

---

# Tikvah Talk

Vol. 33 Iss. 5

Congregation B'nai Tikvah Walnut Creek, CA

January 2014

---

## *From Where I Stand*

By Rabbi Raphael Asher

---



We are far enough into the 21<sup>st</sup> century that we can refer to the 20<sup>th</sup> century American – Jewish experience as “History.” There may indeed be more courses that I teach as your ‘emeritus,’ but my last course as the active rabbi will deal with the uniqueness and hopes of 20<sup>th</sup> century America to refashion the role of the Jew in the Diaspora.

Like all Jewish communities past and present, we have been impacted by the Holocaust, Zionism, and the State of Israel. However, in these 9 one-hour sessions we will be reading and discussing the phenomena and institutions that have made American Jewry one-of-a-kind, an antidote to the dynamics of exile in Europe.

The course will examine the huge impact of Jewish immigration at the beginning of the century and how it led to the whole array of political and social welfare institutions we have today. We’ll look at the origins of the different ideologies and denominations in synagogue life, and discuss the impetus and the pros and cons of the secular Jewish option as well. Israel and Zionism have given American Jewry a great sense of pride and a creative tension as well. The history of the holocaust has imbued us with a sense of vigilance to the point that the U.S. Holocaust Museum sits prominently at the center of our nation’s capital.

What this all means for ourselves and for generations to come is ripe material for speculation, and should yield good discussion and learning. (We’ll begin on Thursday evening, February 13<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm.)

---

## *Reflections...*

By Cantor Jennie Chabon

---



As I sit down to write my article this month, my mind keeps drifting back to the Reform movement’s biennial in San Diego, where I just spent Shabbat this past weekend. I had never attended biennial before, but I have been hearing for years how incredible and impactful it is. I have been to many Jewish conferences, so I thought I was prepared for the experience I would have there. I wasn’t.

On Shabbat morning, 5000 Jews gathered together in a giant room at the convention center to pray and learn together. I wasn’t sure how I would feel about services that were projected onto enormous screens throughout the room—how deeply could you really feel a service if you were so far away from the bima? But what I found was that the service leaders—Rabbi Rick Jacobs and Cantor/Rabbi Angela Buchdahl—did an extraordinary job of making the service accessible and even intimate, despite the size of the room and number of people who were there. There were many moments that moved me deeply and many melodies that I have been humming for days - be prepared for some new melodies at services in the coming weeks! However, what I want to describe is something that Rabbi Jacobs did that I’ve never seen before and that really transformed one part of the liturgy for me.

Before we chant the shema on Shabbat morning, it is traditional to gather the four corners of your tallit—the four tsitsit—into your hand, as you say the words “gather us from the four corners of the earth.” You then hold the tsitsit over your eyes as you recite the shema. I have always loved this embodiment of the text and felt very connected to this piece of liturgical choreography. But instead of just gathering my fringes as I always do, Rabbi Jacobs had us all—all 5000 people—hold out our hands and place each fringe into our palm, keeping in mind different communities around the world that need to be held right now. Syria, the Philippines, one whole fringe for Newtown. He urged us to think beyond the four corners of our Jewish world and instead to gather into our hearts and our prayers ALL of the people of the world who need hope and prayer right now. The Shema has never felt as powerful to me as it did that morning.

*(continued on page 5)*

**Congregation B'nai Tikvah** is a Reform congregation which, through personal attention, provides to its members an extended family. The congregation fulfills its members' spiritual needs, fosters their Jewish identity, promotes the perpetuation of Judaism and its members' Jewish education, and encourages a commitment to full participation in Temple life.

**Raphael W. Asher, Rabbi**  
**Jennie Chabon, Cantor**  
**Stephen Richards, Cantor Emeritus**  
**Judy Blum, Temple Administrator**  
**Phil Hankin, Director of Education**

**Temple Office (925) 933-5397**  
**Office Hours: Mon-Fri 9:00 - 5:00**

**Fax (925) 933-6833**

**E-mail: [office@tikvah.org](mailto:office@tikvah.org)**  
**Website: <http://www.tikvah.org>**

**CONGREGATIONAL OFFICERS**

President	Harry Wittenberg
Vice President	Dan Lapporte
Vice President	Glenn Gould
Vice President	Jared Goldin
Secretary	Bob Stern
Treasurer	John Rubinfeld
Past President	John Rubinfeld

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Judith Barrall	Bob Canter
Alan Gould	Sandy Gross
Tina Guterman	Bob Grossman
Amy Lichtenstein	Idelle Lipman
Barbara Loebel	Bruce Meyers
Rayna Ravitz	Mary Ann Wittenberg
Todd Young	

*Upcoming Bat Mitzvah*

**Adam Newman**  
*Son of Karen Sutton and Andrew Newman*  
 Saturday, January 4, 2014

Shabbat Services begin at 10 am.  
 The Congregation is invited to attend.

