

MISHKAN 5781

2020-2021

We Were Built for This

This year, a tiny, invisible virus undid everything – our daily routines, our sense of control and, hardest of all, the health of our family, friends and neighbors. Suddenly we couldn't sing in the same room or light Shabbat candles together. We couldn't gather for High Holidays or mark lifecycles in person. For a community built through the soaring blending of harmonies and a drum beat that flows through a room... this moment could have undone us.



But it didn't.

Together we created 250 virtual programs between March and August, attracting thousands of participants from around the world. We went from two Friday night services a month to Shabbat live-streams every Friday night and Saturday morning. We launched a podcast that already has 400 consistent listeners. And we welcomed the opportunity to create a virtual and immersive High Holidays experience. Your support and participation in all of our experimentation has been inspiring.

Still, we are in a moment of undoing. Alongside the pandemic, we've seen a call for the *intentional* dismantling of unjust policies and inequitable systems. In the face of this national reckoning around race, and the *cheshbon nefesh*, soul accounting, of the Jewish community, we recommitted ourselves to radical inclusivity, a foundational value. We rebuilt our Mission, our Non-Negotiables and our Community Norms to better reflect anti-racist policies and standards, and launched programs to reflect those changes (read more about all that below).

So yes, a lot is uncertain. But I've never been more sure that **Mishkan is built for this**. Inherent to our namesake in the Torah and our origin story, is the power of people not only ready to build, but also ready to take apart, change, retool, and build anew. This is our essential strength, and it will carry all of us from place to place in the year ahead — just as it did thousands of years ago.

May you be inscribed for a year of more health, more hope, more purpose, and more inspiration,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R' Lizzi Heydemann".

Rabbi Lizzi Heydemann, Founder

Mission and Vision: Our Why

Mishkan Chicago is a Jewish spiritual community that leads people toward more purposeful, more connected, and more inspired lives. We create Jewish spaces to bring your whole self, and be part of something larger than yourself. When we do that, we reimagine and breathe new life into Judaism, and we change the world.

Our Non-Negotiables

We are radically inclusive. We welcome everyone and bend over backwards to be accessible on multiple levels, creating space that is both safe and brave. We assume positive intent and learn from moments of friction.

We heal the world. Racial justice and social equity are values in our work at Mishkan, and in our lives. Our practice of Judaism calls us to transform and heal our world.

We engage people. We take active steps to help people feel that they belong – if on the outside to come in, if on the inside, to form deeper connections.

We educate people. We build Jewish tradition and learning into everything we do.

We empower people to lead. We give people the space, tools and encouragement to help more people find purpose, connection and inspiration.

We encourage self expression. Judaism is not a spectator sport, it's an active spiritual practice. We need to bring our whole selves and co-create our Jewish experience for it to change our lives.

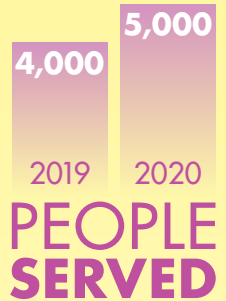


Davening Team members at Jewish Rock Radio's Song Leader Boot Camp, where R'Lizzi was a featured speaker!

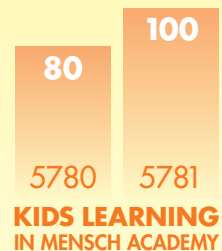


Mishkan by the Numbers

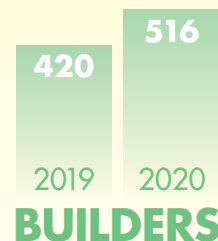
20
FULL AND
PART-TIME
STAFF



30 OUT OF
STATE
BUILDERS



1317 SHABBAT
LIVESTREAM
AVERAGE VIEWS PER WEEK



Headlines of 5781

INSPIRED MUSIC + PRAYER

Singing and prayer at Mishkan is the beating heart of what we do. When the pandemic hit, our Davening Team began rehearsing on Zoom and spent the summer gathering on sidewalks outdoors, distanced, in masks, to prepare for our High Holiday outdoor pre-recorded experience, aiming to keep bringing you the same dynamic and harmonious experience as you'd have at the Vic. We expanded services to include a daily minyan and weekly Shabbat, and we look forward to continuing to get creative, bringing you more heart-stirring, professionally-produced music in the year to come.



