

Matt Quinn
President
CHERRYWOOD

Dave Miller
Executive Vice President
NORBECK MEADOWS

John Blachere
First Vice President
ASHLEY HOLLOW

Hilary Phillips-Rogers
Second Vice President
VICTORIA SPRINGS

Carol Frenkel
Recording Secretary
OLNEY MILL

Ryan Martin
Corresponding Secretary
BROOKVILLE KNOLLS

Bob Hambrecht
Treasurer
WILLIAMSBURG VILLAGE

December 7, 2019

The Greater Olney Civic Association (GOCA) would like to congratulate Rabbi Jonah Layman for 25 years of dedicated leadership he has provided his congregation, the larger Jewish Community, and the greater Olney Community.

Rabbi Jonah Layman's personal warmth and sense of humor in greeting members, taking part in holiday events, and sharing his love of Jewish beliefs have been great catalysts in making Shaare Tefila a comfortable home for all who enter and in bonding its members together. He has brought together the members of the Congregation by implementing an egalitarian approach, whereby female members are encouraged to participate as fully as male members in all parts of the religious services.

He is an innovative educator and religious leader. He has greatly increased the members' knowledge and awareness of Judaic and social issues by conducting regular classes on a variety of topics. He has led trips to Israel to increase Congregants' understanding of their roots and heritage, as well as to experience the beauty of their homeland. He also has worked with the congregations' cantors and religious committee to create family-oriented services, Friday evening family dinners, and Saturday morning services focused on increasing members' understanding of major prayers and customs.

Rabbi Layman has led the Congregation's response to social issues and has worked closely with a variety of Shaare Tefila committees to make community food and toiletry drives, and similar initiatives, more effective. He also serves as a role model to the Congregation as a member of the Inclusion Committee of the Rabbinical Assembly.

He is an effective partner within the local Jewish community and other communities of faith. Rabbi Layman has worked closely with several local Conservative synagogues to jointly run religious services during the High Holidays and other major events. He is active in the Greater Olney Interfaith Ministerium, consisting of a number of local Jewish, Christian, and other denominations, responsible for hosting interfaith programs, some of which have been held at Shaare Tefila. These programs have brought members of all faiths closer by increasing understanding and reducing intolerance.

Rabbi Layman's leadership roles have included: serving as President of the Washington-Baltimore region of the Rabbinical Assembly and as President of the Washington Board of Rabbis. He is a Senior Fellow of the Shalom Hartmann Institute in Jerusalem, having graduated from its Rabbinic Leadership Institute, and regularly returns to Israel to remain current on major Judaic Conservative Jewish topics and issues affecting the movement, sharing that new knowledge with Congregants.

GOCA recognizes and celebrates that Olney is a diverse community and we are proud to support and acknowledge Rabbi Layman as he celebrates this 25 year milestone. We wish him all the best in his future endeavors for the local and wider community.