**Congregation B'nai Shalom & Congregation B'nai Tikvah**  
 Present

**A Taste of Jewish Cuba**

**Sunday, January 5, 2014**  
**3:00pm - B'nai Shalom Social Hall**



Join in the fun and festivities!  
 ~ Dance the cha cha cha, salsa or mambo and make your own maracas  
 ~ Learn about the current Jewish community of Cuba  
 ~ Sample Cuban tapas from Havana restaurant  
 ~ "Tour" Cuba with recent visitors:  
 Rabbi Jennifer Flam, Helen & Rod Sweet, Hope & Rich Egan and Toby & Bill Gottfried

Adults \$12; Youth (7-12) \$6; Children (0-6) Free  
 Please RSVP to Barbara at 925-934-9446 ext 100

  
 Congregation B'nai Shalom  
 74 Eckley Lane - Walnut Creek, CA 94596 - Phone 925.934.9446 - Fax 925.934.9450  
[office@bshalom.org](mailto:office@bshalom.org) [bshalom.org](http://bshalom.org)  
 Affiliated with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

*Tikvah Talk*

**Tikvah Talk** is published 11 times a year and is distributed free of charge to anyone expressing an interest in Congregation B'nai Tikvah. All news items are due the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. Please submit articles electronically, if possible, to Congregation B'nai Tikvah, at **office@tikvah.org** (subject *Tikvah Talk*) or by mail to 25 Hillcroft Way, Walnut Creek, CA 94597, (925) 933-5397.

## President's Message

By Harry Wittenberg



Okay - I'm coming right out and saying it. This is the season for giving. We all do it - whether for the reason that we need the tax deduction or we put it off and put it off until the last minute. During Yom Kippur I made an appeal to our community to help our capital fund which pays the mortgage. I broke it down as simply as I could - your Membership Commit-

ment does not go towards the mortgage and if every member family gave \$5000, we could retire our mortgage immediately. I was so hopeful when the first \$5000 check came in, then I was humbled when it stopped there. I realized that for some it would be difficult, for a few near impossible, but for many others, it would be doable (or even a little uncomfortable). At the end of this calendar year, I am asking everyone to reconsider my appeal to give whatever you can. Some give cash, and some give the gift of stock. I myself found out that giving stock is the most effective because it's completely tax deductible and provides an added benefit to the giver. Now is the time to make due on your good intents. If you put it off yet again, ask yourself what is it you're really waiting for. Our temple needs your financial help now - bottom line. Anything you give will make a difference in keeping our doors open, our community thriving, and a place for our families to worship, be bar mitzvah, get married, and have our newborns named. Now is the time.

One act of giving is to thank those who have given of themselves this year. I want to thank Rabbi Asher and Cantor Chabon for their spiritual guidance and sharing their gifts and talents with us. I want to thank our staff - Judy Blum, Lance Canter and Phil Hankin - for all of their hard work in the office and with our wonderful Hebrew School. Next, I want to thank our Board of Trustees who chair our committees and diligently show up every month at Board meetings to discuss matters important to our shul, make decisions, and directly perform acts of kindness to our temple and to our outside community. I want to make sure I thank all of our volunteers who have helped make our temple a terrific place. And I want to thank Phil Weismehl, Jenifer Paul, and our search committee for all of the time and effort they have put into searching for our next Rabbi.

I also want to give a shout-out to those whose donations made a significant difference this year. Every donation went directly to the operations for our congregation. I want to call out to Jonathan Winchell specifically whose generosity made it possible to upgrade our sound systems in both the sanctuary and the social hall.

