps are something special and that for anyone involved in the Jewish community they are something worth studying and understanding. For too long scholars and professionals have dismissed the role of Jewish summer camp and the importance of building upon the foundation laid before. Jewish professionals, for decades, have been writing and rewriting guidelines for summer camps

in order to make them better but too much came from a top-down mentality. Those on the ground, the professionals working at the summer camps, are the ones we should be paying attention to, and not only the administrators at the top. Even though some Jewish summer camps are for-profit institutions, most are not and their purpose for existing is the building of a community of young Jews who will one day be the leadership, both professional and lay, of the Jewish community.

The evolution of Jewish summer camps is not something that can be fully discussed in a singular chapter but the need to understand the history in order to build upon a solid foundation was the purpose of this chapter. Scholars who have written on the topic, as has been seen throughout this chapter, have mostly focused on smaller topics within the larger history. While helpful, it is clear that a larger study is much needed by the Jewish community even if that were to consist of separate histories for the separate movements rather than one comprehensive history.²¹²

One goal of this chapter was to show that the evolution of American Reform Judaism, especially in the past sixty years, cannot be understood without looking at the impact of Jewish summer camps - both those affiliated with the Reform movement and those affiliated with other groups or none at all. Jewish summer camp has changed the expectations of both children and adults of what their Judaism can mean to them personally as well as what their personal practices and observances are. Without summer camp, as one example, the love of Havdalah is unlikely to have returned to the lives of Reform Jews. Another example is that of the role of music, especially folk music, in Reform liturgy. The publication of *Mishkan T'filah* with the words of so many new songs written in the past twenty years is proof of that.

Jewish educators today have the opportunity to build upon the understandings, guidance, failures, and successes of those who came before and apply them to all aspects of Jewish life, but especially to the opportunity presented by the immersive, overnight experience of summer camp.

²¹² Example: URJ camps, Ramah camps, Young Judaea movement, etc.

In the survey given in August 2017, the question “If you were rewriting the camp schedule, where would you put prayer? Would you give resources for prayerful moments to staff? And why?” inspired a lot of detailed answers, expressing the various personal desires of the respondent. From a desire to have it more often, to a desire to have it at different times of day, to a desire to see prayer or blessing actively engaged in throughout the day. The professionals who responded have both the education and the standing to help shape a new perspective at camp, and their thoughts as well as the conversations the author participated in while at GFC in 2014 and 2017 are the basis of the construction of Chapter Three.

Appendix A

Objectives of UAHC Camps from the “Camp Counselor and Staff Orientation Manual,” Ed. Rabbi Leonard A. Schoolman. Department of Camp and Youth Education Union of American Hebrew Congregations 1970, 7.

1. To provide campers and staff with rewarding, challenging and pleasant experiences in a religious environment, and to aid in the development of knowledgeable, believing and practicing Reform Jews.
2. To provide opportunities to study Torah at graded levels of understanding and appreciation.
3. To develop through the natural setting of a UAHC camp an awareness of the presence of God in all of life.
4. To develop an appreciation and an understanding of the sacred relationships between man and God, and between man and man.
5. To develop an understanding that life is filled with purpose and is good beyond its materialistic manifestations.
6. To provide youth and adults with opportunities to experience the fullness of Jewish life through prayer and other meaningful religious experiences.
7. To provide youth and adults with intensive training for roles of lay and professional leadership within the Reform Jewish community specifically, as well as the Jewish community at large.
8. To translate religious concepts into real experiences, developing or modifying personal character and group behavior in consonance with the ideals of Judaism.
9. To provide a creative setting for Jewish learning and living, through integrated religious camp programming, at each UAHC camp.
10. To implement the awareness of K'lal Yisrael in general and of the State of Israel in particular, and to offer campers the opportunity of finding their own creative and active roles in this process.

Working List of Jewish Values (page 19-20) prepared by Abraham Segal

“Thus, this evolving list of values, in which the ordering and numbering have no significance, can help the counselor to emphasize those aspects of Judaism which children can internalize.”

1. Scholar and saint as the ideal Jewish character type.
2. Compassion toward all living things as expression of our love of God.
3. Sense of identification with all Jews, of heritage, rootedness, history, generation-binding ties.
4. Pleasure and enjoyment in Jewish living.
5. Mitzvot both obligations and opportunities; the “reward-in-itself.”
6. God not a wonder-working magician, but man’s partner, helper, teacher, guide.
7. Passionate zeal for study by all; reverent concentration on a few basic documents (Scripture); study as an essential form of prayer and service to God; vital importance of learning and knowledge.
8. Jewish practices in home and synagogue as expressions of Jewish values.

9. Hebrew language as expression of Jewish values.
10. Covenant commitment of an entire people and their descendants forever to Jewish values.
11. Messianic ideals: world peace, brotherhood, freedom.
12. Justice the chief goal of human existence, the chief criterion for human, national, communal, or personal salvation.
13. Worship and ceremonial not "communion" (sharing with God) but self-discovery, self-judgment, self-purposing, self-development.
14. Optimism in the face of the world's evil.
15. Importance of the group, the Jewish people, as source and target of individual effort.
16. Importance of the individual as well: his divine potential and divine obligation to achieve the very highest kind of human personality; his responsibility to himself.
17. The supreme value of life itself, above all other values except -- according to Jewish tradition -- the still higher requirement of refusing to commit murder, adultery, or idolatry.
18. Sense of Jewish uniqueness, distinctiveness, difference, purpose and destiny.
19. Spiritual survival even more important than physical survival.
20. Family, school, synagogue, and community as vital agents for transmitting Jewish values from generation to generation.
21. Good citizenship plus strong and public Jewish life.
22. Obligation to support the State of Israel both as physical refuge and as cultural-spiritual center of Jewish living.
23. Jewish homeland as conditional, not guaranteed, but organically related to Jewish values as its chief purpose and vital prerequisites.
24. Rational, inquiring attitude toward life's problems, even to challenging God Himself.
25. Resistance to intermarriage and assimilation.
26. Resistance, physical and spiritual, to persecution.
27. Torah as continuing discovery (revelation) of God's guidance, demands, punishments, rewards.
28. Organic development in Jewish living achieved by continuing interaction of tradition, reinterpretation, and reform, in response to both external pressures and inner growth in understanding.
29. Basic harmony between reason and faith, science and religion, Judaism and the best in modern culture.
30. Ethics and morality as outcomes of religious search and religious faith.
31. Acceptance of difference and disagreement among Jews as part of a "family feeling" that also includes love, responsibility, pride, shame.

Appendix B

From Daniel Isaacman's *Jewish Summer Camps*, 663-664.

c. The Jewish Educator and Camping.

1. The Jewish summer camp is indeed a major Jewish educational institution. Consequently, this institution requires the services and staff of qualified Jewish educators. Jewish education can no longer be viewed as a nine or ten-month profession, but must be seen as a full-year job which includes teaching formal classes, leading youth groups during the school year, and serving on the staff of camps during the summer.
2. The Jewish educators, particularly the younger educators in the field, must be encouraged to prepare themselves for camping responsibilities by enrolling in necessary courses and workshops in general camping, and agreeing to serve periods of apprenticeship under supervision in summer camps in preparation for responsible camp positions.
3. It is particularly important that Jewish educators not limit their camping ambitions to the Educational and Denominational camps but seek positions in the other camps where their talents and resources are in greater need.
4. Professional teacher placement services should begin to recruit for summer camp positions as well as for school positions. A first step in this direction would be for the Placement Service to poll educators with reference to their camping experience and interest so as to build up a reservoir of potential personnel for camp placement.
5. Jewish camping has played a relatively minor role in educational literature. Focus should be given to this general area so as to further stimulate concern and interest.
6. National conferences of Jewish educational bodies should place Jewish Camping on their agendas and meetings of educators involved in camping should take place at these conferences.

Appendix C
Responses to Survey Sent Out to GFC Faculty Members
August 2017

Question: How has prayer changed or evolved during your time at camp?

(12 responses)

1. At the camp I attended, we prayed as a group every single day. I learned many prayers and melodies through camp and it meant a lot to me. It also fed into NFTY prayer services. When I joined faculty at GFC, I was surprised at how little prayer there was. We had morning tefilah with each cabin, but the only time there was communal prayer was on Shabbat. The morning tefilah wasn't even tefilah, but was instead a tefilah "lesson," which could be yoga or prayer or looking at the lake. I usually focused solely on "Modeh/Modah Ani" and what we are grateful for, and then "rabah emunatecha" how God's faith in us gave us responsibility and what we would do with that. Later, they started doing nighttime prayer routines.
2. That's a long history, beginning in 1981. We used to have services written by bunks, copied off and handed out to everybody. That involved a lot of primitive technology, cut & paste, mimeograph and the like. These services followed traditional structure but [included] creative readings between major Hebrew prayers. Services over time became more traditional and structured, without camper involvement. Then, we went to faculty-led services, less traditional, more creative, and with still less camper involvement. Except that we occasionally have camper-led services, such as the maudlin affair that is anything but a worship service on the last Friday night of each session led by Kibbutz.
3. Worship has always been great at camp. The combination of the music and setting lends itself to a casual, but spiritual experience.
4. This was my 11th summer. When I started there was some type of t'fillah every day. Usually whole unit. It was mostly 'traditional'- although [included some] creative t'fillah. Then it moved half alternative and half 'traditional' but still with some type of t'fillah most days. Now there is only Shabbat t'fillah that is traditional with only alternative t'fillah during the week and not every day. - Si'um & tekes boker do not count as t'fillah to me.
5. Structurally the same. New melodies. Rachel and Leah have been switched.

6. In summer 2016 and summer 2017 bonim campers have enjoyed their own shabbat evening and morning services so they could be catered more appropriately to their age. Of course, as with most camp programs, the success of this service depended on the person leading.
7. WE ONLY DID A SMALL PRAYER SERVICE FRIDAY NIGHT (NOT A URJ [Camp])
8. The amount of Hebrew increased from when I was a camper.
9. Yes and no. Format is pretty much the same but the music slightly varies.
10. I've been on faculty at GFC for 9 summers and Eisner for 2. At GFC prayer has evolved into more trying to get meaning rather than just doing/fluency.
11. My impression is less individual or small group prayer and more communal.
12. In my time at GFC I have not seen a whole lot of prayer.

Question: Why do you think these changes were made?

(12 responses)

1. No one was ever happy about getting up extra early for the brief morning tefilah experience. The nighttime prayer experience seemed a better way to end the day and have a moment of prayer.
2. 1. Evolution. 2. Whatever the people in charge at any given time thought should be the worship structure. 3. The growth in the number of faculty.
3. With the evolution of modern Jewish music from Debbie Friedman, Dan Nichols and Rick Recht, songs came alive that taught a great deal about Jewish values.
4. To try to focus more on kavanah than keva.
5. Melodies change with time.
6. I believe this change was made to better accommodate the camp population during prayer by providing age-appropriate services as well as maintain the earlier bedtime of the youngest campers.
7. PEOPLE LIKE SONG SESSIONS NOW.
8. It tracked with a general trend within the Movement. In addition, campers would return to their home congregations with the ability to recite (although imperfectly) additional prayers, and rabbis/educators decided to add them to their curricula.
9. Create some variety.

10. Kids hate it when it's just for fluency or for the sake of doing it.
11. Scheduling of morning tefilah and curriculum changes.
12. I don't know.

Question: Do you think there is a connection between the changes made at GFC and the choices made in the Reform Movement at large?

(11 responses)

1. My experience as a camper was that the camp was on the cutting edge of prayer in the Reform Movement. This was especially true at Kutz. My experience as a faculty member at GFC is that they are sort of behind the movement, behind the cutting edge, and just sort of tucking in prayer where it fits, not really experimenting. Oh dear! I hope this is not the future of prayer or reflective of the changes of prayer in the Reform Movement at large!
2. No. Except on Shabbat morning, I don't think that GFC services reflect what's happening in the Reform Movement.
3. Yes, I think that the worship at GFC reflects the move towards more tradition, including more Hebrew and a more engaging style.
4. No.
5. Most seem to match up.
6. YES.
7. There is a great deal of cross-pollination among staff and faculty, so there is certainly a connection. I do think that the interplay between camp music and the Biennials is important to recognize. A great deal of contemporary music is introduced to lay leadership through the Biennials.
8. Yes. GFC leadership plays a role in Biennial.
9. Perhaps. The Reform Movement at large has been struggling with weakening Jewish religious identity (as opposed to cultural identity) and this is an attempt to enhance religious identity.
10. Yes, Reform Movement prayer styles came after success at camp.
11. No, in some ways I think it is the opposite of what is happening in the Reform Movement as a whole.

Question: What are the unique needs of the campers and staff that led camp to create their own materials? At one point there was a prayer pamphlet for Friday night as well as one for Saturday morning.

(11 responses)

1. I do not know.
2. Most kids can't navigate Mishkan T'filah.
3. It is special for each camp to have their own siddur that reflects the values of that region and space.
4. I think it was attempting to give easy access to as many campers as possible. There is a wide variety of backgrounds that the campers come from and there is no knowledge base that each camper has. By creating their own materials, they are able to engage the maximum number of students in prayer.
5. I was not at camp when this took place but I can imagine it was to be sure that all campers had the words in front of them in an easier-to-manage format. Mishkan T'filah is bulky and heavy when you are a young person.
6. THEY WANT OWNERSHIP AND TO DO IT LIKE THEY WANT IT.
7. The previous prayerbooks were either bulky (Gates of Prayer) or small (Gates of Assembly), and rarely had transliteration.
8. N/A
9. When I first went to GFC it was partly that we created services by bunks so they were fairly unique. Now we have more keva.
10. Friday night I believe was prepared waiting for Mishkan Tefilah and changes that came with that siddur. Saturday morning for years we have used Mishkan Tefilah.
11. I have never seen this pamphlet.

Question: How have the choices made at the camp been brought back into the congregations and communities that the campers and staff return to? The one/s that you serve.

(12 responses)

1. I have brought back a number of camp melodies for songs and prayers into our worship.

2. Not much.
3. We try to continue singing the same types of songs our kids are used to hearing at GFC throughout the year for a variety of programs.
4. 1. We learn new melodies for prayers that we bring back. 2. Because of the change in t'fillah, we no longer let our campers count the services at camp towards the services they need to attend for their bar/bat mitzvah. We used to do so.
5. Melodies. It is also disrupting that some kids stand through v'ahavtah.
6. I would say the thing most requested back at our synagogue are the melodies sung during the services more so than the way the service is presented.
7. I TRIED (WITH YOU) TO BRING ONE TUNE BACK, NEXT I WILL TRY ANOTHER.
8. Our congregation created its own alternative prayerbook called Sabbath Prayer-Sabbath Peace that was written by former campers.
9. Yes.
10. The music at camp filters back into our congregation.
11. More singing of prayers at congregations.
12. I think that we try to have more of a "camp" feel to our tefillah, however, I would say camp in general and not specific to GFC.

Question: If you were rewriting the camp schedule, where would you put prayer? How frequently would organized prayer occur? Would you give resources for prayerful moments to staff? And why?