JUDAISM IN ACTION

This past year we were called to “not stand idly by” (Lev. 19:16). Through the efforts of many we were able to send over \$25,000 on Covid relief to community members and frontline organizations across the city. Additionally, our Mishkan Covid Response Giving Circle raised and donated \$10,800 to organizations supporting LGBTQ+ youth and teens, survivors of domestic violence, and vocational training for people on the South and West sides of the city. We also showed up at rallies and protests calling for justice in solidarity with Black Lives Matter, and we established Anti-Racist Book Clubs with more than 80 participants. All while our Social Justice Team continued to focus on issues including the Fair Tax amendment, police accountability and refugee rights in partnership with ONE Northside, the Jewish Council of Urban Affairs, and the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society.



MENSCHES-IN-TRAINING

What started as a pilot project of 15 students in 2017, Mensch Academy has now grown into a robust program that served over 80 students aged 3–13. We finished out the last school year with a quick pivot to remote learning and then launched a 3-week Mensch Camp that filled up in days. This fall, we will welcome nearly 100 students into an entirely remote Mensch Academy, bolstered by specialists in art, drama, justice, music and spirituality.

We also offer Family Shabbat services, holiday celebrations, and a new Kehilat BMitzvah Cohort to engage 6th and 7th graders and their families in Jewish ritual and social justice ahead of their BMitzvahs. Fun fact: kids and their grown-ups are our fastest growing (and cutest) population.





THE JUDAISM THEY NEVER TAUGHT YOU IN SUNDAY SCHOOL

Judaism is a full-body, intellectual-spiritual tour-de-force and nobody has learned all there is to know. This year, 21 students went through our Conversion Cohort, 30 became Adult B'Mitzvah, 40 took Rabbi Lizzi's Universal Truths, Jewish Roots class, and we built deep relationships over time through workshops and small groups including our Rosh Chodesh Circle, Partners in Parenting, and our High Holidays Mish Mosh groups.

THE WELLNESS SPOT

To date, Maggie's Place, our holistic wellness center, has offered more than 200 programs serving more than 1000 participants regardless of background, affiliation or ability to pay. From our themed drop-in nights and indoor rock climbing to our online wellness workshops, or weekly Meditation Circle, our programs nurture the mind, body, and spirit.

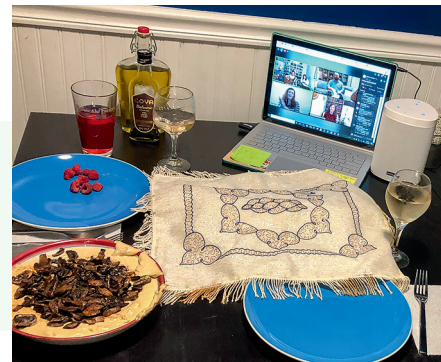


GO DEEP, GET HIGH, PIGS FLY: THE HOLIDAYS

2,500 of you participated in holiday events in 5780 and even more of you engaged digitally, bringing new life to the ancient wisdom of the Jewish calendar. 200 of you celebrated with us and Gilead Church at Silver F**ing Bells & Latkes: Interfaith Holiday Stories at the Davis Theater, and nearly 300 of you partied hard at Chop Shop for Purim 5780: When Pigs Fly, featuring the best Purim spielers, megillah readers, and dance party this side of Shushan. 525 people attended our Virtual Seder and our Simchat Torah draws a bigger crowd each year. Whether virtual or in-person, Mishkanites like a good party with a purpose.

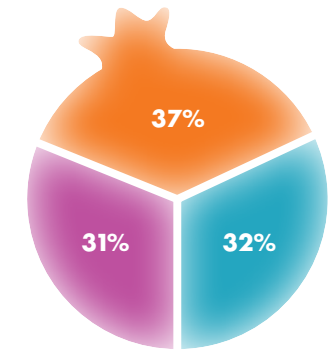
INTO THE ETHER, TOGETHER

Halfway through the year, Mishkan went virtual and remote to ensure safety and accessibility for our community. We hosted more than 250 digital programs between March and August, including Shabbat services every Friday night and Saturday morning. Though the Mishkan spirit stayed the same, our Facebook presence grew by 23% and our Instagram by 26% — connecting us with people all over the world. We launched *Contact Chai with Rabbi Lizzi*, a podcast exploring Jewish ideas in unlikely places, and more than 400 of you became consistent listeners — proving once again that our staff and community can rise to the challenge of the moment.