*(continued on page 5)*

## Turn It, Turn It

By Phil Hankin, Director of Education



How many of you have heard of the organization in the SF Bay Area called Lehrhaus Judaica? It was founded in 1974, taking as its name the German word Lehrhaus (meaning "house of learning") and finding its inspiration from a school for Jewish studies founded by philosopher Franz Rosenzweig in Frankfurt, Germany, in 1920. The original Lehrhaus — until its closure by the Nazis — was the focal point of a Jewish intellectual revival between the wars. Attracting scholars such as Martin Buber, S.Y. Agnon, A.J. Heschel, Gershom Scholem, and Erich Fromm, dialogue between the student and teacher was the primary method of learning, which, according to Rosenzweig and Buber, "could restore something genuinely Jewish to the Western intellectual."

Why am I focusing on this 40 year old linchpin of Bay Area Jewish learning? I want to inform you, the members of CBT, that on February 9<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 9:30am, the religious school staff, Rabbi Asher, Cantor Chabon, and I will be hosting a Lehrhaus-like morning of fun and learning for members of all ages. We will be offering 50 minute classes that will engage and enlighten grandparents, parents, and even kindergartners. We will be offering a wide array of classes that will show off the strengths of our educational instructors. Unlike Lehrhaus Judaica classes, this event is FREE of charge and will replace the normal religious school classes that morning. This is billed as a "Day of Learning at CBT." More specific information will arrive in your inboxes by mid-January. Suffice it to say that this will be an event you will not want to miss. I am looking for this to be an opportunity for families to learn together and empty nesters to come and learn on a Sunday morning. I want to see generations of CBT'ers arrive at 25 Hillcroft Way and be treated to an educational smorgasbord that will delight your palate. Come one, call all on Sunday February 9, 2014 to CBT's Religious School "Day of Learning."

Chanukah  
Family  
Fun event  
was lots  
of fun!



---

## Sisterhood News

By Rayna Ravitz, President

---

### Sunday, January 5 – the De Young Museum – David Hockney Exhibit

We will meet and carpool from B'nai Tikvah for this event. Susan was able to set up a private docent for this at 10AM. Meet at CBT at 8:45. Cost is \$23 for general admission, Museum members are free. Check with Susan to see if space is still available and to RSVP. [susanbfriedman@aol.com](mailto:susanbfriedman@aol.com)

### Wednesday, January 8 & 22, 7pm - Mah Jongg at CBT

If you are interested in playing get on Janet's email list : [jgoodman@comcast.net](mailto:jgoodman@comcast.net) or 934-8817.

### Saturday, January 11, 7:30 pm - Game Night at CBT

Bring a nosh and join us for a fun night. Poker, Mah Jongg or any board game you want to bring. Sponsored by Sisterhood and the Men of CBT.

### Tuesday, February 25, 6:30 pm – Book Sisters

“Something I've Been Meaning to Tell You” by Alice Munro. Location:TBD.

### Tuesday, March 4 – Jewish Film Festival at Century Theaters, Pleasant Hill

Meet for dinner before the movie.

#### **7:30 pm The Dandelions (du Vent dans mes mollets)**

France, 2012, 90 minutes, French/subtitles

### Friday, March 21, 7:30 pm – Sisterhood Shabbat

### Sunday, May 4, 2pm – “The Real Housewives of Walnut Creek”

This new musical will be playing for just a short time at the Leshner Center. We have a block of tickets for this performance @ \$30. If you are interested in joining us, please let me know ASAP. [Raynaravitz@gmail.com](mailto:Raynaravitz@gmail.com) We still have a few spots available.



Sisterhood's Chanukah event was dinner and once again making no-sew blankets for the children at Children's Hospital.

---

## Social Action

By Tina Guterman, Chairperson

---

Thanks to everyone for the great response to the collection of **Coats, Gloves, Socks, and Toiletries** which are being distributed to families in need through VESTIA, and special thanks to Diane Leventhal for organizing this effort!

**Sponsor a Dream:** Here are some important updates on the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program - an Immigration Justice effort: 1.) The Program is Fully Launched; 2.) We have a couple of applicants now and will be reaching out to them regarding their application process for deferred action; 3.) There are opportunities to help with both financial and non-financial needs; and 4.) There will be a training in February at the Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church in Walnut Creek (across the street from B'nai Shalom) for anyone who is interested in participating in interviews with applicants to help determine their (and their family's) needs regarding the DACA process – date and time to follow. If you are interested in finding out more about the DACA program and/or would like to get involved, please email Michael Fischer (who has been working intensely on this effort) at [mjf1155@gmail.com](mailto:mjf1155@gmail.com).

