



In remembrance of Rabbi Guy "Hillel" Greene May 27th, 1947-May 8th, 2024

Dear fellow CBS congregants:

It is approximately one month, since the passing of Rabbi Guy "Hillel" Greene, and while the pain of the news of Wednesday, May 8th may now for us be somewhat subsiding, surely the fond memories we all hold for Rabbi Greene, & his unwavering optimism & sunny disposition, will live on in our hearts & minds.

It was Tuesday, July 11th, 2023, when Rabbi left Sioux City, & Congregation Beth Shalom, for the final time, after his cancer had metastasized to his brain, making rabbinical duties impossible. He was fortunate to be able to return to his hometown of Los Angeles, & be near his daughter, Sharon, & his granddaughters in Southern California; additionally, his other two daughters, Maayan & Zohar, from the Bay Area & the NY metro area, respectively, were able to spend significant time with him, as well, over the course of the last 10 months. Indeed, some of us from CBS were able to travel west & meet with him at his hospice/memory care facility in Encino, & he was genuinely grateful to have visitors from Sioux City, despite the diminished nature of his advancing frailty.

Rabbi Greene first took the bimah for Shabbat services at CBS on Friday, April 1st, 2005; he put in a solid 18+ years of service, with dedication & devotion to the Jewish community of Siouxland, & beyond. Unsurprisingly, he was also an integral part of wider Siouxland, writ large, teaching classes on Judaism & the Holocaust at Morningside University & Western Iowa Tech Community College, & always presenting an inviting, open & affirming space at our shul, for Jews & non-Jews alike. On more than one occasion, our congregants have been outnumbered in the pews by one church group or another, visiting at Rabbi's entreaty, or with his approval at their request for an experience of Shabbos!

It was surely no mystery, then, that the Sioux City Human Rights Commission would bestow upon Rabbi Greene, three years ago, the War Eagle Human Rights Award for "his work bettering the community." Naturally, the Rabbi was also involved on an annual basis in Tolerance Week, organizing programming & interfaith forums, & generally raising genocide awareness to audiences young & old, as an ecumenical emissary.

Rabbi Greene was a lifelong learner, & a voracious reader (witness the vast number of books on the shelves of his office, & in his home at 3232 Jackson St.) A mindful, peaceful man, in full, he was in touch with the ineffable nature of the Divine, & his spirituality manifested itself not only in his Judaism, but also in his practice of meditation & tai chi. It was no surprise to learn, at his live-streamed memorial service, that he'd also dabbled with Buddhism as a young man! And who could forget seeing him biking around town, or hearing of his hiking exploits in Stone Park!

Let us all be thankful that we had such a faithful servant for as many years as we did, & be consciously prayerful for his daughters, sons-in-law, & grandchildren, as they mourn the loss of his loving presence in their lives. Let us think back on all the life events he oversaw while leading our flock, at times both happy & sad (weddings, funerals, conversions, baby-naming ceremonies, etc.), & let us also not forget the several trips to Israel on which he guided us, with indefatigable aplomb. He was, surely, a good & humble shepherd, & may his memory forever be for a blessing...

Randy Bergen, Chairman of the Board
Kermit Dahlen, Pres., Sioux City Jewish Federation
Greg Giles, synagogue Pres., CBS