(12 responses)

1. I would have a communal moment of prayer before breakfast every day - a sort of "flagpole moment" of modeh/modah ani and another prayer that different cabins can lead. I would also have weekly prayer at least twice a week for the different units - in the evenings - that are led by the different cabins. This is a good bonding experience and a good exposure to leadership and tefillah for the entire camp. I think that as a movement we are somewhat stilted when it comes to prayer - we don't let it flow naturally, and are very scripted in what we do offer. We will do Birkat HaMazon; why not "v'achalta v'savata" or "brich rachamana"? What are the boundaries of prayer that we can push - and can we invite the staff (who are younger, less bound to tradition) to lead that boundary pushing?

2. I like it in the morning, three days a week.
3. I think prayer is a nice way to end the day. It is a time for reflection that lends itself to the evening prayers well.
4. I would have it everyday at different times. There is a different experience having t'fillah in the morning/at sunset/ at bedtime. I would also have a combination of t'fillah experiences and more traditional yet creative prayer services. I would absolutely give resources to staff for prayerful moments because you never know when a moment will present itself and I'm sure the staff would be happy to lead a quick prayer if they knew what to do.
5. The structure this year has the most potential. Daily prayer. The challenge is consistency. If a new rabbi leads every week, then its not consistent. This is where the prayer book is needed daily. I would introduce a basic prayer card with prayers that the camp wants every kid to really know well. The rest can be creative.
6. I believe that we could make the best of what appear to be wasted minutes by offering a brief morning t'fillah during each breakfast. The counselors would have coffee on board, the campers would have food in their bellies and nobody would have to get up early to pray. I believe that this could take place each day, including poems or ideas written by counselors/campers by the second week of camp. We could take advantage of the tvs in the dining hall and provide the keva on slides. I would also be sure to include counselors in the discussions of how/why of this change so that we could have their buy in. They would then be more engaged, setting a great example for their campers, and then the campers would model this behavior.
7. TO THE STAFF THAT HAS TO DO MORNINGS, I WOULD GIVE THEM A LAMINATED PRAYER SHEET (SMALL) WITH 2 OR 3 MAJOR PRAYERS YOU WANT DONE.
8. Prayer for modern students is challenging. There is a disjunct between some of the siddur theology and the beliefs of our students. Even prayer in our congregations is moving more towards moments of inner emotional expression (Mi Sheberach - I'm feeling sad or scared) rather than on specific beseeches for God to heal. This seems like a trend that will continue and can find a place at camp to express some of the emotional states of our campers.
9. I would put it in the evening and/or a prayer routine at flagpole.

10. I actually liked this year's schedule, but I would encourage staff to create micro-moments of prayer (upon seeing natural beauty, in gratitude, etc) The staff showing how prayer can be normal and everyday would have more impact than faculty.
11. End of day- I thought that was successful time last summer (I was with Niviim) more so than the morning tefilah by bunk when campers were just waking up. Yes I strongly believe staff should have more prayer resources to use when they feel campers would be most receptive and reinforce the idea there are many times during the day to pause and recognize holy, spiritual moments.
12. I would have more prayer at camp in general. Other than Birkat Hamazon and Shabbat I didn't see ANY prayer at camp. By taking it out so completely I think it supports the kids' and counselors' opinions that tefillah is either boring or obsolete. I think that the staff definitely needs opportunities to experience different kinds of tefillah; they need resources, learners' services, language they can use that is more accessible.

Question: Do you think the switch from bunk creative morning t'filah to unit t'filah was successful in engaging the campers?

(12 responses)

1. I was not there in 2017 for this change.
2. I was in Seganim, which had only three bunks first session, and that went very well.
3. I think a combination of both is good. Camp is all about experimentation and I think there is value in both large and small groups.
4. No.
5. It is much better. A larger prayer community means more kids that know the prayers. See above.
6. I thoroughly enjoyed leading unit t'filah and personally did not struggle to keep the group engaged despite challenges with space and timing.
7. I THINK THE UNIT WAS A GOOD IDEA. MORE PEOPLE GOT INVOLVED WHICH GOT MORE INVOLVED BY WATCHING;
8. I was not actively involved or don't have an opinion.
9. No.
10. Definitely yes, for me. The larger group made it easier for people to participate freely.

11. See above- timing was main reason for success in Niviim- even though group was larger.
12. I like the idea, but again I didn't see that happening in my units.

Question: As a leader, did you prefer morning tekkes or evening siyyum for prayer?

(11 respondents.)

- 7 were in favor of Evening and 4 were in favor of Morning

Question: Please explain your response to the previous question (preference for morning tekkes or preference for evening siyyum).

(10 responses)

1. I like the evening siyyum in theory, but I am just so wiped at night that I cannot do them.
2. I was happy to have services in the morning before breakfast. For an older unit, the moment at the end of the day is important.
3. I like the idea of reflecting and singing at the end of the day. Campers are not quite awake in the morning and they are too subdued. By the end of the day, although they may be tired, they are energized by all of the activity during the day.
4. I never found evening prayer effective or desired by the kids. In the morning, they are willing to engage - if only reluctantly.
5. It is easier to get the unit together first thing in the morning than in the evening. It was challenging to know exactly when siyyum would take place as unit evening program locations are always changing and don't typically end on time.
6. It is more effective to let the siyyum be an opportunity to express the emotions and states of mind of our campers.
7. I believe bringing the camp together as the sun is setting is VERY powerful.
8. Evening siyyum was irregular, but morning tekkes was more consistent.
9. See above.
10. I would actually say there should be alternating opportunities for prayers so campers can experience different kinds of prayers and services.

Question: Opportunity for other thoughts.

1. I think that having campers as basically a captive audience presents so many opportunities for them to experience and learn about t'fillah in a positive way. Because campers complained about too much t'fillah, camp got rid of a lot of it instead of changing the quality of what was there.
2. I think that prayer is important and a simple thing that could be incorporated more into camp culture. If we could coach the counselors, Israeli staff, to incorporate some big ideas from Jewish prayer (gratitude, strength, respect, etc) into conversations/moments with their campers then there would be continuity between the general language of camp and formal prayer. Encouraging everyone to find the prayerful moments in everything they do could lead to more kindness in camp relationships. Particularly as everyone begins to get tired as the session continues.
3. I would love to see what conclusions you draw, since I don't feel like I have the answers.
4. I feel strongly that staff should be taught and given resources to incorporate bunk-individual prayer into days. Do not think morning tefilah was at all successful and I led it for years.
5. The two things at camp that seem to be 'expendable' are education and t'fillah. If there is a schedule problem, those are the first things to go.

CHAPTER 3

Shabbat Shacharit for Greene Family Camp

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to write and explain a newly constructed *Shacharit* Shabbat service for The URJ Greene Family Camp (GFC). Currently they use *Mishkan T'filah*, the full edition, but only really use about thirty of the pages (and never all in the same service). Using as guides a variety of siddurim written for children as well as writings on how to teach prayer to young people, the author hopes that the campers and staff at GFC will feel that the new service booklet gives both options as well as new understandings of an ancient practice. This introduction as well as the conclusion following the service will serve to give shape and clarity to the service commentary.

Rabbi Leonard A. Schoolman, who was the Director of the Department of Camp and Youth Education at the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC), wrote in the *Religious School Camp Weekend Manual* some criteria for “Creative Jewish Worship.” He was writing for a generation who were discovering the joys of truly creative worship - meditation, themed services (friendship, peace, Israel), etc. While he was not writing about how to create a standard prayerbook for a summer camp, his criteria have played an important role in guiding the construction of the service which follows.

1. Does the service have a theme or a clear idea? Is that idea one that helps the worshipper transcend his private world so that he can see the universal?
2. Does the service have structure? The traditional Jewish service develops ideas and reaches a climax. Specifically Jewish responses should fit into the structure.
3. Are “special effects” ends in themselves or do they help the worshipper pray? Is it a service or a program to entertain? Is there congregational participation in the service?
4. Does the service take today’s concerns and relate Judaism to them? Is Jewish study part of the service?

5. Is the service adequately rehearsed, so that the performances of the readers do not detract from the services?²¹³

The final criteria does not relate to the content of the service but to its manner of performance. At GFC, the songleaders play an important role in Shabbat services, and their preparation, along with that of the service leader and anyone participating in the service (such as a Torah reader) must be given adequate time in order for the service to be successful. The more people involved in a service, the greater the need for organization and preparation.

Many sources were read and consulted in the creation of the service. Two of the most important *siddurim* were *A Mountain Climber's Guide to Prayer*, written for Camp Young Judaea, and *Siddur Mikor-Hayyim*, written for the Brandeis Hillel Day School. These two *siddurim* take their roles, as a camp *siddur* and as a school *siddur*, seriously. In both, there is a desire not only to include the prayers but to include explanation as well as questions. This allows those using them to learn more about both themselves, through introspection, as well as about the way in which Jews pray, through commentary. This style is also seen in the construction of *Mishkan T'filah* for adults but less so for children using it. *Mishkan T'filah for Children* and *Mishkan T'filah for Youth* have a similar feel but do not give as much commentary as the author felt was possible and necessary. The service is built around the idea that it needs to allow for flexibility in order to serve GFC well. The love of music at GFC means that there will always be words not found in the service booklet, but having the service booklet will allow consistency from week-to-week, which is needed in order to increase the campers' and staff's comfort with the service. The commentary surrounding the prayers allows for the development of a common vocabulary around prayer, and therefore around spirituality.

²¹³ Leonard A. Schoolman, *Religious School Camp Weekend Manual* (New York: Department of Camp and Youth Education UAHC, 1970), 42.

The book, *Jewish Spiritual Parenting: Wisdom, Activities, Rituals and Prayers for Raising Children with Spiritual Balance and Emotional Wholeness*, written by Rabbi Paul Kipnes and Michelle November, MSSW (who are married and the parents of three children), was another important resource for guiding the commentary and thoughts shared throughout the service. The authors speak of the importance for parents to understand their own beliefs surrounding spirituality, religion, and God. This understanding allows parents to help guide their children, and can, and should, also be expanded to all caregivers, including camp staff. The book is an excellent manual which could be built upon for activities to do with camp staff during training.²¹⁴

Kipnes and November cite the teaching of Rabbi Micah D. Greenstein, senior rabbi at Temple Israel of Memphis, Tennessee, who says that Jewish spirituality is “a matter of seeing the holy in the everyday, and invites us to wake up and open our eyes to the holy things happening all around us every day.”²¹⁵ In order for children to recognize that holiness around them, an understanding of this holiness must be modeled for them. The purpose of the *shacharit Shabbat* service is to help give some of the structure, the consistency, of modeling regardless of who is leading the service. Though more consistency was seen at GFC in Summer 2017, this consistency may not continue and any new materials used for services must have the flexibility to be used by a variety of people with different skills.

Loui Dobin, executive director of GFC, explained to the author that a regional difference experienced by GFC (and likely by Jacobs in Mississippi as well) is that “God talk” is something “they” (non-Jews) do in the South. For many campers and staff at GFC, living in the Bible Belt is all that they have known and their discomfort with discussions of religion or spirituality is a worry

²¹⁴ The need for this type of training will be addressed in the longer Conclusion of this work, in the section devoted to ideas for what comes next.

²¹⁵ Micah D. Greenstein, “Jewish Spirituality: 10 Ways to Be a Spiritual Person,” Explorefaith.org as cited in Paul Kipnes and Michelle November, *Jewish Spiritual Parenting: Wisdom, Activities, Rituals and Prayers for Raising Children with Spiritual Balance and Emotional Wholeness*.

that they are crossing into Christian territory. This comment shaped a lot of what the author thought about while compiling and writing the service: how to make the topic of God accessible and Jewish to young people without sounding pushy (or Christian).

Another aspect of life at GFC, as explained by Dobin, was something that is understandable as an issue for religion in the United States and not just for Jewish youth at summer camp. Ritual has become problematized, and people are struggling, because prayer is connected to certain occasions that involve material things. An important example is prayers revolving around food - food appears in grocery stores and in homes whether one prays or not. Or so it appears to many. Many people no longer really believe any more that “stuff” comes from God. So the idea of thanking God for these things is no longer seen as necessary, the way it was for generations past.²¹⁶ Another important matter that Dobin explained was the importance of developing prayers, blessings, for things that are important and relevant in the lives of those whom GFC is serving. His example was a blessing written for when a teenager gets their driver’s license: something that expresses the need for safety and the importance of personal responsibility. This too impacted the choices made for the service booklet.

Note

The commentary to the service is found in full after the service. Citations are found in the endnotes, rather than in footnotes, in order for the reader to fully experience what the new service would look like in print. All footnotes in the service are a part of the booklet. The majority of the Hebrew prayers came from the computer program Davka. Edits were made in order to make the selections match the Hebrew choices found in *Mishkan T'filah*. Some prayers were copied from <http://www.zemirotdatabase.org/> as well as from <http://www.adateloheim.org/>. Transliteration

²¹⁶ It should be noted that this does sound incredibly privileged and the author recognizes this. Not all children are blessed with a stable home life where food is easily accessible. These comments are generalized in order to explain why the idea of thanking God has become problematic for so many individuals.

comes from ReformJudaism.org and *Mishkan T'filah*. All pictures and clip art were found through Google Images and are allowed to be used without copyright infringement.

שַׁבַּת שַׁחֲרִית

Shabbat Morning Service



URJ Greene Family Camp

Why do we pray?

We pray for many reasons, each one as unique as the person praying.

- Some people say praying is like **climbing a mountain**. In both situations we are trying to reach the heavens, we are trying to reach higher. A prayer service is like climbing a mountain. There is a beginning, various points one must reach, the top or center of the prayer service, and then one makes their way back down to earth.
- Others see prayer as **exercise**. It takes practice, for no one is good at it the first time they try. When you have taken a break from prayer, it can take time to get back into shape.
- Still others see prayer like **art**, as an expression, for each person can see a different story in a piece of art, just like every person may feel something or think something different when praying the same prayer.
- Another way people view prayer is that it is like learning to play a **musical instrument**. In order for you to feel accomplished, you must play regularly. It can take a lot of effort, a lot of time but when you have learned how, it is often enjoyable to play with others.

How do we pray?

There is no one way to pray. At GFC we enjoy praying together as a whole camp community on Shabbat, as bunks or units during the week, and whenever we join together for meals. Judaism recognizes the importance of praying as a community as well as praying as individuals. This is why we always include silent prayer in our services together.

You can pray anytime, anywhere. Some people enjoy praying outside, like we do on Friday evening at the Beit Knesset, while others prefer praying in their bed. Some people like to pray out loud, singing with all their soul, while others prefer to keep their words inside their heart and mind. Some people like to read prayers from the *siddur* (prayerbook) and others want only to pray from their hearts. Most people enjoy some combination of all of these things.

When do we pray?

We pray all of the time. We recite blessings during meal time, we come together during the week as small groups, and on Shabbat we come together as the entire GFC community (often with lots of guests!). YOU can pray any time of day or night. Prayer is often a way to think about the things that worry YOU or that YOU are excited about. Prayer, speaking to community or to God, is whatever you want it to be.

How to use this new *siddur* (prayerbook)?