Our Impact

We believe that a budget is an expression of values. At Mishkan, we invest in talented people and meaningful programs (you may have noticed we don't have a building) – and that's it! Our budget, and all the money raised to meet it, directly supports Mishkan's work engaging, educating and inspiring our diverse community. In 2020, our budget is \$2,000,000, which we raise through a combination of ticket prices and tuition, foundation grants, and donations large and small. Just as in the ancient Mishkan, every contribution counts.



Shabbat + Holidays

Bringing our trademark creativity, music and joy to Shabbat services and the Jewish calendar with our Davening Team and musical guests

Learning + Community

Volunteer teams (Mishkan Avodah, Justice Teams and others), Adult BMitzvah, Conversion Cohort, workshops, trainings, speakers, and programs

Families

Mensch Academy, B'nai Tefillah, Rise + Shine Services, Mensch Camp, High Holiday Family Camp and other programs connecting families to Jewish community and to one another



Administrative and staff costs have been distributed proportionally.

Shout Out: Givers

MISHKAN IS GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE, WHO HAVE MADE GIFTS OF \$5,000 OR MORE THIS YEAR:

Marcie & Mark Achler
Anonymous (3)*
Hannah Bloom-Hirschberg
& Gary Hirschberg
Britta Bolin & Peter Kupferberg
Kathy & Peter Bresler
Lynn & Jeff Coe
Lisa & Bruce Cohen
Anita & Stephanie Cohen
Margaret & Lee Cohn
Debbi & Aaron Cooper
Melanee Cooper
Joan Colmar & Mitchell Sabshon
Terri & Michael Freeman
Sari Gluckin & Lance Friedmann
Galit & David Gottlieb

Harry Gottlieb
Charles Hammerslough
Marcie Hemmelstein
& David Drew
The Heydemann Family
Vicki & Bruce Heyman
Karen & Andy Jacobs
Sharon Kahan & Alan Miretzky
Lisa & Michael Kornick
Karen & Larry Kurtzon
Karen & Josh Leavitt
Avi Lewittes & Family
Katherine Linzer
Margaret & Paul Lurie
Julie & Gary Moos
The Morgenstern Wilson Family

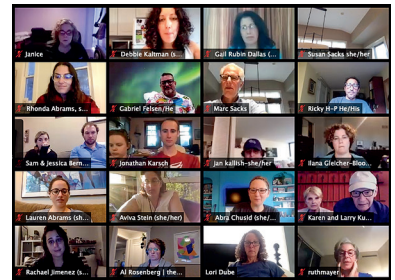
Lisa Portnoy
Rebecca Richards
& Matthew Kutcher
Susan & Marc Sacks
Josh Schwartz
Susan & David Sherman
John Supera
Rona Talcott & Owen Deutsch
Ericka & Matt Thacker
Josh Turnbull
Laren Ukman
Janice Wahnnon
Cindy Wolfson

**3 donors at this level chose
to remain anonymous*

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE SUPPORT OF THESE FOUNDATIONS & ORGANIZATIONS:

An Anonymous Family Foundation
Crown Family Philanthropies
jBaby Chicago
Pathways
The Community Foundation
for Jewish Education

The Jack and Goldie Wolfe
Miller Fund
The Jewish Emergent Network
The Nikoh Foundation



HOW TO GIVE

Your gift, of any amount, will help us continue impacting the lives of thousands in Chicago and beyond, reimagining and breathing new life into Judaism. We gladly accept donations by way of checks and credit cards, donor advised funds, stock transfers, corporate matches and planned giving. For more information, please contact Rhonda Abrams, rhonda@mishkanchicago.org.



Shout Out: Builders (membership Mishkan-style)

On behalf of Team Mishkan, thank you to the 500 households of people (and counting) in and outside of Chicago who are finding a sense of purpose, connection and inspiration through being part of this community. While our love is distributed equally, names in the community are not! Size corresponds to how many of each name we have in our community of Builders.*

Not yet a Builder?
We want you
to join us.

**Includes active
Builders as of
August 5, 2020.*



Let's get social! Follow us @mishkanchicago

www.mishkanchicago.org

pwn mishkan
CHICAGO
inspired, down-to-earth Judaism