

Meet our 2017-2018 Religious School Faculty!

Anna Fox, PreK, Room 103

Anna grew up and went through religious school at Mount Zion. She has worked most school years since 2001, mainly as a KULAM advocate. Outside of Mount Zion, Anna works at Fraser providing in home skills training for children with autism. She loves spending time with family, friends, and her pets and is full of wanderlust. Anna is thrilled to be taking on a new role as the Pre-K teacher!



Sherry Brooks, Kindergarten & 1st Grade, Room 105

Sherry returns to teach Judaic Studies again this year. She has taught at Mount Zion for twenty two years. She recently retired from teaching for the St. Paul school district. She is married with four grown children.



Rhonda Fox, 2nd Grade Hebrew & Judaic Studies, Room 209

Rhonda Fox began teaching Sunday school in 1983 in Portland, Oregon, while representing Israel to the Oregon Jewish community as the director of the *Israel Program Center* and executive director of the *Portland-Ashkelon (Israel) Sister City Association*. Since moving back to the Twin Cities in 1996, she has been teaching at local synagogues and in Independent School District 197. Rhonda owns Global Connections Custom Travel, LLC and her hobby is collecting stamps in her passport. She is delegation director for *Model United Nations through the YMCA Youth in Government* program and is a *Collection In Focus* guide at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. She is committed to Jewish education and to the development of positive Jewish identity and values.



Amy Ariel, 3rd Grade Hebrew Studies, 6th Grade Judaic Studies, 11th/12th Grade Sich'a 3rd Grade Wednesdays - Room 203 6th Grade Sundays – Room 211

Growing up a Jewish kid on a horse farm west of Saint Louis, with a B.A. from Grinnell and work experience in outdoor, experiential education, Amy moved to Saint Paul in 1999. As a lawyer, youth worker, educator, author, and volunteer, she has been intensely involved in the Jewish community in the Twin Cities and especially at Mount Zion ever since. Her middle-grade chapter book *Friends Forever* won the Gelett Burgess award for Religion in 2012. July 2018, God willing, Amy will be celebrating her rabbinical ordination/smicha through Jewish Spiritual Leaders Institute (JSLI). Amy lives in Saint Paul with her wife, Liddy Rich, and their Jewish dogs Koty (who joined our family during Sukkot) and Nashi (Nachshon).



Elizabeth Isaac-Herzog, 3rd Grade Hebrew Studies, Sundays, Room 203

Liz graduated from Macalester College in 2016, where she studied geography and creative writing, in May, and is excited to start her second year as Mount Zion's third grade Hebrew teacher. She is originally from Philadelphia, PA, where she was involved with her synagogue's religious school programming and chanted Torah yearly for the High Holidays. During the week, Liz is a preschool teacher, which means she gets to spend tons of time with super cute two-year-olds! She enjoys reading, writing, cooking, gardening, hiking, and biking. She is looking forward to working with the students and encouraging them to explore what Judaism means to them through learning the building blocks of the language and mastering the prayers.



Taylor Elgarten, 3rd Grade Judaic Studies, Room 206

Taylor is a Senior at Hamline University studying Creative Writing. She is the Editor in Chief of Hamline's literary journal *The Fulcrum*, as well as a captain for the Hamline Swim and Dive Team. This past summer Taylor rocked not only three jobs but also an internship with RedBird Chapbooks. She is super excited to come back to the Mount Zion community.



Brian Serle, 4th Grade Hebrew Studies, Room 202

Brian will be teaching 4th Grade Hebrew this year. Brian has over 32 years of experience in Jewish education. He has taught religious school in Milwaukee and Minneapolis. He was the spiritual leader of a congregation in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, for 5 years. Here at Mount Zion, he has led Shabbat services many times, chanted Torah and Haftarah, and taught 6th grade Hebrew and music. He was a lead counselor at a YMCA day camp this summer and last summer he was the music and drama specialist at Camp Butwin. Brian is also the President of the Mount Zion Brotherhood.



Michael Wall, 4th Grade Judaic Studies, Room 204

Michael Wall is in his third year of teaching for Mount Zion, returning to teach 4th grade once again. He taught middle school and high school before moving to Minnesota, and has also worked in higher education and non-profit work in Massachusetts and Washington, DC. As a Mount Zion member- with his family- students and parents will see Michael in the halls, so please (re)introduce yourself and feel free to talk about class.