YOU will find throughout this *siddur* that there are comments and activities for you to think about or do. YOU will also find that the Hebrew words are on the left hand side and the transliteration is on the right hand side. The transliteration is matched to the Hebrew to help you with your reading skills, and if you see a syllable in **bold**, that is where you place the emphasis, rather than on the expected last syllable.

Remember: prayer can be as meaningful as YOU want it to be.

בִּרְכוֹת הַשַּׁחַר

BIRCHOT HASHACHAR - MORNING BLESSINGS

What is the first thing you do when you wake up in the morning? Do you wiggle a little deeper into the covers, saying “One more minute!” Or do you jump right out of bed knowing there is a full day of fun ahead of you? In Jewish tradition we are taught that the first thing one should do when you wake up is to say “thank you” to God for allowing you to wake up after being asleep all night long. After saying Modeh Ani (masculine) or Modah Ani (feminine) one can then get up and start the day.²¹⁷

מוֹדֶה / מוֹדָה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ,	Modeh / Modah ani l'fanecha,
מֶלֶךְ חַי וְקַיִם,	Melech chai v'kayam,
שְׁהֶחֱזַרְתָּ בִּי נִשְׁמָתִי בְּחֶמְלָה,	she-hechezarta bi nishmati b'chemlah,
רַבָּה אֱמוּנָתְךָ.	Rabbah emunatecha.

I offer thanks to You, ever-living Sovereign, that You have restored my soul to me
in mercy: How great is Your trust.

Activity: After waking up and saying “thank you,” try some of these stretches or yoga poses as a good way to start your day!

- Upward Stretch
- Reclining Spinal Twist
- Neck and Shoulder Stretch
- Hamstring Stretch
- Tree Pose
- Child’s Pose

Activity: Meditation is another great way to start your morning.

1. Sit or lie comfortably. You may even want to invest in a meditation chair or cushion.
2. Close your eyes. ...
3. Make no effort to control the breath; simply breathe naturally.
4. Focus your attention on the breath and on how the body moves with each inhalation and exhalation.

²¹⁷ Hebrew, similar to Spanish, has genders built into every part of it. Every verb is masculine or feminine, as are all nouns. For those of us who would prefer not to be known by our gender, this can be incredibly frustrating. Some people are working on restructuring Hebrew, adding more words, in order to allow for more flexibility in the gendering of the language.

We find the first words of *Ma Tovu* (how good) in the Book of Numbers in the story about the evil magician Baalam who has been paid to curse the Israelites. Yet, when he opens his mouth to curse them, God turns his words into a blessing.

We start each morning service with these words to help remind us that any place we pray is a beautiful place, and that everyone can change their words to blessings at the last possible moment.



מה טובו אהליך יַעֲקֹב,
מִשְׁכְּנֹתֶיךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

Ma **to**vu ohalecha, Yaakov,
Mishk'notecha, Yisrael!

וְאֲנִי בְּרֹב חֲסִדֶּיךָ אָבוֹא בֵּיתְךָ,
אֲשַׁתְּחֹוֶה אֶל הַיֵּיכָל קֹדֶשְׁךָ בִּירְאָתְךָ.

Vaani b'rov chasd'cha avo veitecha,
eshtachaveh el heichal kodsh'cha b'yiratecha.

יְיָ אֱהַבְתִּי מְעֹון בֵּיתְךָ, וּמְקוֹם מִשְׁכָּן
כְּבוֹדְךָ. וְאֲנִי אֲשַׁתְּחֹוֶה וְאֶכְרַעָה,
אֶבְרָכָה לְפָנַי יְיָ עֹשִׂי.

Adonai, **ahav**ti m'on beitecha um'kom mishkan
k'vodecha. Vaani eshtachaveh v'echraah,
evr'chah lifnei Adonai osi.

וְאֲנִי תַפְלִיתִי לָךְ יְיָ, עֵת רָצוֹן, אֱלֹהִים,
בְּרֹב חֲסִדֶּיךָ, עֲנֵנִי בְּאַמֶּת יִשְׁעֶיךָ.

Vaani t'filati l'cha, Adonai, eit ratzon, Elohim,
b'rov chasdecha, aneini be-emet yishecha.

How fair are your tents, O Jacob, your dwellings, O Israel!

I, through Your abundant love, enter Your house; I bow down in awe at Your holy temple.
Adonai, I love Your temple abode, the dwelling-place of Your glory. I will humbly bow down low before
Adonai, my Maker.

As for me, may my prayer come to You, Adonai, at a favorable time. O God, in Your abundant
faithfulness, answer me with Your sure deliverance.

We are grateful for our bodies that allow us to be here at GFC as well as to participate in all of the many activities we enjoy. We take time to acknowledge our blessings, first of our body and then of our soul.

Our soul is the part of us that makes us different, makes us unique. That spark inside of us that allows us to be whoever we want to be.

Asher Yatzar

My God I thank You for my life, body, and soul;
For my name, my gender, my way of thinking, and speaking.
Help me realize that I am something new,
someone who never existed before,
someone original and unique in the world.
For if there had ever been someone like me,
there would have been no need for me to exist.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, רוֹפֵא כָּל בֶּשָׂר וּמַפְלִיא לַעֲשׂוֹת.

Baruch atah, Adonai, rofei chol basar umafla la'asot.

אֱלֹהִי, נִשְׁמָה שֶׁנָּתַתָּ בִּי טְהוֹרָה הִיא.	Elohai, n'shamah shenata bi t'horah hi.
אַתָּה בְּרָאתָה, אַתָּה יִצְרָתָה, אַתָּה	Atah v'ratah, atah y'tzartah, atah
נִפְחָתָה בִּי, וְאַתָּה מְשַׁמְרָה בְּקִרְבִּי.	n'fachtah bi, v'atah m'shamrah b'kirbi.
כָּל זְמַן שֶׁהַנִּשְׁמָה בְּקִרְבִּי, מוֹדָה /	Kol z'man shehan'shamah b'kirbi, modeh /
מוֹדָה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ, יי אֱלֹהִי וְאֱלֹהֵי	modah ani l'fanecha, Adonai Elohai v'Elohei
אֲבוֹתַי וְאִמּוֹתַי רַבּוֹן כָּל הַמַּעֲשִׂים,	avotai v'imotai, ribon kol hama'asim,
אֲדוֹן כָּל הַנִּשְׁמוֹת.	Adon kol han'shamot.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֲשֶׁר בָּיָדוֹ נִפְּשׁ כָּל חַי	Baruch atah, Adonai, asher b'yado nefesh kol chai
וְרוּחַ כָּל בֶּשָׂר אִישׁ.	v'ruach kol b'sar ish.








My God, the soul You have given me is pure. You created it, You shaped it, You breathed it into me and You protect it within me. For as long as my soul is within me, I offer thanks to You, Adonai, my God and God of my ancestors, Source of all Creation, Sovereign of all souls. Praised are You, Adonai, in whose hand is every living soul and the breath of humankind.

It used to be, a long long time ago, that these blessings would be said as someone was getting up and getting ready for their day. The rabbis decided to have people say them in temple in order to make sure everyone said them. We have so many things to be grateful for at GFC: our friends, our counselors, the lake, the *mishlach* (Israelis)...what else can you think of?

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם...

Baruch ata, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha'olam...

Praised are You, Adonai Our God, Ruler of the Universe...

 <p>who gives us a mind</p>	 <p>who opens our eyes</p>	 <p>who makes people free</p>
 <p>who strengthens our steps</p>	 <p>who stretches the earth over the waters</p>	 <p>who lifts us up</p>
 <p>who makes Israel beautiful</p>	 <p>who makes Israel strong</p>	 <p>who makes us a Jewish family</p>

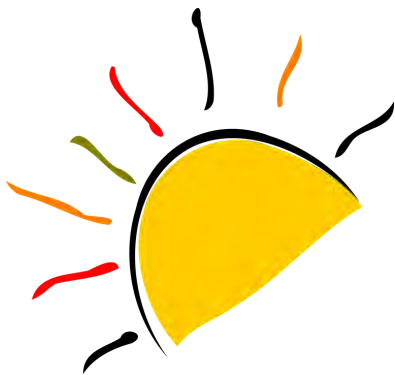


who makes us in God's image

What are you grateful
for this morning?



who makes me free



who wakes us up



who gives us strength



who gives us clothes

There is a tradition in Judaism that we are to pray a hundred blessings every day. That is a whole lot of praying. Can you think of moments during your day when you may want to pray?

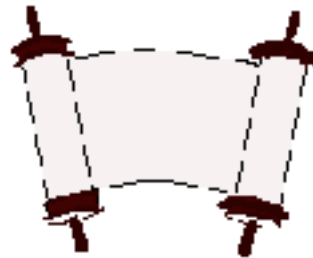
As Jews we look to the Torah to give us guidance on how to live our lives. The Torah is full of stories and laws. But, broadly understood, Torah is both the Five Books of Moses (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy), as well as the entire collection of Jewish writings for more than 2000 years! If you wrote a book on a Jewish topic, it too would be a part of the collection!

We say the blessing for Torah study any time we are going to study Jewish texts. After you say the blessing you then have to study some texts - which is why we normally say the words of *Eilu D'varim* afterwards. Words of Mishnah, commentary on the Torah written almost 2000 years ago by the ancient rabbis.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ
לְעִסּוֹק בְּדִבְרֵי תוֹרָה.

*Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, asher k'dishanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu
laasok b'divrei Torah*

Blessed are Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, Who makes us holy with mitzvot and commands us to engage in the words of Torah.²¹⁸



“Sweet as Honey” - Dan Nichols

Sweet as honey, sweet as honey, sweet as honey on our tongue
Sweet as honey, sweet as honey, sweet as honey on our tongue

Baruch Atah Adonai
Eloheinu **Melech** haolam
Asher kid'**shanu** b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu
Laasok b'divrei Torah
Laasok b'divrei Torah

Sweet as honey, sweet as honey, sweet as honey on our tongue
(Let us soak it up and let it all sink in sweet words of Torah) - 2x

²¹⁸ In this blessing we are commanded to “engage in the words of Torah.” It doesn’t say that we are commanded to “read words of Torah” or “study words of Torah.” What do YOU think that it means to “engage” in words of Torah? What are some ways that you can engage in words of Torah?

אֵלּוּ דְּבָרִים נְשֵׂאִין לָהֶם שְׁעוֹר...

Eilu d'varim she-ein lahem shiur...

These are things that are limitless...

Honoring one's parents
 Performing acts of love and kindness;
 Arriving early for study, morning and evening,
 Dealing graciously with guests,
 visiting the sick,
 providing for the wedding couple,
 accompanying the dead for burial,
 being devoted in prayer, and
 making peace among people.

But the study of Torah encompasses them all.

Thoughts to think about:

Read some of the quotes below and think about how else you can apply the lessons of Torah in YOUR life - for studying must lead to action. This is why after reciting a blessing, such as saying *hamotzi* over food, we then must eat the food.

The world is sustained by three things:

By Torah, by worship, and by acts of lovingkindness. (Pirkei Avot 1:2)

"As an artist, I engage the Torah in creative play through both my conceptual and aesthetic explorations. The Torah itself teaches us to approach it in a playful spirit. In *Psalms* 119:174, we read: "Your Torah is my plaything (*sha'ashua*)."
Sha'ashua is a toy to engage children in play."

- Mel Alexenberg (artist)

Hillel would say:

If I am not for myself, who will be for me?
 But if I am only for myself, what am I?
 And if not now, when? (Pirkei Avot 1:14)

"When we give cheerfully and accept gratefully, everyone is blessed." - **Maya Angelou**

"It matters not what someone is born, but what they grow to be." - J.K. Rowling

We read in the Book of Psalms that we should praise God with our voices, our musical instruments, and that the whole world should join us. GFC is where many of us learn to lift our voices in song - sometimes in services, sometimes at song session, and often wherever we happen to be. In the Temple in Jerusalem, before it was destroyed, there were lots of musicians. We believe that all of the psalms in the Book of Psalms (150 psalms in total), used to be sung. Some are more popular than others but all speak of our awe, our wonder, of God.

אֲשֶׁרֵי יוֹשְׁבֵי בֵיתְךָ, עוֹד יְהַלְלוּךָ סֵלָה.	Ashrei yoshvei ve ite cha od yehalelucha selah .
אֲשֶׁרֵי הָעָם שָׁכָכָה לוֹ, אֲשֶׁרֵי הָעָם שֵׁי אֱלֹהָיו.	Ashrei ha'am she k acha lo, ashrei ha'am she'adonai elohav.
תְּהִלָּה לְדָוִד,	Tehilah leDavid,
אֲרוֹמִמְךָ אֱלֹהֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ, וְאַבְרָכָה שִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.	Aromimcha elohai ha me lech va'avarcha shimcha le'olam va'ed.
בְּכֹל יוֹם אֲבָרְכֶךָ, וְאַהֲלִלָה שִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.	Bechol yom avar' che ka va'ahal'la shimcha le'olam va'ed.
גָּדוֹל יְיָ וּמְהִלָּל מְאֹד, וְלִגְדֻלָּתוֹ אֵין חֶקֶר.	Gadol Adonai um'hulal me'od velig'dulato ein che ker.
דֹּר לְדֹר יִשְׁבַּח מַעֲשֶׂיךָ, וּגְבוּרָתְךָ יִגִּידוּ.	Dor ledor y'shabach ma'asecha ug'vuro te cha yagidu.
הַדָּר כְּבוֹד הוֹדֶךָ, וְדַבְּרֵי נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ אֲשִׁיחָה.	Hadar kevod ho d echa vedivrei nifl'o te cha asicha.
וְעִזּוֹז נִזְרָאוֹתֶיךָ יֹאמְרוּ, וּגְדֻלָּתְךָ אֲסַפְּרָנָה.	Ve'ezuz noro te cha yo me iru ug'dulat'cha asap re na.
זָכַר רַב טוֹבְךָ יִבְיָעוּ, וְצִדְקָתְךָ יִרְגְּנוּ.	Zecher rav tuvcha ya bi u v'tzidkat'cha yerane in u.
חֲנוּן וְרַחוּם יְיָ, אֶרֶךְ אֲפִים וּגְדֹל חֶסֶד.	Chanun verachum Adonai erech a pa yim ugdol ch as ed.
טוֹב יְיָ לְכֹל, וְרַחֲמָיו עַל כָּל מַעֲשָׂיו.	Tov Adonai lakol verachamav al kol ma'asav.
יִדְוֶךָ יְיָ כָּל מַעֲשֶׂיךָ, וְחִסְדֶּיךָ יִבְרָכְוֶךָ.	Yodu ch a Adonai kol-ma'asecha, vechasi d e ch a yevarch u cha.
כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתְךָ יֹאמְרוּ, וּגְבוּרָתְךָ יִדְבִּירוּ.	Kevod malchut'cha yo me iru ugvurat'cha yeda be iru.
לְהוֹדִיעַ לְבָנֵי הָאָדָם גְּבוּרָתוֹ, וְכְבוֹד הַדָּר מַלְכוּתוֹ.	Leho d iah livnei ha'adam gevurotav uchvod hadar malchuto.

