

**Report to Har Shalom Board January 8, 2019  
Activities from Dec 18 to present**

Laurie Franklin

***Abstract:** A full and intense time as I approach ordination on Sunday! Feeling grateful. Finishing one final, and engaging with congregational issues. Hope to move ahead with positive steps toward enhanced communication with board, as recommended in Sunday 12/9 retreat report from Empower MT Executive Director Heidi Wallace.*

**Services**

- Shabbat Shacharit 1/5
- Kabbalat Shabbat/Ma'ariv 12/21

**Torah Study**

- Torah study with Hebrew 12/22
- Regular Torah study 12/22

**Atidaynu**

- B-mitzvah consults, recordings

**Adult Ed**

- Beit Midrash 1/7 Tu B'shvat and our Four New Years

**Development, Pastoral, Outreach, and Greater Community**

- Weekly office hours, plus additional pastoral visits, emails, and phone calls.

**Professional**

- Completed last class of rabbinic program
- Attending Ohalah rabbinic conference Jan 13-17. Presenter and service leader.

**Coming up**

- Rosa Salamanca, Senior Conciliation Specialist, Community Relations Service, U.S. Department of Justice contacted me about offering a forum at Har Shalom about protecting worship communities, to be held at HS, now postponed to either March or April because of Federal government partial shutdown.
- Dana Eisenberg is offering to hold a workshop at Har Shalom on Community Resilience Training, CRM on Jan 27. Lida is primary contact, and I am supporting.
- My ordination January 13, 3 to 5 pm, Broomfield, CO, and live stream (will share url when I get it)
- My daughter will be having surgery. The date is still uncertain. I will request time for annual leave to give her care during her recovery.

## Laurie's Letter: A Heartfelt Thank You

Dear Friends of Har Shalom,

I am writing to you on the eve of my January 13, 2019 ordination.



reached this place.

I am thrilled to arrive at this moment; I could only have done it with your support. It's both joyful and rare, that a small Jewish community in the Rocky Mountain West, through purpose and innovation, could raise up a rabbi from among its own. This accomplishment belongs to all of us. This is also a pivotal time that leads me to reflect on how, as a community, we have

### **A brief tale of our shared journey to establish residential rabbinic leadership:**

In 2005, a large volunteer group, including Dave Jolles, Paul Rosen, Marlene Hutchins, Toba Winston, Scott Green, me, and many others, revised Har Shalom's bylaws so we could affiliate with the Union for Reform Judaism. The affiliation enabled us to hire student rabbis from Hebrew Union College. From mid-2007, when we acquired our current building, to mid-2010, Har Shalom encouraged me to serve as a volunteer lay leader, a role in which I led services every Shabbat (except for the monthly student rabbi visits), led life cycle rituals, taught adults and children, and collaborated with our student rabbis to lead High Holiday services.

In mid-2010, Har Shalom invited me to serve as student rabbi, and in Fall 2011, I entered the ALEPH Alliance for Jewish Renewal Ordination Program. The program included study in Jerusalem for the 2012–2013 academic year at Pardes Institute. Har Shalom gave me a substantial grant to support my studies, which was invaluable. When I returned in 2013, Har Shalom expanded my responsibilities, and I have continued to work for our community until the present. My studies have been deeply and personally meaningful and also put me on a parallel track toward serving the spiritual needs of our community.

I am deeply grateful for the support that Har Shalom has given me during these



years. You have provided me the opportunity to grow into the role of rabbi: to lead worship; to teach, counsel, and support our adults and youth; to represent Har Shalom to the greater Missoula community and to collaborate with interfaith and advocacy partners over a wide range of issues important to the life of our community, including opposing anti-Semitism, feeding the hungry, supporting prisoner re-entry, and establishing a shelter for homeless families and battered women.

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Torah commands us to act on our values, “Tzedek, tzedek tirdof” (“Justice, justice you shall pursue” – Deuteronomy 16:18). Our Sages teach that Jewish life is a three-legged stool; prayer, learning and community responsibility are each of its legs. All these activities—worship, study, and community

involvement—are an expression and celebration of our Jewish values and allow us to make a positive difference in the world. Through our activities, we have been able to educate our non-Jewish friends in an overwhelmingly non-Jewish environment about the special gifts Jewish life can bring to the broader Missoula community, and we have reinforced and enriched our Jewish identity.

### **Celebrating the present and future of Har Shalom:**

I am honored that my family and several members of our congregation are traveling to Broomfield, Colorado, to be with me for ordination. I would love to share this experience with others at Har Shalom and with our friends everywhere. If you would like to view the livestream of the ordination at 3 pm Sunday January 13, 2019, please go [here](https://www.youtube.com/user/RTSteven/live). (<https://www.youtube.com/user/RTSteven/live>)

Further, please save June 14, 15, and 16, 2019 for “**Missoula תאגאן** **Milestone**”, our Shabbaton to celebrate Har Shalom’s future and my ordination. The weekend will feature Shabbat worship and learning with internationally recognized leaders and scholars, a Saturday Night Jazz Gala, a Sunday panel on local food production, land use, and food security, and a first-ever, museum-quality exhibit of Missoula Jewish History curated by our own Bert Chessin. Our goal is to both celebrate our present accomplishments and create a “**Fund for Our Future**” to support growth of Jewish programs for adults and youth, including theatre and music, and the expansion of our classroom and performance spaces. We will welcome guests from Missoula, statewide, and beyond!

Finally, I want to say that becoming a rabbi was an organic outgrowth of both my love for and commitment to Har Shalom and my own desire to learn. Har Shalom invited me to take on spiritual leadership, and as I tried to fill that role, I soon realized I might best serve our community by dedication to rabbinic studies. Har Shalom supported and encouraged me on this path, one that serves both our community and is so meaningful to me. I could not have imagined, when I first connected with Har Shalom, that it would lead to this moment of ordination. I am humbled by both the responsibility and the opportunity. Thank G-d for this holy path.

With gratitude and appreciation,

*Erev Rav*\* Laurie Franklin

\*An *Erev Rav* is a rabbi-to-be on the eve of ordination.