Sarah Orman, 5th Grade Hebrew & Judaic Studies, Room 207

Sarah divides her time between teaching and farming. She has worked as a teacher for 20 years in public and private schools. Teaching Hebrew at Mount Zion has been one of her favorite teaching appointments. When she's not in the classroom, she's in the coop, the field, or the hoop house. She raises poultry, vegetables, and fruit. Fruit is the goal, but it takes many years of nurturing to reach the first harvest. As the vines gain strength and the trees branch, she looks forward to a healthy, happy, learning filled year with your children.



Lauren Jamnick, 6th Grade Hebrew Studies, Wednesdays, Room 205

Lauren has been working with kids in one form or another for most of her life. Over the years she's taught child development classes for new moms, nannied for multiple ages, taught gymnastics to preschoolers, and worked as a teaching assistant at a Montessori school. After spending a year in Israel on Young Judea Year Course, she combined her Hebrew knowledge with her passion for teaching at Mount Zion Hebrew School. Her teaching style is non-traditional but fun and engaging. At the end of the day, the most important thing to her is that her students are as proud of their Jewish identity as she is.



Zoe Summit, 6th Grade Hebrew Studies, Sundays, Room 205

Zoe moved to Minnesota last fall to study autism spectrum disorders in a Masters of Education program at the University of Minnesota. She graduated from Goucher College in 2016 with a degree and certification in Special Education. In the summers Zoe works at Eisner Camp where she has been for 14 years, most recently as the inclusion coordinator. She is excited to be teaching sixth grade Hebrew on Sundays, advising both junior youth groups at Mount Zion, and helping out with lower school shabbatonim this year.



Maya Goldbaum, Music Specialist

Maya Goldbaum is so excited to have the opportunity to spread her love of making music at Mount Zion. She is a freshman at the U of M and is planning on majoring in elementary education and minoring in Spanish. She worked at her synagogue in her home town of Milwaukee for several years and was an active NFTY participant, serving as NFTY Northern's head songleader. She also has spent the last 10 summers at OSRUI and was a councilor for the first time this summer. She is incredibly excited to get to know you all!



Rachel Ault, Office Assistant

Rachel is a senior at Macalester College and is double majoring in History, with an emphasis on Holocaust history, and Theatre. She recently spent a semester studying abroad in Copenhagen, Denmark. Prior to working at Mount Zion, she attended Westchester Jewish Center's religious school in Mamaroneck, NY, and later worked as a classroom aide there. After graduation, she hopes to work in a casting office or talent agency in New York.



Stuart Bloom, KULAM Coordinator

Stuart has worked as a Student Advocate at Mt Zion since 2009. He is originally from Milwaukee, WI and has lived in Minnesota for 27 years. Even though he's from Wisconsin, he's been a life-long Vikings fan! Stuart attended the University of South Florida in Tampa where he received his undergrad degree and the University of Minnesota where he received his M.Ed. He is currently a Middle School Special Education Teacher at Sojourner Truth Academy in Minneapolis. Stuart has also worked as an Inclusion Facilitator at the St. Paul JCC, Beth Jacob Synagogue and West Metro Learning Center. He lives in Eagan with his wife Marilyn and their dog Lily. Their son Brandon is a junior at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and their daughter Rachel is a freshman at San Diego State University.



Nicky Bohm, KULAM Advocate



Isaac Gamoran, KULAM Advocate

Isaac is beyond excited to be back for his fourth year on Mount Zion Faculty after spending a semester abroad in France this past Spring! He grew up in both Wilmette, Illinois and Bethesda, Maryland and is now a senior at Macalester College with a major in Geography, French and Theatre minors, and an Urban Studies Concentration. He spent 10 summers combined at OSRUI as both a camper and counselor, and most recently spent this past summer working at "Mahanetzer", a new Reform Jewish sleep-away camp in southern France! Isaac currently helps out at Macalester as the Jewish Organization's Service Leader, and loves joining together with teens in song and Jewish traditions. Looking ahead, he is pondering working in France with a Jewish community next year, and other post-graduation ideas are greatly appreciated!



Abby Gore, KULAM Advocate

Abby is from Los Angeles and is a first-year at Macalester College. She was a madricha for 4 years at her synagogue in LA and helped run the Tot Shabbat program, and over the summer she interned at the Jewish Federation of Los Angeles. In her free time, she likes baking and spending time with her friends and family. She is so excited to be working at Mt Zion and getting involved in the community!