מַלְכוּתְךָ מִלְכוּת כָּל עוֹלָמִים,	Malchut'cha malchut kol olamim,
וּמִמְשַׁלְתְּךָ בְּכָל דּוֹר וָדוֹר.	umemshaltecha bechol dor vador.
סוּמֵיךָ יְיָ לְכָל הַנִּפְלִים, וְזוֹקֵף לְכָל	Someich adonai lechol hanoflim vezokeif lechol
הַכְּפוּפִים.	hakefufim.
עֵינֵי כָל אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁבְּרוּ, וְאַתָּה נוֹתֵן	Einei chol eilecha yesabeiru v'atah notein
לָהֶם אֶת אֲכָלָם בְּעֵתוֹ.	lahem et ochlam b'ito.
פּוֹתֵיחַ אֶת יָדְךָ, וּמִשְׁבִּיעַ לְכָל חַי רָצוֹן.	Poteiach et yadecha umasbiah lechol chai ratzon.
צַדִּיק יְיָ בְּכָל דֶּרֶכָיו, וְחֹסֵיד בְּכָל	Tzadik Adonai bechol derachav vechasid bechol
מַעֲשָׁיו.	ma'asav.
קָרוֹב יְיָ לְכָל קֹרְאָיו, לְכָל אֲשֶׁר	Karov Adonai lechol ko'rav, lechol asher
יִקְרָאֵהוּ בְּאַמֶּת.	yikrauhu ve'emet.
רָצוֹן יִרְאִיו יַעֲשֶׂה, וְאַתָּה שׁוֹעֲתָם יִשְׁמַע	Retzon yereiav ya'aseh v'et shavatam yishma
וַיִּשְׁמָע.	veyoshi'iem.
שׁוֹמֵר יְיָ אֶת כָּל אֲהָבָיו, וְאַתָּה כָּל	Shomer Adonai et kol ohavav v'et kol
הַרְשָׁעִים יִשְׁמִיד.	har'sha'im yashmid.
תְּהִלַּת יְיָ יְדַבֵּר פִּי, וַיְבָרֶךְ כָּל בָּשָׂר	Tehilat Adonai yedaber pi vivarech kol basar
שֵׁם קִדְּשׁוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.	sheim kodsho le'olam va'ed.
וְאַנְחֵנוּ נִבְרַךְ יְיָ, מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם,	Va'anachnu nevareich Yah, meatah ve'ad olam
הַלְלוּיָהּ.	Halleluyah.

Happy are those who dwell in Your house; they forever praise You! Happy the people who have it so; happy the people whose God is Adonai. David's song of praise, I will extol You, my God and Sovereign, and bless Your name forever and ever. Every day will I bless You and praise Your name forever and ever. Great is Adonai and much acclaimed; God's greatness cannot be fathomed. One generation shall laud Your works to another and declare Your mighty acts. The glorious majesty of Your splendor and Your wondrous acts will I recite. They shall talk of the might of Your awesome deeds, and I will recount Your greatness. They shall celebrate Your abundant goodness, and sing joyously of Your beneficence. Adonai is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in kindness. Adonai is good to all, and God's mercy is upon all God's works. All Your works shall praise You, Adonai, and Your faithful ones shall bless You. They shall talk of the majesty of Your sovereignty, and speak of Your might, to make God's mighty acts known among mortals and the majestic glory of Your sovereignty. Your sovereignty is eternal; Your dominion is for all generations. Adonai supports all who stumble, and makes all who are bent stand straight. The eyes of all look to You expectantly, and You give them their food when it is due. You give tsopenhandedly, feeding every creature to its heart's content. Adonai is beneficent in all ways and faithful in all works. Adonai is near to all who call to all who call upon God with sincerity. Adonai fulfills the wishes of those who fear God; Adonai hears their cry and delivers them. Adonai watches over all who love God, but all the wicked God will destroy. My mouth shall utter the praise of Adonai, and all creatures shall bless God's holy name forever and ever. We will bless You God now and always. Hallelujah!



הללויה,	Haleluyah
הללו אל בְּקֹדֶשׁוֹ,	Halelu-El b'kodsho,
הללוהוּ בִּרְקִיעַ עֶזּוֹ.	Haleluhu birki'a uzo.
הללוהוּ בְּגִבּוֹרֹתָיו,	Haleluhu big'vurotav,
הללוהוּ כְּרֹב גְּדֻלּוֹ.	Haleluhu k'rov gudlo.
הללוהוּ בְּתִקְעַ שׁוֹפָר,	Haleluhu b'teka shofar,
הללוהוּ בְּנִבְל וְכִנּוֹר.	Haleluhu b' nevel v'chinor.
הללוהוּ בְּתוֹף וּמַחֹל,	Haleluhu b'tof umachol,
הללוהוּ בְּמִינִים וְעֻגָּב.	Haleluhu b'minim v'ugav.
הללוהוּ בְּצִלְצִלֵי שִׁמְעַ,	Haleluhu b'tiltzilei shama ,
הללוהוּ בְּצִלְצִלֵי תְרוּעָה.	Haleluhu b'tiltzilei tru'a.

כל הנשמה תהלל יה - הללויה. Kol han'shama t'halel Yah - Haleluyah

Hallelujah.

Praise God in God's sanctuary;
praise God in the sky, God's stronghold.

Praise God for mighty acts;
praise God for exceeding greatness.

Praise God with blasts of the horn;
praise God with the harp and lyre.

Praise God with the timbrel and dance;
praise God with lute and pipe.

Praise God with resounding cymbals;
praise God with loud-clashing cymbals.

Let all that breathes praise Adonai - Hallelujah.

We have reached the point in the service in which we are called to stand up and show we are present. Jewish tradition teaches that for certain prayers, like the Barchu, we need a *minyan* - ten people present at the service. At GFC we do not need to worry about having enough people, even one bunk has enough people!

בָּרְכוּ אֶת יְיָ הַמְּבָרֵךְ. Bar'chu et Adonai ham'vorach.

בְּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבָרֵךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד! Baruch Adonai ham'vorach l'olam va'ed!

Praise Adonai to whom praise is due forever.

Praised be Adonai to whom praise is due, now and forever!

After the Barchu we thank and praise God for creating all of us, the animals, the plants - the entire world.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
יוֹצֵר אוֹר וּבוֹרֵא חֹשֶׁךְ, עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם
וּבוֹרֵא אֶת הַכֹּל. Baruch ata, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam,
yotzeir or uvorei **chos**shech, oseh shalom
uvorei et hakol.

הַמְּאִיר לָאָרֶץ וְלַדָּרִים עָלֶיךָ בְּרַחֲמִים,
וּבְטוֹבוֹ מְחַדֵּשׁ בְּכֹל יוֹם תָּמִיד מַעֲשֵׂה
בְּרִאשִׁית. מַה רַבּוּ מַעֲשֵׂיךָ יְיָ, כָּלם
בְּחֹכְמָה עֲשִׂיתָ, מְלָאָה הָאָרֶץ קִינָנֶךָ. Hamei-ir la'**aretz** v'ladarim **alecha** brachamim,
uv'tuvo m'chadeish b'chol yom tamid ma'aseih
v'reishit. Mah rabu ma'asecha, Adonai, kulum
b'chochmah **asita**, mal'ah ha'**aretz** kinyan**echa**.

תִּתְבָּרַךְ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַל שְׂבַח מַעֲשֵׂה
יָדֶיךָ, וְעַל מְאֹרֵי אוֹר שֶׁעָשִׂיתָ יְפָאָרוֹךְ
סֵלָה. Titbarach, Adonai Eloheinu, al **shevach** ma'aseih
yadecha v'al m'orei or she-asita, y'fa'**arucha**
selah.

אוֹר חֲדָשׁ עַל צִיּוֹן תֹּאִיר, וְנִזְכֶּה כְּלָנוּ
מִהֵרָה לְאוֹרוֹ. Or chadash al Tzion tair, v'nizkeh chulanu
m'heirah l'oro.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, יוֹצֵר הַמְּאֹרוֹת. Baruch atah, Adonai, yotzeir ham'orot.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, Creator of light and darkness, who makes peace and fashions all things. In mercy, You illumine the world and those who live upon it. In Your goodness You daily renew creation. How numerous are Your works, Adonai! In wisdom, You formed them all, filling the earth with Your creatures. Be praised, Adonai our God, for the excellent work of Your hands, and for the lights You created; may they glorify You. Shine a new light upon Zion, that we all may swiftly merit its radiance. Praised are You, Adonai, Creator of all heavenly lights.

Prior to singing Sh'ma, our declaration in faith in One God, we thank God for the love God shows us. In the V'ahavta, we are told "You shall love Adonai your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might." How can we be commanded to love God? We are told to respect our parents and teachers but to love God. How do you show your love to God?



God, You gave us the Torah to show that You love us. May it always be a friend at our side.

The Torah is our teacher. It tells us what is right and what is wrong.

It shows us how to live good lives.

Be with us always when we study Torah.

Be with us always, as we try to live good lives.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, הַבּוֹחֵר בְּעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאַהֲבָה.

Baruch atah Adonai habocheir b'amo Yisrael b'ahavah

Praised be You, Adonai, who chooses Your people Israel in love.

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, יְיָ אֶחָד. בָּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מְלָכּוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

Sh'ma Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Echad.

Baruch shem k'vod malchuto l'olam va-ed.

Hear, O Israel, Adonai is our God, Adonai is One!²¹⁹

Blessed is God's glorious majesty forever and ever.

וְאַהַבְתָּ אֶת יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ, בְּכָל לִבְּךָ,	V'ahavta et Adonai Elohecha, b'chol l'vavcha
וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁךָ, וּבְכָל מְאֹדְךָ. וְהָיוּ	uv'chol nafsh'cha uv'chol m'odecha. V'hayu
הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה, אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוְךָ	had'varim ha-eileh asher anochi m'tzav'cha
הַיּוֹם, עַל לִבְּךָ. וְשָׁנַנְתָּם לְבִנְיָךְ,	hayom al l'vavecha. V'shinantam l'vanecha
וּדְבַרְתָּ בָּם, בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ, וּבְלִכְתְּךָ	v'dibarta bam b'shivt'cha b'veitecha uv'lecht'cha
בְּדֶרֶךְ, וּבְשֹׁכְבְּךָ, וּבְקוּמְךָ. וְקִשְׁרָתָם	vaderech uv'shochb'cha uv'kumecha. Uk'shartam
לְאוֹת עַל יָדְךָ, וְהָיוּ לְטַטְפֹּת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ.	l'ot al yadecha v'hayu l'totafot bein einecha.
וְכַתְבָתָם עַל מְזוֹזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ.	Uch'tavtam al m'zuzot beitecha uvish'arecha.
לְמַעַן תִּזְכְּרוּ וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֶת כָּל מִצְוֹתַי,	L'ma'an tizk'ru, va'asitem et kol mitzvotai
וְהָיִיתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם.	vih'yitem k'doshim l'Eloheichem.
אֲנִי יְיָ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם, אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי	Ani Adonai Eloheichem, asher hotzeiti
אֶתְכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם מִצְרַיִם, לְהָיוֹת לָכֶם	et-chem mei-eretz Mitzrayim lih'yot lachem
לֵאלֹהִים, אֲנִי יְיָ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם.	l'Elohim, Ani Adonai Eloheichem.

You shall love Adonai your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might. Take to heart these instructions with which I charge you this day. Impress them upon your children. Recite them when you stay at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them serve as a symbol on your forehead; inscribe them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. Thus you shall remember to observe all My commandments and to be holy to your God. I am Adonai, your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I am Adonai your God.

²¹⁹ Why are the *Ayin* and *Dalet* larger in the Sh'ma? They are larger to spell out the word **לֵוִי** (witness) in Hebrew. This is a reminder to us that we are all witnesses to God's greatness.

Long ago, we were slaves in Egypt.
After ten terrible plagues
Pharaoh finally told Moses that we could be free!

We could be free to celebrate Shabbat!
We could be free to pray to God!
We could be free to be Jewish!

But just as we got to the sea, Pharaoh changed his mind again.
His chariots and soldiers were coming to take us
back to Egypt, back to slavery.

Just then, the sea parted and we safely crossed to the other side.
We couldn't believe it!
Mi chamochah ba-eilim, Adonai?
We sang, "Who is like You, Adonai?"

Today there are people who are not free.
We promise that, with Your help,
we will work hard to make sure that everyone is set free.
Then all the world will sing with joy.



מִי כַמֹּכָה בָּאֵלִים יי, Mi cham**o**chah ba-eilim, Adonai!
 מִי כַמֹּכָה נֶאֱדָר בִּקְדֻשָּׁה, Mi kam**o**chah ne'dar bak**o**desh,
 נֹרָא תִהְיֶה, עֲשֵׂה פֶלֶא. nora t'hilot, **o**seih **f**ele!

שִׁירָה חֲדָשָׁה שִׁבְּחוּ גְאוּלִּים לְשִׁמְךָ Shirah chadashah shib'chu g'ulim
 עַל שְׁפַת הַיָּם, יַחַד כָּלֵם הוֹדוּ l'shimcha al s'fat hayam. **Y**achad kulam hodu
 וְהִמְלִיכוּ וְאָמְרוּ: v'him**l**ichu v'amru:
 יי יִמְלֹךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. Adonai yimloch l'olam va-ed.

Who is like You, O God, among the gods that are worshipped?
 Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in splendor, working wonders?
 With new song, inspired, at the shore of the Sea, the redeemed sang Your praise.
 In unison they all offered thanks.
 Acknowledging Your Sovereignty, they said: "Adonai will reign forever!"



צוּר יִשְׂרָאֵל, קוּמָה בְּעֶזְרַת יִשְׂרָאֵל, Tzur Yisrael, **k**umah b'ezrat Yisrael
 וּפְדֵה כְּנָאֲמֶךָ יְהוּדָה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל. uf 'deih chinu**m**echa Y'udah v'Yisrael.
 גִּאֲלֵנוּ יי צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ, Go-ale**i**nu Adonai Tz'vaot sh'mo,
 קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל. k'dosh Yisrael.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי גִּאֲלֵ יִשְׂרָאֵל. Baruch atah, Adonai, ga'al Yisrael.

Rock of Israel, rise in support of Israel and redeem Judah and Israel as You promised. Our Redeemer, Adonai Tz'vaot is Your Name. Blessed are You, Adonai, for redeeming Israel.

We have come to the summit of our prayer - the highest point on the mountain top - the **Amidah** -
and so we rise.

Open my eyes to truth
Open my hands to give freely
Open my lips to good words, to pure words
Open my heart to love

אֲדֹנָי שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח וּפִי יַגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ. Adonai s'fatai tiftach ufi yagid t'hilatecha.

Adonai, open up my lips, that my mouth may declare Your praise.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu
וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ, אֱלֹהֵי vElohei avoteinu v'imoteinu, Elohei
אַבְרָהָם, אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב, Avraham, Elohei Yitzchak vElohei Yaakov,
אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה, אֱלֹהֵי רִבְקָה, אֱלֹהֵי Elohei Sarah, Elohei Rivkah, Elohei
רָחֵל וְאֱלֹהֵי לֵאָה. הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל, Rachel vElohei Leah. Ha-El hagadol
הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא, אֵל עֲלִיּוֹן, גּוֹמֵל hagibor v'hanora, El elyon, gomeil
חַסָּדִים טוֹבִים, וְקוֹנֵה הַכֹּל, וְזוֹכֵר chasadim tovim, v'koneih hakol, v'zocheir
חַסְדֵי אֲבוֹת וְאִמּוֹת, וּמֵבִיא גְּאֻלָּה chasdei avot v'imahot, umeivi g'ulah
לְבָנֵי בְנֵיהֶם לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה. liv'nei v'neihem l'maan sh'mo b'ahavah.

מֶלֶךְ עֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמַגֵּן. Melech ozeir umoshia umagen.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, Baruch atah, Adonai,

מִגֵּן אַבְרָהָם וְעִזְרַת שָׂרָה. magein Avraham v'ezrat Sarah.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God,
God of our fathers and mothers,
God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob,
God of Sarah, God of Rebecca, God of Rachel, and God of Leah,
the great, mighty and awesome God, transcendent God
who bestows loving kindness, creates everything out of love,
remembers the love of our fathers and mothers,
and brings redemption to their children's children for the sake of the Divine Name.

Sovereign, Deliverer, Helper and Shield,
Blessed are You, Adonai, Sarah's Helper, Abraham's Shield.

אתה גבור לעולם, אדני,
מחיה הכל / מתים אתה,
רב להושיע.

*חורף – משיב הרוח ומוריד הגשם.

*קיץ – מוריד הטל.

מכלכל חיים בחסד,
מחיה הכל / מתים

ברחמים רבים, סומך נופלים,
ורופא חולים, ומתיר אסורים,
ומקיים אמונתו לישיגי עפר.

מי כמוך בעל גבורות

ומי דומה לך, מלך ממית

ומחיה ומצמיח ישועה.

ונאמן אתה להחיות הכל / מתים.

ברוך אתה, יי, מחיה הכל / המתים.

Atah gibor l'olam, Adonai,
m'chayeh hakol / meitim atah,
rav l'hoshia.

*Winter— Mashiv haruach umorid hagashem.

*Summer — Morid hatal.

M'chalkeil chayim b'chesed,
m'chayeh hakol / meitim
b'rachamim rabim, someich noflim,
v'rofei cholim, umatir asurim,
um'kayem emunato lisheinei afar.

Mi chamocha baal g'vurot

umi domeh lach, melech meimit

um'chayeh umatzmiach y'shuah.

V'ne-eman atah l'hachayot hakol / meitim.

Baruch atah, Adonai, m'chayeh hakol / hameitim.

You are forever mighty, Adonai; You give life to all / revive the dead.

*Winter—You cause the wind to shift and rain to fall.

*Summer —You rain dew upon us.

You sustain life through love, giving life to all / reviving the dead through great compassion, supporting the fallen, healing the sick, freeing the captive, keeping faith with those who sleep in the dust. Who is like You, Source of mighty acts? Who resembles You, a Sovereign who takes and gives life, causing deliverance to spring up and faithfully giving life to all / reviving that which is dead?

Blessed are You, Adonai, who gives life to all / revives the dead.



נְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת שִׁמְךָ בְּעוֹלָם,	N'kadeish et shimcha baolam,
בְּשֵׁם שִׁמְךָ יְשִׁים אוֹתוֹ בְּשִׁמֵי מָרוֹם,	k'shem shemakdishim oto bish'mei marom,
כְּכַתוּב עַל יַד נְבִיאָךְ,	kakaturv al yad n'vi-echa,
וְקָרָא זֶה אֵל זֶה וְאָמַר:	v'kara zeh el zeh v'amar:gh
קָדוֹשׁ, קָדוֹשׁ, קָדוֹשׁ, יְיָ צְבָאוֹת,	Kadosh, kadosh, kadosh Adonai tz'vaot,
מְלֵא כָל הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ.	m'lo chol ha'arets k'vodo.
אֲדִיר אֲדִירָנוּ יְיָ אֲדִירָנוּ	Adir adireinu, Adonai Adoneinu,
מָה אֲדִיר שִׁמְךָ בְּכָל הָאָרֶץ.	Cdu5 //jmah adir shimcha b'chol ha'arets.
בָּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד יְיָ מִמְקוֹמוֹ.	Baruch k'vod Adonai mim'komo.
אֶחָד הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ, הוּא אָבִינוּ,	Echad hu Eloheinu, hu Avinu,
הוּא מַלְכֵנוּ, הוּא מוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ	hu Malkeinu, hu Moshi-einu,
וְהוּא יִשְׁמִיעֵנוּ בְּרַחֲמָיו לְעֵינֵי כָל חַי	v'hu yashmi-einu b'rachamav l'einei kol chai.
אֲנִי יְיָ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם!	Ani Adonai Eloheichem.
יִמְלֹךְ יְיָ לְעוֹלָם, אֱלֹהֵיךָ צִיּוֹן,	Yimloch Adonai l'olam, Elohayich Tzion
לְדֹר וָדֹר, הַלְלוּיָהּ.	l'dor vador, hal'luyah.
לְדֹר וָדֹר נִגִּיד גִּדְּלָךְ, וּלְנִצַּח נִצָּחִים	L'dor vador nagid godlecha ul'neitzach n'tzachim
קִדְשָׁתְךָ נְקַדֵּשׁ, וְשִׁבְחָךְ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ,	k'dushat-cha nakdish, v'shivchacha Eloheinu,
מִפִּינוּ לֹא יִמוּשׁ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.	mipinu lo yamush l'olam va-ed.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, הָאֵל הַקָּדוֹשׁ .	Baruch atah, Adonai, Ha-El hakadosh.

Let us sanctify Your Name on earth, as it is sanctified in the heavens above.

As it is written by Your prophet:

Holy, holy, holy is Adonai Tz'vaot! God's presence fills the whole earth.

Source of our strength, Sovereign One, how majestic is Your presence in all the earth!

Blessed is the presence of God, shining forth from where God dwells.

God alone is our God and our Creator, our Ruler and our Helper; and in

mercy, God is revealed in the sight of all the living: I am Adonai your God!

Adonai shall reign forever, your God, O Zion,

from generation to generation, Hallelujah!

To all generations we will declare Your greatness, and for all eternity

proclaim Your holiness. Your praise, O God, shall never depart from our lips.

Blessed are You, Adonai, the Holy God.

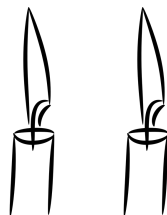
The *Amidah* (standing) prayer is also known as *HaT'filah* (The Prayer) and as the *Shemonah Esrei* (the eighteen). During the weekdays (Sunday-Friday) the *Amidah* has nineteen blessings - after it was named another blessing was added - but on Shabbat it only has 7. The first three blessings and last three blessings all appear in the weekday service as well but on Shabbat we only have one blessing in the middle which celebrates Shabbat. During the week the middle blessings are requests for God's assistance with all of the things we want or need. On Shabbat it is custom to not ask for things but only to say thank you - what are YOU thankful for this Shabbat?

וְשָׁמְרוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת,	V'shamru v'nei Yisrael et HaShabbat,
לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת לְדֹרוֹתָם	laasot et HaShabbat l'dorotam
בְּרִית עוֹלָם.	B'rit olam.
בֵּינִי וּבֵין בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אוֹת הִיא	Beini u'vein b'nei Yisrael ot hi
לְעוֹלָם.	l'olam.
כִּי נִשְׁשֶׁת יָמִים עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֶת	Ki sheishet yamim asah Adonai
הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ,	et hashamayim v'et ha'aretz,
וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי נִשְׁבַּת וַיִּנָּפֵשׁ.	u'vayom hashvi-i shavat vayinafash.

The people of Israel shall keep Shabbat, observing Shabbat throughout the ages as a covenant for all time. It is a sign for all time between Me and the people of Israel. For in six days Adonai made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day God ceased from work and was refreshed.

יִשְׁמְחוּ בְּמַלְכוּתְךָ שׁוֹמְרֵי שַׁבָּת	Yism'chu v'malchut'cha shomrei Shabbat
וְקוֹרְאֵי עֹנֶג. אִם מְקַדְּשֵׁי שְׁבִיעִי,	v'korei oneg. Am m'kad'shei shvi-i,
כָּלֵם יִשְׁבְּעוּ וַיִּתְעַנְּגוּ מִטוֹבָךְ.	kulam yisb'u v'yitangu mituvecha.
וְחִשְׁבִּיעִי רָצִיתָ בּוֹ וְקִדְּשָׁתוֹ, חֶמְדַּת	V'hashvi-i ratzita bo v'kidashto, chemdat
יָמִים אוֹתוֹ קָרָאתָ, זֵכֶר לְמַעֲשֵׂה	yamim oto karata, zecher l'maaseh
בְּרֵאשִׁית.	v'reishit.

Those who keep Shabbat by calling it a delight will rejoice in Your realm. The people that hallow Shabbat will delight in Your goodness. For, being pleased with the Seventh Day, You hallowed it as the most precious of days, drawing our attention to the work of Creation.



Where is God?
How do I try to feel close to God?

Today, I've tried to pray,
because it is one way to feel close to You.
Accept the prayers of Your people Israel,
even though they are only our own prayers.
Accept us, Your people Israel,
For we have changed
and so have our prayers.
We are made in Your image,
and so our thoughts and prayers
reach out to You,
so that we can feel close to You -
but are always part of us.
For You created,
and so
as Your partner
we are creative.
Accept our additions,
pardon our abbreviations.
May the prayers of your people Israel
always be **Acceptable** to You.
Accept the tefillah/prayer of Your people
as lovingly as it is offered.

Be happy with Your people and accept our prayers.
We praise You, God, who lovingly accepts our prayers.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, הַמַּחְזִיר שְׁכִינָתוֹ לְצִיּוֹן.
Blessed are You, Adonai, whose Presence returns to Zion.²²⁰
Baruch atah, Adonai, ha'machazir Shechinato l'Tzion.

²²⁰ צִיּוֹן = Zion = Israel. This prayer recognizes that Israel is both a place as well as a people. We pray that our prayers are heard and that God may be with us always.

This prayer is called *Hoda'ah* (thanksgiving). It is an excellent time to think about something that happened to YOU recently that was wonderful. Try to remember something that was a wonderful surprise that YOU didn't have to work or try hard for...something that just happened and made YOU happy.



Source of good, thank You for the many gifts and blessings that fill our lives:
sweet smells, delicious tastes, and warm touch;
friendship and love and life;
Your Torah, which teaches us wisdom.
We praise You, God, for all Your goodness.

Blessed are You, Adonai, whose name is Goodness, and who
deserves our appreciation and thanks.
We thank You, God, for all the blessings You give.
Life: it is filled with wonder.
The world: it is filled with beauty.
A soul: it is filled with mystery.
Every day - morning, noon, and night - these remind us of You.
We praise You, Eternal God, for all these blessings You give us.



Source of Life we thank you for the life You have granted us
A life full of chances and choices
To chose life and all its wonders
To chose life and all its struggles
We recognize that with free will we are granted the choice
To make friends with those who are different from us
Help us to reach our full potential
As one humanity
This holy day may we recognize that all life praises Your Name.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, הַטּוֹב שִׁמְךָ וְלִךָ נָאֶה לְהוֹדוֹת.

Blessed are You, Adonai, Your Name is Goodness, and You are worthy of thanksgiving.
Baruch atah, Adonai, hatov shimcha ul'cha na-eh l'hodot.

What is peace? Does it mean no more war? Does it mean no more pain? No more hunger or hurt? We pray for peace every single time we pray as a community. What does peace on earth look like to you?



“Shalom, Salaam, Peace”

שִׁים שְׁלוֹם טוֹבָה וּבְרָכָה,	Sim shalom tova uv'rachah,
חַן וְחֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים,	chein vachessed v'rachamim,
עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמָּךְ.	aleinu v'al kol Yisrael amecha.
בְּרַכְנוּ, יוֹצְרֵנוּ, כְּלָנוּ כְּאַחַד	Bar'cheinu, yotzreinu, kulanu k'echad
בְּאוֹר פְּנִיךָ, כִּי בְּאוֹר פְּנִיךָ נִתְּתָה לָנוּ,	b'or panecha, ki v'or panecha natata lanu,
יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ,	Adonai Eloheinu,
תּוֹרַת חַיִּים וְאַהֲבַת חֶסֶד,	Torat chayim v'ahavat chesed,
וּצְדָקָה וּבְרָכָה וְרַחֲמִים	utz'dakah uv'rachah v'rachamim
וְחַיִּים וְשְׁלוֹם,	v'chayim v'shalom.
וְטוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ לְבָרֶךְ אֶת עַמָּךְ	V'tov b'einecha l'vareich et amcha
יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכָל עֵת וּבְכָל שָׁעָה	Yisrael b'chol eit uv'chol shaah
בְּשָׁלוֹמְךָ.	bish'lomecha.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, הַמְּבָרֵךְ אֶת עַמּוֹ	Baruch atah, Adonai, ham'vareich et amo
יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשָׁלוֹם.	Yisrael bashalom.

Grant peace, goodness and blessing, grace, kindness and mercy, to us and to all Your people Israel. Bless us, our Creator, all of us together, through the light of Your Presence. Truly through the light of Your Presence, Adonai our God, You gave us a Torah of life — the love of kindness, justice and blessing, mercy, life, and peace. May You see fit to bless Your people Israel at all times, at every hour, with Your peace. Blessed are You, Adonai, Source of peace.

At this point in the service we take a moment for silent prayer. For YOU to have the chance to say what you want to say privately, quietly. Whether you want to say thank you or ask for something or just to know that what you think, believe and say is between YOU and God - it is up to you. The Rabbis of old taught that while *keva* (fixed) prayer, the words in the *siddur* (prayerbook) are important, so are the words of your heart - prayer filled with *kavanah* (intention). There are also options for you to read if you need some guidance.

I cannot pray to You to rid the earth of war because You have filled the earth with paths to peace.
I cannot pray to You to rid the earth of hunger because You have given us enough food for everyone.
I cannot pray to You, asking for no more racism because You have shown me how to see inside people.

I will pray for strength to work for peace.
I will pray for enough to feed everyone I meet.
I will pray for hope to see the good in others.

I have many feelings, God.
Some are good. Some are bad.
Sometimes I like my feelings.
Sometimes I don't.
Sometimes I understand my feelings.
Sometimes I don't.
Sometimes I can control my feelings.
Sometimes I can't.
I like having good feelings.
And I like to understand and control my feelings.
Help me understand them.
And help me control them as I grow.

יְהִי לְרָצוֹן אֲמֵרִי פִי וְהִגְיוֹן לִבִּי לְפָנֶיךָ, Yih'yu l'ratzon imrei fi v'hegyon libi l'fanecha,
יְיָ צוּרִי וְגֹאֲלִי Adonai tzuri v'go-ali.