Adam Lifland, KULAM Advocate

Adam is a senior at the University of Minnesota majoring elementary education and "biology, society and environment". Originally from Plymouth, MN Adam was active in Young Judaea and spent 6 years as a camper and 3 years as a counselor at Camp Young Judaea Midwest in Waupaca, WI. He also attended Young Judaea's Senior Leadership camp, Camp Tel Yehudah in Barryville, NY for two years. More recently, Adam has been a counselor and sports specialist at Camp Olami at the Sabes JCC in Minneapolis, and is currently working as a youth group advisor and Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutor at Adath Jeshurun in Minnetonka and is excited to be in his first year as a KULAM advocate at Mount Zion Temple. Adam loves Israel and spent a gap year studying and volunteering in Bat Yam and Jerusalem on Young Judaea's Year Course '13-'14 before he began his studies at the University of Minnesota. After he finishes his undergraduate studies, Adam plans to get a Masters of Education and become a science teacher.



Rebecca Lubar, KULAM Advocate

Rebecca is originally from Milwaukee, Wisconsin and is now a junior at the University of Minnesota, where she studies Kinesiology and Public Health. She has spent 10 summers at OSRUI, was active in NFTY-Northern where she served on TYG and Regional Board, and taught at her home synagogue for 5 years. Rebecca is currently serving as the Minnesota Hillel Jewish Learning Chair and works on campus, and is excited to be a KULAM advocate for 3 years running. Rebecca feels most connected to Judaism in nature, so she loves doing T'fillot outside and going on outdoor adventures with her Jewish friends!



Noah Gerber, Madrichim Coordinator

Noah is currently a sophomore at the University of Minnesota, where he is majoring in psychology. He grew up in Saint Paul, and has been going to Mount Zion since Kindergarten. In high-school Noah was very active in NFTY and SPORTY, and was on SPORTY board for 3 years. He has spent 2 summers on staff at OSRUI, and will be returning this summer for his 2nd year as a counselor. Noah loves traveling and hearing other languages, and he hopes to study abroad within the next few years. He is very excited to be on Mount Zion faculty for the first time, and every week he looks forward to working with Jewish kids and teens at Sunday School.



Bob Epstein, Librarian

Bob grew up in Worcester, Massachusetts, where he attended Temple Emanuel (Reform). He has an undergraduate degree in Religion from Boston University, and a master's degree in Librarianship from the University of Minnesota. He works as a full-time cataloger and reference librarian at Hennepin County's Ridgedale Library. He lives in Minneapolis with his wife, Wendy, and daughter Hannah, both social workers. Bob looks forward this year to once again working with the clergy, teachers, parents, and especially the children of Mount Zion!



Mary Ann Wark, Tzedakah Specialist

Mary Ann Wark, past President of our congregation and chair of our History Committee, started teaching in our Religious School decades ago-- originally teaching in the High school, then teaching grades 3, 4, 5 Judaic studies when her son was in those grades. Twenty-two years ago she began teaching a tzedakah curriculum, which she taught to all the grades. She now teaches the PreK, K and 1st grade on a weekly basis. Don't miss her Hanukkah puppet show, *Zlateh the Goat* which she performs every year for the younger children. She is the author of [We Tell it to Our Children: A Haggadah for Seders with Young Children](#) Mary Ann is deeply involved in the Jewish Community, serving many years on the Executive Committee of the Jewish Federation of Greater St. Paul, on its Steering committee for the Community Planning Process, and Chair of the Panel 4 on Education of the



Community Planning Process. She also is involved with Think Small (is Past President of its former name Toy's N Things/ Resources for Child Caring); past Board member of SPA, the Children's Museum, and MacPhail Center for the Arts. She enjoys her ceramics hobby at the Northern Clay Center. Having retired from 14 years of teaching preschool at Jean Lyle Children's Center, she is now a docent at the Minneapolis Institute of Art.

Susan Amram Summit, Religious School Director

Sue has been a Jewish Educator since 1995 (school director, classroom teacher, family educator, curriculum developer, program facilitator and individual education specialist). In 2009, she received the Grinspoon-Steinhart Award for Excellence in Jewish Education. Sue received her undergraduate degree from Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA, and then went on to study Early Childhood Education at Becker College in Worcester, MA. Sue earned her degree in Jewish Special Education from Hebrew College in Newton, MA.



Liza Henry, Youth Engagement Director

Liza Henry grew up in the Chicago area where she was an active NFTYite and a madricha at her synagogue. Liza has served in various roles at Mount Zion since 2008 when she began college at the U of M. Prior to beginning her role as Youth Engagement Director, Liza worked as a Naturalist (environmental educator) at Dodge Nature Center and Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center. Liza also spent many summers on OSRUI staff and holds a very special place in her heart for Moshavah. When Liza is not leading Shabbatonim or teaching Jewish teens, she enjoys running, biking, listening to podcasts, traveling, and hanging out with her husband, their puppy, and their two cats.