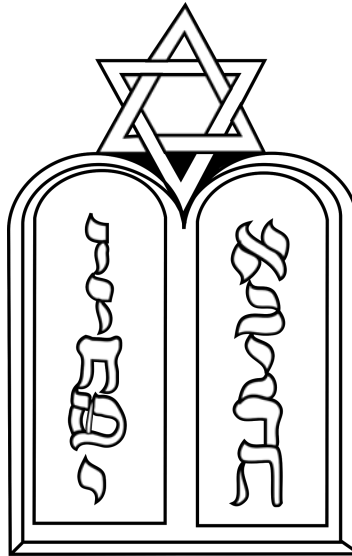
May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart
be acceptable to You, Adonai, my Rock and my Redeemer.

עֲשֵׂה שָׁלוֹם בְּמִרְמָוָה, Oseh shalom bimromav,
הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה שָׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ, hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu,
וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְעַל כָּל-יֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל, v'al kol Yisrael, v'al kol yoshvei teveil,
וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן. v'imru. Amen.

May the One who makes peace in the high heavens make peace for us, for all
Israel and all who inhabit the earth. Amen.

קְרִיאַת הַתּוֹרָה

Reading the Torah



כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תּוֹרָה, וּדְבַר יְיָ
מִירוּשָׁלַיִם Ki Mitziyon teizei Torah ud'var Adonai
miY'rushalayim.

For from out of Zion will come the Torah, and the word of Adonai from Jerusalem.

בָּרוּךְ שֶׁנָּתַן תּוֹרָה לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל
בְּקִדּוּשָׁתוֹ. Baruch shenatan Torah l'amo Yisrael
bikdushato.

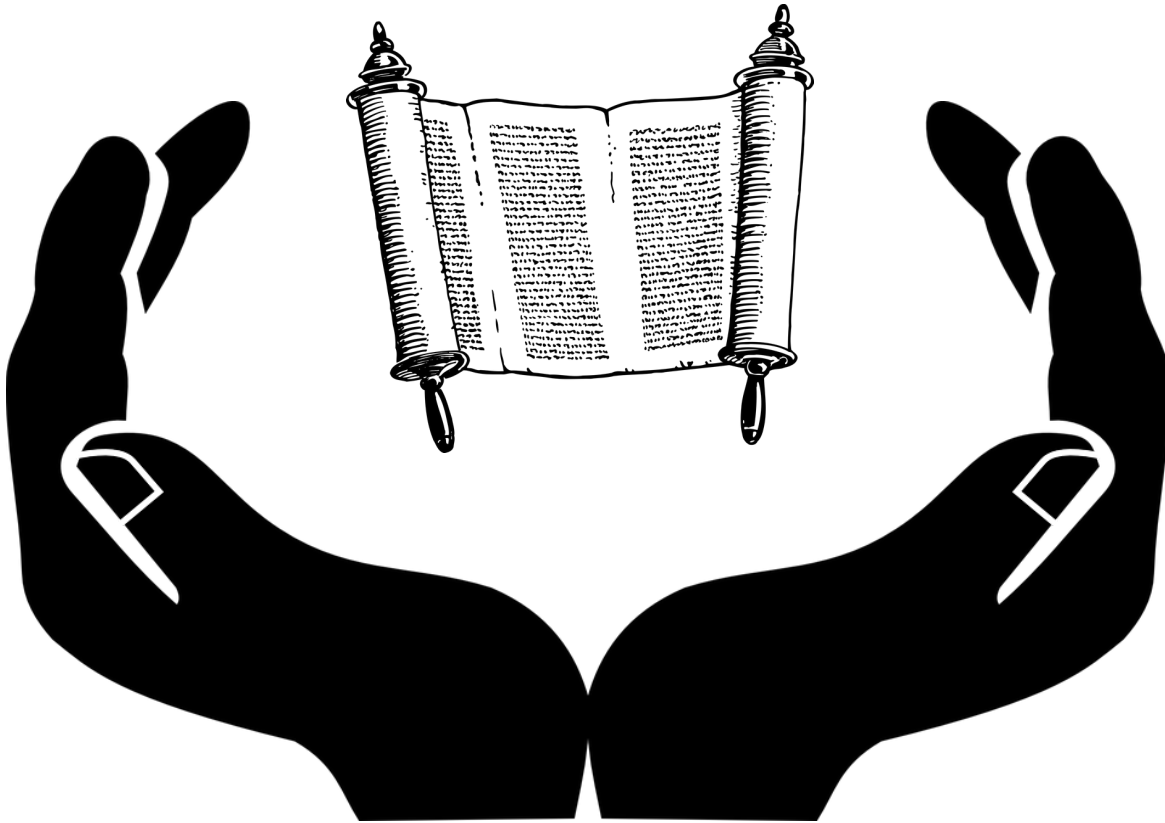
Blessed is God who in holiness gave Torah to the people Israel.

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, יְיָ אֶחָד. Sh'ma Yisrael, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad.
Hear, O Israel, Adonai is our God, Adonai is One.

אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ גָדוֹל אֲדֹנֵינוּ קָדוֹשׁ שְׁמוֹ. Echad Eloheinu gadol Adoneinu, kadosh sh'mo.
Our God is One, Adonai is great, holy is God's Name.

גָּדְלוּ לִי אֱתִי, וְנִרְמְמָה שְׁמוֹ יַחְדָּו. Gadlu l'Adonai iti, un'rom'mah sh'mo yachdav.
Exalt Adonai with me, let us extol God's Name together.

At this point in the service we walk with the Torah scroll around the congregation - called the Torah Processional or *Hakafah* (surround or encircle). A common question about the *hakafah* is why some people turn their bodies follow the Torah with their eyes. This is because as people do this, they are “surrounding” the Torah as it is moved about the congregation. Many people also will use their hand, prayerbook or *tallit* (prayer shawl) to kiss the Torah as it is carried past. This is to honor the specialness of the Torah and what it represents to each one of us.



לך יי הגדלה והגבורה והתפארת
והנצח וההוד, כי כל בשמים
ובארץ, לך יי הממלכה,
והמתנשא לכל לראש.

L'cha Adonai hag'dulah v'hag'vurah v'hatiferet
v'haneizach v'hahod, ki chol bashamayim
uva'aretz. L'cha Adonai hamamlachah
v'hamitnasei l'chol l'rosh.

Yours, Adonai, is the greatness, light, splendor, triumph, and majesty -
yes, all that is in heaven and on earth.

To You, Adonai, belong sovereignty and preeminence above all.

על שלשה דברים העולם עומד:
על התורה ועל העבודה
ועל גמילות חסדים.

Al sh'loshah d'varim ha'olam omeid:
al hatorah v'al ha'avodah
v'al g'milut chasadim.

The world is sustained by three things: Torah, worship and loving deeds.

Blessing Before the Aliyah

בָּרְכוּ אֶת יְיָ הַמְּבָרֵךְ.
 בָּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבָרֵךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
 בָּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבָרֵךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
 בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
 אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּנוּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים
 וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת תּוֹרָתוֹ.
 בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.

Bar'chu et Adonai ham'vorach.

Baruch Adonai ham'vorach l'olam va-ed.

Baruch Adonai ham'vorach l'olam va-ed.

Baruch atah, Adonai Elo**heinu**, **Melech** haolam,
 asher **bachar banu** mikol haamim,
 v'**natan lanu** et Torato.

Baruch atah, Adonai, notein haTorah.

Blessed is Adonai who is blessed now and forever.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who has chosen us from among the peoples, and given us the Torah. Blessed are You, Adonai, who gives the Torah.

Blessing After the Aliyah

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
 אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת, וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם
 נָטַע בְּתוֹכָנוּ.
 בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.

Baruch atah, Adonai Elo**heinu**, **Melech** haolam,
 asher **natan lanu** Torat emet, v'chayei olam
 nata b'to**cheinu**.

Baruch atah, Adonai, notein haTorah.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe,
 who has given us a Torah of truth, implanting within us eternal life.
 Blessed are You, Adonai, who gives the Torah.

We take a moment during the service in order to remember that there are people in our lives who are in need of healing - of body or of mind or of spirit.

מִי שֶׁבֵּרַךְ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
 מִקּוֹר הַבְּרָכָה לְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ.

Mi shebeirach avot**einu**

M'kor hab'racha l'imot**einu**

May the source of strength who blessed the ones
 before us. Help us find the courage to make our
 lives a blessing, and let us say Amen.

מִי שֶׁבֵּרַךְ אֲמוֹתֵינוּ
 מִקּוֹר הַבְּרָכָה לְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ.

Mi shebeirach imot**einu**

M'kor habrachah laavot**einu**

Bless those in need of healing with r'fu-a
 sh'lei-ma, The renewal of body, the renewal of
 spirit, and let us say Amen.

Hagbahah Ug'lilah - the Torah is raised, rolled, and wrapped.

וְזֹאת הַתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר שָׂם מֹשֶׁה לִפְנֵי
 בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, עַל פִּי יְיָ בְּיַד מֹשֶׁה.
 V'zot haTorah asher sam Moshe lifnei b'nei
 Yisrael, al pi Adonai b'yad Moshe.

This is the Torah which Moses placed before the people of Israel. God's word through the hand of Moses.



עֵץ חַיִּים הִיא לַמַּחְזִיקִים בָּהּ, וְתִמְכֶּיָּהּ
 מֵאֲשֶׁר. דְּרָכֶיהָ דְרָכֵי נֹעַם, וְכָל
 נְתִיבוֹתֶיהָ שְׁלוֹם.
 Eitz chayim hi lamachazikim bah, v'tom'checha
 m'ushar. D'rachehah darchei no-am, v'chol
 n'tivotiha shalom.

It is a tree of life for those who hold fast to it, and all its supporters are happy. Its ways are ways of pleasantness and all its paths are peace.

Prayer for the State of Israel

O heavenly One, Protector and Redeemer of Israel,
 bless the State of Israel which marks the dawning of hope for all who seek peace.
 Shield it beneath the wings of Your love; spread over it the canopy of Your peace;
 send Your light and truth to all who lead and advise,
 guiding them with Your good counsel.
 Establish peace in the land and fullness of joy for all who dwell there.
 Amen.

Prayer for Country

Eternal God, we pray to You for the whole Hosue of Israel, scattered over the earth, yet bound together by a common history and united by a common heritage of faith and hope.

O Guardian of life and liberty,
 may our nationa always merit Your protection.
 Teach us to give thanks for what we have
 by sharing it with those who are in need.

Keep our eyes open to the wonders of creation,
 and alert to the care of the earth.
 May we never be lazy in our owkr of peace.
 May we honor those who have died in defense of our ideals.
 Grant our leaders patience and wisdom.

Help us to appreciate one another
 and to respect the many ways that we may serve You.
 May our homes be safe from affliction and strife
 and our country be sound in body and spirit.

Prayer for GFC

Here, together
 We say thank You
 for the trees, the sun, the lake
 for blue skies and green grass
 for new friends and old.
 Here, together
 We say thank You
 for fun and games
 for counselors, campers, staff.
 We say thank You for helping may this our home.

עֲלֵינוּ וְקַדִּישׁ יְתוֹם

Aleinu and Mourner's Kaddish

עֲלֵינוּ לְשַׁבַּח לְאֲדוֹן הַכֹּל, לְתִת גְּדֻלָּה
 לְיוֹצֵר בְּרָאשִׁית, שְׁלֹא עֲשָׂנוּ כְּגוֹיֵי
 הָאֲרָצוֹת, וְלֹא שָׁמְנוּ כְּמִשְׁפָּחוֹת
 הָאָדָמָה, שְׁלֹא שָׁם חִלְקֵנוּ כֶּהֱם,
 וְגָרְלָנוּ כְּכֹל הַמוֹנָם.
 וְאֶנְחֵנוּ כּוֹרְעִים וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים וּמוֹדִים,
 לִפְנֵי מֶלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים,
 הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא.

Aleinu l'shabei-ach la'adon hakol, lateit g'dulah
 l'yotzeir b'reishit,shelo asanu k'goyei
 ha'aratzot, v'lo samanu k'mishp'chot
 ha'adamah. Shelo sam chelkeinu kahem,
 v'goraleinu k'chol hamonam.
 Va'anachnu kor'im umishtachavim umodim,
 lifnei Melech mal'chei hamlachim
 HaKadosh Baruch Hu.

שֶׁהוּא נוֹטֶה שָׁמַיִם וְיָסֵד אֶרֶץ,
 וּמוֹשָׁב יִקְרוּ בְּשָׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל, וּשְׁכִינַת
 עֲזוֹ בְּגִבְהֵי מְרוֹמִים, הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֵין
 עוֹד. אֱמֶת מִלְכֵנוּ, אֶפֶס זֹלָתוֹ,
 כְּכַתוּב בְּתוֹרָתוֹ: וַיִּדְעָה הַיּוֹם
 וְהַשְׁבֵּת אֶל לִבָּבָהּ, כִּי יְיָ הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים
 בְּשָׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל, וְעַל הָאֶרֶץ מִתַּחַת,
 אֵין עוֹד.

Shehu noteh shamayim v'yoseid aretz,
 umoshav y'karo bashamayim mima'al ush'chinat
 uzo b'govhei m'romim. Hu Eloheinu ein
 od, emet Malkeinu efes zulato.
 Kakatuv b'Torato, V'yadata hayom
 v'hasheivota el l'vavecha, ki Adonai hu HaElohim
 bashamayim mima'al, v'al ha'arets mitachat,
 ein od.

וְנֹאמַר, וְהָיָה יְיָ לְמֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל
 הָאֶרֶץ, בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יִהְיֶה יְיָ אֶחָד,
 וּשְׁמוֹ אֶחָד.

V'ne-emar, v'hayah Adonai l'Melech al kol
 ha'arets. Bayom hahu yih'yeh Adonai echad
 ush'mo echad.

Let us now praise the Sovereign of the universe, and proclaim the greatness of the Creator who has set us apart from the other families of the earth, giving us a destiny unique among the nations. We bend the knee and bow, acknowledging the supreme Sovereign, the Holy One of Blessing.

For you spread out the heavens and established the earth; Your majestic abode is in the heavens above and Your mighty Presence is in the loftiest heights. You are our God and there is none else. In truth You are our Sovereign without compare, as is written in Your Torah: Know then this day and take it to heart that Adonai is surely God in the heavens above and on the earth below. There is none else.

Thus it has been said, Adonai will be Sovereign over all the earth. On that day, Adonai will be one, and God's Name will be one.

At this point in the service our thoughts turn to those who are no longer with us. In some communities it is a custom for everyone to stand during the Mourner's Kaddish in solidarity. In other communities people stand in order to remember those who have no one to stand for them - like those who died in the Holocaust. At GFC we ask for the name of the person being remembered and then everyone is asked to rise and recite the Mourner's Kaddish together.

We remember people we love and respect, who are now gone. We think of people we loved, and people who were loving and righteous. *Zichronam liv'rachah* - may their memories bless us.

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא.	Yitgadal v'yitkadash sh'mei raba.
בְּעָלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא כְּרַעוּתָהּ, וְיִמְלִיךְ	B'alma di v'ra chirutei, v'yamlich
מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיִּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן	Malchutei, b'chayeichon uv'yomeichon
וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל,	uv'chayei d'chol beit Yisrael,
בְּעָגְלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.	baagala uviz'man kariv. V'im'ru: Amen.
יְהִי שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ	Y'hei sh'mei raba m'varach
לְעָלַם וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא.	l'alam ul'almei almay.
יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמַם	Yitbarach v'yishtabach v'yitpaar v'yitromam
וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל	v'yitnasei, v'yit'hadar v'yitaleh v'yit'halal
שְׁמֵהּ דְקֻדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא,	sh'mei d'Kud'sha B'rich Hu,
לְעֵילָא מִן כָּל בִּרְכָתָא וְשִׁירָתָא	l'eila min kol birchata v'shirata,
תְּשׁוּבָתָא וְנֶחֱמָתָא,	tushb'chata v'nechemata,
וְאָמְרוּ בְּעָלְמָא, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.	daamiran b'alma. V'imru: Amen.
יְהִי שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא,	Y'hei sh'lama raba min sh'maya,
וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל,	v'chayim aleinu v'al kol Yisrael.
וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.	V'imru: Amen.
עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרְוֵנוּ, הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה	Oseh shalom bimromav, Hu yaaseh
שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְעַל	shalom aleinu, v'al kol Yisrael
כָּל-יֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.	v'al kol yoshvei teveil, V'imru: Amen.

Exalted and hallowed be God's great name in the world which God created, according to plan. May God's majesty be revealed in the days of our lifetime and the life of all Israel — speedily, imminently, to which we say Amen. Blessed be God's great name to all eternity. Blessed, praised, honored, exalted, extolled, glorified, adored, and lauded be the name of the Holy Blessed One, beyond all earthly words and songs of blessing, praise, and comfort. To which we say Amen. May there be abundant peace from heaven, and life, for us and all Israel. to which we say Amen. May the One who creates harmony on high, bring peace us and to all Israel and all who inhabit the earth. To which we say Amen.

שירים

Songs

Havah Nashira

הִבֵּה נְשִׁירָה שִׁיר הַלְלוּ-יְהוָה.

Havah nashirah shir hal'lu Yah.

Let us sing a song of praise. Hallelujah.

Heinei Ma Tov

הִנֵּה מַה טוֹב וְיָמָה נְעִים שָׁכֵת אַחִים גַּם יַחַד.

Hineih mah tov u'mah naim shevet achim gam yachad.

How good and how pleasant it is that brothers/sisters dwell together.

Kol Han'shama

כָּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תְּהַלֵּל יְהוָה - הַלְלוּ-יְהוָה.

Kol han'shamah t'hallel Yah, hal'lu-Yah.

Let all that breathes praise Adonai. Hallelujah.

Mah Yafeh HaYom

מַה יָּפֶה הַיּוֹם, שַׁבַּת שָׁלוֹם.

Mah yafeh hayom, Shabbat shalom

How lovely today is, Shabbat shalom.

Od Yavo Shalom Aleinu

עוֹד יָבוֹא שָׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כּוֹלָם. סָלָאם, עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל הָעוֹלָם, סָלָאם, סָלָאם.

Od yavo shalom aleinu v'al kulam. Salaam, aleinu v'al kol ha'olam, salaam, salaam.

Peace will surely come to us, to everyone. Salaam, for us and for the entire world.

Oseh Shalom

עוֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם בְּמִרְמֵי, הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

Oseh shalom bimromav, hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu v'al kol Yisrael v'imru: Amen.

May the One who causes peace to reign in the high heavens let peace descend on us and on all Israel, and let us say: Amen.

Ozi v'Zimrat Yah

עֹזִי וְזִמְרַת יְהוָה, וַיְהִי לִי לִישׁוּעָה

Ozi v'zimrat Yah, vay'hi li lishuah.

Adonai is my strength and might; God will be my salvation.

ENDNOTES FOR SERVICE

Note: Anything original not cited below is written by Simone Schicker.

- ❖ Introduction - commentary is drawn from both *A Mountain Climber's Guide to Prayer* as well as from *Siddur Mikor-Hayyim*.
- ❖ Ma Tovv - commentary is drawn from both *A Mountain Climber's Guide to Prayer*, pages 4-5, as well as from *Siddur Mikor-Hayyim*, page 4.
- ❖ Nisim b'chol yom - format is from *Mishkan T'filah for Children*, pages 14-15.
- ❖ Torah Study - Footnote is drawn from *Mishkan T'filah for Youth*, page 72. Lyrics to "Sweet as Honey" are written by Dan Nichols.
- ❖ Ahava Rabbah - English reading comes from *Gates of Prayer for Young People*, page 8.
- ❖ Emet/Mi Chamocha - English reading comes from *Mishkan T'filah for Youth*, page 41.
- ❖ Adonai s'fatai tiftach - words prior to the Amidah are the lyrics to "Open" written by Judith Silver.
- ❖ Ritzei - First English reading comes from *Siddur Mikor-Hayyim*, page 56. Second reading comes from *A Mountain Climber's Guide to Prayer*, page 78.
- ❖ Modim - Commentary is based upon the Kavanah in *Siddur Mikor-Hayyim*, page 60. First English reading is from *Mishkan T'filah for Youth*, page 113. Second English reading is from *Gates of Prayer for Young People*, page 86.
- ❖ Silent Prayer - first English reading is based on the responsive reading in *Siddur Lev Chadash*, pages 308-309. Second English reading is from *Gates of Prayer for Young People*, page 88.
- ❖ Prayer for the State of Israel - from *Mishkan T'filah*, page 377.
- ❖ Prayer for Our Country - from *Mishkan T'filah for Youth*, page 171.
- ❖ Prayer for GFC - inspired by readings in *Mishkan T'filah for Youth*, pages 168-169.
- ❖ Mourner's Kaddish - commentary is based on *Mishkan T'filah for Youth*, page 132. English reading is from *Mishkan T'filah for Children*, page 110.

COMMENTARY FOR SERVICE

The inspiration for the compilation of this service arose after the experiences of the author as a camper at Young Judaea in Texas, as a counselor at Young Judaea and as a member of the Education Team at Greene Family Camp (GFC). The choices made in the compilation of the service are based on the research and reading that was undertaken for this project and is expressed more fully in Chapter One and Chapter Two of this work.

The introduction to the service booklet gives a framework for the entire service by explaining to the prayer participant the purpose of the booklet as well as giving the essential questions one finds themselves asking during prayer. Based on the wording of both *A Mountain Climber's Guide to Prayer* as well as *Siddur Mikor-Hayyim*, the idea of having an introduction comes from the example of *Mishkan T'filah* and the experience of so many that a book placed in the hands of someone who has never previously seen it often leads to questions.

It is all too common that people, of all ages, have questions but do not want to feel different or uninformed and therefore do not ask. The booklet takes this into consideration starting with the introduction and continuing throughout the commentary, questions, and thoughts shared in juxtaposition with common Reform liturgy.

The liturgy chosen, what to include and what to skip, is based upon the current customs of GFC as well as being informed by the survey that was given to faculty members who had served at GFC during recent summers. The need to both inspire and educate, but also recognize that GFC is not Hebrew school, is a balancing act throughout. The decision to title certain sections in the same manner of *Mishkan T'filah* is one example in which the desire to familiarize the prayer participant with the structure of both the service and of the prayer book they will most likely use in their home congregation is the reason for the choice. In comparison, the decision to put Hebrew on the

left, transliteration on the right, and translation below (for the majority of the liturgical choices) arose from the author's reading on alternatives discussed prior to the publication of *Mishkan T'filah*. The idea of lining up the Hebrew and transliteration in this way is thought to be helpful for people learning Hebrew because they can more easily find where they are in either option. As the service is written for GFC, where the ages range from 6 to 14 for campers, a format that is both approachable and may help provide comfort with the Hebrew text was necessary. For a similar reason the author chose to bold the penultimate syllable in the transliteration when the stress falls on that syllable, and not on the last syllable, in order to facilitate the correct pronunciation of the Hebrew.

Throughout the service the reader will find images. This choice arose out of both exploration and experience with siddurim written for children that use color, drawings, and other images throughout as well as an acknowledgment that words do not work for every person as a bridge between where they are and where their thoughts and prayers are. For many, praying in nature gives them the opportunity to understand and feel that prayer is about more than who they are at the moment of prayer. The images selected were chosen to inspire as well as to give the reader a break from the structure of the booklet, which is text-heavy. Every person learns differently and prayer is no different. Even after establishing the structure of the traditional *shacharit* service, the Rabbis of old knew that having time for personal prayer, silent prayer, was important. Just as time without words is important, time to recognize the role of both images and our surroundings is important and therefore has been incorporated.

Having explained the overarching structure of the service, below is an explanation, page by page, of the service to give more insight into the choices made based on the needs, understandings, questions, and experiences explored in Chapters One and Two.

Modeh/Modah Ani

The decision was made to include not only questions in the commentary at the top of the page but also activities at the bottom of the page one could do when first waking up. This allows the reader to both learn more about the history of the prayer and to recognize that things they may do in places other than the synagogue are also embraced in Reform Jewish practice. Just as images are more inspiring than words for some people, others need direction or movement to find themselves in the right space for prayer. The hope of the author is that these activities may also inspire the prayer leaders to incorporate more movement or meditation into the service on a rotating basis, allowing both campers and staff to explore a variety of modes of prayer.

The decision to include the footnote at the bottom of the page both facilitates familiarity with the structure of *Mishkan T'filah* and gives important information to the reader. The comparison to Spanish was chosen because of GFC being located in Texas and many campers and staff having a familiarity with Spanish. It was also important for the author to recognize that a number of URJ camps are working on inclusion of individuals who identify as transgender or genderqueer, since members of both groups often struggle with the gendered structure of the Hebrew language.²²¹

Ma Tovv

The choice to teach about the source of *Ma Tovv* came from the cited *siddurim* but the decision to include a picture of a replica of the *mishkan*, as would have been seen by Baalam, was made in order to enliven the text. Too often it is forgotten that there is an historical basis for much of the Jewish tradition and this includes some of the prayers and blessings recited during services.

²²¹ Julie Zauzmer "A camp tries to reinvent the Hebrew language, so transgender kids can fit in." *Washington Post*, August 11, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2016/08/11/what-does-a-gender-neutral-kid-call-themself-in-a-gendered-language/?utm_term=.f9ce28eacb4f [accessed January 9, 2018].

It is also a relevant image because the words themselves speak to the tents of Jacob and the dwelling places of Israel.

The author also made the decision to include the entire text of *Ma Tovv* and not just the first verse, or first two verses, in order to facilitate flexibility for the prayer leaders in how much of the prayer they wish to recite. The decision was also based upon the inclusion of the full text in the previous prayer booklet for GFC. The inclusion of the full text also gives the reader the opportunity to read the entire passage, either in Hebrew or English, if they so desire. Personal practice is often overlooked during the creation of liturgy for certain groups or places but, when possible, the author believes that allowing the option for different personal traditions or practices ought to be embraced.

Asher Yatzar/Elohai N'shamah

In the previous *shacharit* prayer booklet written for GFC, the order of prayers went directly from *Ma Tovv* to *Barchu*. The use of *Mishkan T'filah* for the past number of years has shifted the tradition of what is included in *shacharit* Shabbat services. It is now common to incorporate much more of *birchot ha'shachar* as part of the service. The author experienced the pushback of some against the inclusion of both *Asher Yatzar* and *Elohai N'shamah* because of time constraints when working at GFC. This pushback fell away after she explained that the two are connected, that first one is thankful for one's body and then for one's soul. This short and simple explanation was not known to those with whom the author was working and proved to be a moment of recognition of how important explanation is throughout a service.

The decision to not include the Hebrew of *Asher Yatzar* and rather to use an English version inspired by the prayer was based on two considerations. The first was that it is common at GFC to include more English; the second was that the author felt it was important to find alternative

readings, used throughout the service, to help guide and inspire the reader. Too often individuals feel excluded from the prayer laid out in front of them. The hope is that the acknowledgement of individuality and the importance of the individual experience expressed in the alternative reading, followed by the *chatimah* in *Mishkan T'filah*-fashion, will help individuals find themselves in the liturgy.

The entire text of *Elohai N'shamah* is included for similar reasons to those stated in the explanation of *Ma Tov*. Though generally only the first line is sung or the English translation is read with the *chatimah*, it was important to the author to allow for as many options as possible. This is why the *chatimah* is set slightly apart from the rest of the prayer - for ease of inclusion with the English that follows it.

Nisim B'chol Yom

The author was inspired by the choice of the author of *Mishkan T'filah for Children* to use the same format in this service. The use of both images and text, as well as the beginning of the traditional blessings, allows for numerous ways of praying what *Mishkan T'filah* has deemed *Nisim b'chol yom*.

The idea of reciting the first part of the blessing, as written in Hebrew, transliteration and English, followed by things individuals in the congregation are thankful for was introduced at GFC in Summer 2017. A structure that is also used in religious schools, the images work well for this idea as well - they are inspirations of things one may in fact be thankful for as well as being representative of the expected blessings during this portion of the service.

The commentary at the top of the first page, as well as on the bottom of the second page, helps give a deeper understanding of the reason these blessings appear, as well as allowing for readers to ask themselves if they could follow in the tradition of their ancestors by reciting a

hundred blessings every day. The author's hope is that the questions and commentary allow the service participant to explore for themselves, through a variety of media as chosen by the prayer leader, to be thankful for the blessings they find in their own lives.

Torah Blessings and Eilu D'varim

Torah study as part of the worship service is an important tradition that is often the first thing to go when one is under time constraints. This is a shame, because the understanding that study can be prayer too, that study can help connect one to their larger purpose, is an important value to be passed on to the next generation. Torah study is also an opportunity to teach about the Torah, about the tradition, and about the specific text chosen to share. *Mishkan T'filah* does this well in that, along with the expected text of *Eilu d'varim* there are alternatives which include quotes and thoughts from people who are not seen to be "religious" in a traditional sense. Anything written by a Jew can be viewed as Torah, and anything at all can be viewed as sacred text.²²² Both of these ideas were built upon for this section: first is commentary explaining an understanding of Torah, then the blessing along with GFC's tradition of singing "Sweet as Honey" by Dan Nichols, followed by *Eilu D'varim* and then quotes, both Jewish and not, which speak to being a good person. The idea to include quotes by non-Jews is intended to help, in a subtle way, teach that, in a Jewish context, we can learn from everyone. As a *shacharit* Shabbat service written specifically for camp, there is more room to be flexible and to write for the audience. The author recognizes that if she had seen an acknowledgment of the wisdom of all peoples in the *siddur*, with which she grew up, it would have had a significant impact on her interactions throughout her life. Even if it is not the intention of the adults in a child's life, there is an understanding that a *siddur* is

²²² A current popular example is the podcast "Harry Potter and the Sacred Text" which is hosted by two academics. They read a chapter per episode and apply their skill to understanding what can be drawn from the text if one would only view it as sacred in a similar way as the Bible is viewed (or other texts sacred to other religious traditions).

an important book. What it says holds weight, as it should, but this weight can also be used for the greater good.

Ashrei and Psalm 150

The importance of song, at summer camp in general and at GFC in particular, along with a traditional understanding of the role of the psalms in the Temple in Jerusalem, helped focus the comments and choices in this section. The entire *Ashrei* is included through the author recognizes that it is rare at GFC to chant the entire *Ashrei* (Psalm 150 is always sung) but felt it was an important opportunity for educational purposes, as well as for personal practice purposes, to include it in its entirety. The author would also like to see some prayer leaders choosing to teach the entirety of the *Ashrei* because it is a beautiful prayer with a lot to offer.

The full inclusion of Psalm 150 is to be expected. The plethora of versions of Psalm 150, along with its words, length, and repetitive vocabulary, makes it a popular Psalm for people of all ages. It also speaks to the importance of music in prayer, which fits the culture of both Reform Judaism and GFC. The author knows many people who believe that without music there is no prayer, and our ancestors of old agreed in many ways.

Barchu and Yotzer Or

The *Barchu*, the official call to worship, is an excellent opportunity for recognition of tradition and another opportunity for teaching. The author chose to speak about the idea of a *minyan* at this point because of the *halakhah* of needing a *minyan*, but also brought in the GFC community in order to recognize the community practice of not worrying about number or age during prayer at camp. Many members of the campers are not yet of bat or bar mitzvah age but are counted because camp is about community and not about exclusion. The custom of who stands for an *aliyah* (generally it is groups of people at GFC) is at the discretion of the prayer leader at GFC.

Shema and its Blessings

The chance to build upon the traditional structure of the worship service through creative ways, of questions and commentary and images, felt especially inspirational for the middle portion of the service. The bridges built between the various sections of the service was first taught to the author through her experience of praying with the *siddur*, *A Mountain Climber's Guide to Prayer*, and was only further explained once she started her studies at Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion. The guide of the bridges inspired the choice of placement for the commentary as well as the placement of images throughout this section.

The *Shema* is often referred to as the “watchword of our faith” because it is our statement of the Oneness of God. The importance of the *Shema* is also felt in the build-up to it and the decision to not include the Hebrew of *Ahavah Rabbah* but rather an interpretation of it, in order to give a deeper connection to the prayer itself. The commentary also speaks of the idea of being commanded to love, an idea that many people struggle with, whether one believes in God or not. It has become a common response to a declaration of non-belief to ask which God one does not believe in, for Judaism speaks of so many. The author thought about including something of that nature but ultimately concluded that it would be too much for a majority of the campers. The balancing act of writing material that would both be engaging and include age-appropriate language was a stumbling block for the author. The reading picked to replace the prayer *Emet* in the service was chosen for this reason. It was written for children by an individual with more experience than the author, and also expresses the author's belief in the joy of the moment of crossing the sea. The inclusion of a rainbow also speaks to this moment of joy, and the image of the sea splitting brings a sense of awe at the wonder of both God's power and nature as the congregation prepares to rise for the climax of the service - the *Amidah*.

Amidah

The image of a mountain climber, borrowed from *A Mountain Climber's Guide to Prayer*, brings to mind the feeling of exhilaration as well as a recognition of the work it took to reach the summit. The first three prayers of the *Amidah* are always chanted in Hebrew at GFC. This, in and of itself, is a statement of the way in which the prayers are viewed as important connections to both community and history. This is why the author chose to leave the major commentary for the *Amidah* as a bridge between the *Kedusha* and the songs of Shabbat. The decision to use Judith Silver's words as introduction to the *Amidah* came from experience of hearing the song sung as introduction to the *Amidah* in services at K.K. Bene Israel Rockdale Temple in Cincinnati, Ohio. The words speak of the need for all pieces of a person to be open to goodness, a perfect segue from the theme of love surrounding the *Shema* to the themes of the Shabbat *Amidah*. The images chosen are also supposed to evoke the themes and messages of the *Amidah*. They also help to break up the text in an engaging way especially for those who find themselves overwhelmed by the amount of Hebrew text.

The shift to English readings followed by the *chatimah* for the *Avodah* and *Hoda'ah* prayers is both customary for GFC, but also is common in many Reform synagogues. The reading chosen for the *Avodah* was written for a school *siddur* and places the reader at its center, which the author felt was a nice shift of perspective. The inclusion of a variety of views of God, as well as a variety of understandings of prayer, was important to the author based on the research explored in Chapters One and Two. This was a major reason for the design of the *Hoda'ah* prayer page. Being thankful for the blessings in one's life is something everyone needs to learn. Life may not be perfect but we all have things to be thankful for in our lives. The structure of the page for *Sim Shalom*, the prayer for peace, includes a graphic with Shalom/Salaam/Peace because of the popularity of singing "Od

Yavo Shalom Aleinu” (or “Salaam”), a song Moshe Ben Ari composed while in the band Sheva that is sung in both Hebrew and Arabic. The lesson being taught, both of the importance of peace but also of coming together with those who are different from you and your immediate community, is too important to skip over. This is also the basis of the commentary of questioning what we mean by peace and asking the reader to consider their views on peace in the safe space of worship at Jewish summer camp.

The role of silent prayer, as mentioned in the commentary at the top of the page, is to allow the individual an opportunity to think and pray and be by themselves. This is not always easy to facilitate at GFC, nor in most spaces with lots of children who mostly want to be anywhere except where they are. Therefore rather than pretending this is not so, the second English reading acknowledges this, while the first English reading is aimed at more mature readers. The inclusion of both *Yih'yu l'ratzon* and *Oseh Shalom* is both for their meaning but also the needs of GFC prayer leaders who like as many options for singing as possible.

K'riat HaTorah

The Torah Service was a hard piece of the service to compile because there are both the necessary pieces and the recognition that timing for services is always problematic at GFC. Currently the major issue is the need to hold services in the Chadar Ochel (dining hall), which is first used for optional breakfast, then for services, and then has to be quickly turned over for brunch. An overly long service impacts the schedule as well as the moods of the staff who are in charge of making sure brunch is ready on time. Though not a fun or spiritual reason to be conscious of time, these realities are important. A prayer leader is restrained by the facts of their situation and, though they may wish to be able to spend as much time as they want guiding the community in prayer, it is not always possible or reasonable. The other important piece is that

children, of all ages struggle with staying still when there is nothing for them to do except listen. This is why the prayer leader needs to be well trained in offering an ongoing commentary on what is occurring, especially during this portion of the service. None of this is included in the booklet itself because it is not relevant nor engaging for the clear majority of participants.

It is customary at GFC to have an Israeli member of the staff read the Prayer for Israel during the Torah Service. The author's decision to also include a Prayer for Country, taken from *Mishkan T'filah for Youth*, and an original composition for the Prayer for GFC is to allow for more participation in the service as well as note the importance of all the communities of which participants are a part when praying together at camp.

Aleinu and Kaddish Yatom

The conclusion of the service is often rushed through at GFC for the reasons explained above but the author chose to still include a fuller version of the *Aleinu* in order to facilitate learning and opportunities for changes to the liturgical choices week-to-week. The author was inspired by some of the choices for readings prior to the *Kaddish Yatom* in *siddurim* written for children. Though some believe that death should not be discussed with children, others who have studied the topic or work with children who have experienced death, note that adults should not protect children from the realities of death. Rather, adults should understand the different developmental stages and speak to children based on their ability to understand.²²³ The fact that Judaism remembers those who have died, both recently and in previous years, at the end of every service should be embraced.²²⁴ *Kaddish Yatom* never mentions death but rather praises God. Here

²²³ The author would like to thank Rabbi Samuel Joseph, Ph.D., for the opportunity to study this topic in depth in his course at HUC-JIR in Fall 2017.

²²⁴ The author notes that this commentary is being written from a Reform Jewish perspective. *Kaddish* is recited throughout the service, led by mourners, in other Jewish communities.

is another excellent opportunity for staff to be in conversation with their campers and with one another about how Judaism views death.

Songs

The songs selected for inclusion are based both on the author's experience of working at GFC as well as on previous service booklets that GFC has used. Many more songs could be included, and the choices would change along with the years, but the author chose to be conservative in her selections for reasons of length and formatting.

Conclusion

The compilation of this *shacharit* Shabbat service was an exploration of ways in which to engage both children and adults at GFC more fully in the celebration of Shabbat through morning worship. The service was written based on what is known and what was experienced by the author during her time on staff and through both interviews and the survey (included in Appendix C of Chapter Two). It must be noted that in practice this service booklet is only as good as the prayer leader(s) using it as their guide.

Creative liturgy, in all of its forms, has the potential both to succeed and to fail, based on the person or people leading the prayer experience. The attempt by so many to make worship in synagogues have the same feel as worship at summer camp is an example of this. Some communities do an excellent job while others fall short. Worship at summer camp is so much more than the type of music used or the readings chosen. It is more than the length of the service, typically shorter, or the option to pray in shorts and t-shirts. Worship at summer camp is a total package and it is not always done successfully at camp either, but people rarely remember the bad hour out of an entire session of summer camp. A child may say they did not like it but they will not break it down and analyze it either. The creation of the service booklet is one attempt at helping to enrich and deepen the experience of campers and staff at GFC during *shacharit* Shabbat services.

CONCLUSION

Insights

The goal of writing this thesis was to both learn more about the history of Jewish summer camping as well as to better understand how one may assist in the development of spirituality in children. The end product that was chosen was a *shacharit* Shabbat service specifically for the URJ Greene Family Camp (GFC) in Bruceville, Texas (south of Waco, north of Austin off of Interstate-35).

The history of Jewish summer camping is long, detailed, and fascinating. Chapter Two barely scratches the surface of the history, and what was chosen for inclusion was based entirely on the focus of this work, which is spirituality in children and how Jewish summer camps are the perfect place to help develop a child's connection to and understanding of spirituality. The scholarship discussed in Chapter One laid the foundation to show how much this type of guidance, and particularly openness of adults to talk to children about spirituality, is needed.

A common thread throughout the literature discussed in Chapter Two was the need for better staff, and for better staff training. This has been an issue for many years at this point and appears today as a major source of contention. Staff training must include both programmatic needs and as well training in how to work with intangible topics as well - such as spirituality or spiritual experiences. Though knowing how to lead a program, what to do in an emergency, how the daily schedule functions, are all important things, the intangible topics need to be addressed as well. As adults working with children, there are so many occasions during the course of a day, and the course of a summer camp session, where the growing and learning occurs in the unprogrammed moments. Another topic that needs more attention during staff training is the inclusion of Judaism throughout the day and not only during programmed Jewish times - such as

an education hour, worship services or the time for prayer before and/or after meals. An understanding of Judaism, and spirituality, is something that must be cultivated in each individual. This causes trouble for camp administrators in that they need to invest the time and effort each and every year as their staff changes but would ultimately lead to a more involved and educated Jewish community from which to draw their staff in later years.

The location of the camp became an important aspect of understanding its history and how the experiences of children and staff at GFC differ from other camps, even other URJ affiliated camps, because of the regional reality of their day-to-day lives outside of camp. Summer camping was popular in the north and northeast long before it was popular in the south - a difference of culture, and due as well to the difference in temperature during the summer months.²²⁵ Though the author felt there would be some differences because of location, the numerous differences, including how the different camps came to be founded, was surprising.

One of the differences that played an important part in shaping the service was the comment by GFC Executive Director Loui Dobin about the fear of “God talk” being something “they” (Christians) do. This fear, which was never named for the author but was absolutely experienced growing up in Texas and spending time in Alabama, can be overcome by using the safety of Jewish summer camp as an entry point for these conversations. Children are much more aware than adults often acknowledge. If their developmental stages are adequately recognized and accounted for children can be given the skills necessary to promote their own development and growth. Another aspect of the lives of children attending GFC, as both a camp affiliated with the Reform Movement and one located in the south, is the number of children who come from interfaith families of all kinds. When parents practice different faiths or extended families practice

²²⁵ Campers who attend GFC and then go on to URJ Kutz Leadership Camp in Warwick, NY are often made fun of because GFC has air conditioned cabins - along with all buildings. What campers from other camps do not realize is that it is often over 100 degrees during the summer at GFC, and worries about heat exhaustion are a real concern.

religion differently, it leads to questions - and those questions are often posed to counselors or other staff at summer camp, many of whom do not know how to answer, or even whether they have a right to answer. This is yet another area where education about intangible topics would lend itself to helping create Jewish children who have a solid understanding of their faith, to help create both awareness and self-awareness in the campers.

Recommendations

Throughout this work the author has noted that there are multiple places for more research and a need for a deeper understanding of both the topic of spirituality and children as well as of the history and development of Jewish summer camping in the United States. It is clear that a larger and more in-depth study of Jewish summer camps is needed by the Jewish community. This would most likely require a number of scholars writing on different aspects of Jewish summer camping or require separate histories for the separate summer camping movements.

Chapter One shows the need for more education on spirituality for all people - adults and children - and also notes the opportunities that Jewish camps have to build upon their “buy-in” from campers to be a safe space to explore issues relating to spirituality as well as personal growth. Giving children the safe space to explore who they are in relation to one another as well as in relation to adults along with their relationship to Judaism and possibly also to God will help children in all aspects of their lives. When we create moments and experiences for children, and when we recognize moments when they occur out of the regularly scheduled programming, we help children develop into well-rounded adults.

Out of the, very small, survey the author sent out to faculty members of GFC, came a few significant insights that led to the following recommendations:

- There is no one-size-fits-all when it comes to summer camp. Some faculty members found worship services to be good while others had a number of reservations. What was clear to the author was that it is the responsibility of GFC, in this case, to be both responsive to the faculty members they have at camp as well as to give more guidance to the faculty members about implementing their goals. Just as the staff need more training in relation to the goals of the camp, and their opportunities when working with young people, the faculty are often in need of similar training. GFC also has the opportunity to use the skills of the faculty in training the staff.
- A number of the faculty would like to see a better worship experience for both the campers and the staff at GFC. This may not come in the form of the service seen in Chapter Three but may require a complete rethinking of when and how services are presented and participated in. Summer 2017 saw, more by accident than on purpose, splitting the camp up for Shabbat services because of the need to get the youngest campers to bed on time. This allowed the prayer leader for these younger campers to create a service that was more accessible to them, and allowed the prayer leader for the older campers to build on their skills and understandings of prayer in a different way. While there is something to be said for all-camp services, it must be recognized that, as a camp grows, changes have to be made to account for differing needs.
- Staff training must include more Jewish education. The need for staff, especially counselors, to have the knowledge to draw upon for their campers is incredibly important. Jewish education should not be the sole responsibility of the Education Staff, including the Camp Rabbi, but rather part of the mission of the entire camp staff whether they are Jewish or not. Working at a Jewish summer camp, especially one affiliated with a specific stream of

Judaism, should come with more expectations. This is both for the benefit of the campers as well as the staff - and ultimately the larger Jewish community.

In conclusion, there are many avenues to consider exploring both in relation to spirituality in children and in relation to the role of Jewish summer camps in American Jewish life. If this work helps to inspire others to continue doing this important work, it will have succeeded in its mission.

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