***\*\*CBT's Tzedakah box recipient for January - March will be the DACA: Sponsor a Dream program.***

---

## Reflections....

---

(continued from page 1)

The rest of the service was equally powerful: Amichai Levy from Storah telling bringing the Torah to life; 13 people chanting Torah simultaneously from 13 Torah scrolls throughout the room; Rabbi David Ellenson delivering a Dvar Torah so beautiful that it made me cry many times. But my mind keeps going back to my tsitsit and to the image of thousands of hands outstretched and cradling worldwide communities in the palms of our hands. The lesson here, I believe, is that tefillah, prayer, is vital and powerful and truly capable of creating change in the world. If even a fraction of the people who prayed with me that morning go back to their communities feeling inspired to step beyond the walls of their synagogues to help the greater community, then the biennial was an incredible success.



Sometimes it's the little things that we do that can make a big impression and can impact many people. Ladies and Gentlemen of Congregation Bnai Tikvah - I want to make a very important plea. I would like to ask all of you to please shop our wonderful B'nai Tikvah Gift Shop for all your Judaica needs. Irene (and Art) Korn have an incredible display of gifts for all occasions, jewelry, an incredible selection of Tallit, and other unique items that can enlighten any Jewish home. Please support our B'nai Tikvah community and SEE IRENE FIRST before shopping elsewhere. Most of their items come from Israel and are very competitively priced. So **SHOP TIKVAH FIRST!!**

The Men of CBT have had another wonderful year of events and activities from Bocce Ball to Breakfast at TIKVAHNIES. I would like to thank the Men who participated in our activities and have helped make our group a big success. We hope to grow and look forward to an incredible 2014. Anyone who would like to join our Men of CBT or has any questions or ideas for events and activities please e-mail [men.of.cbt@gmail.com](mailto:men.of.cbt@gmail.com).

For our next event we will team up with Sisterhood and have a B'nai Tikvah Game Night. (see back cover) Look for flyers and bring your unaffiliated friends along.

## TRIVIA NIGHT RECAP!

The 11<sup>th</sup> annual B'nai Tikvah Team Trivia Challenge held in November was our biggest and best ever. Fifteen teams signed up to compete in the 100-question event.

With nearly 115 participants we had a virtual sell-out!

The winners this year were the Chuck Eisner-led "T'shuvot," correctly answering an impressive 92 of 100 questions, three more than the second place "Jewpardy," captained by Dave and Debby Levy. In a tightly-packed finish, two more teams - La Triviata and KDDDD - finished just one more point back.

Thanks to all who attended. The proceeds from the event, more than \$2,500, has been donated to the B'nai Tikvah Building Fund.

An extra special thanks to volunteers Lance Canter, Annette Cohn, Fred Cohn, Bob Grossman, Mason Grossman, Amy Lichtenstein, Rich Sauve, and Brent Waterman, and to event sponsors Rocco's Pizzeria Ristorante and the Men of CBT. We couldn't have done it without you.

We hope to see you all there next year.

*The B'nai Tikvah Trivia Guys*

## JEWS IN AMERICA

When we read American history or study it in our schools, there is seldom much mention of the Jews. Most Americans might judge from this that the Jewish people have had little to do with the history of the United States, or that the Jews are newcomers who arrived after others had founded the nation and made it great. But this happens to be far from the truth.

- On Columbus' first voyage, five members of his crew were Jews. One of the first to set foot on the New World was a Jew.
- The earliest pilgrims who settled the "New England" of America were Puritan refugees escaping religious persecutions in Europe. These Puritans viewed their emigration from England as a virtual re-enactment of the Jewish exodus from Egypt. To them, England was Egypt, the king was Pharaoh, the Atlantic Ocean was the Red Sea.
- Many of our oldest colleges adopted Hebrew words as part of their official seal. The Yale seal shows an open book with the Hebrew "Urim V'Tumim," a part of the breastplate of the High Priest in the days of the Temple.
- The first design for the official seal of the United States recommended by Benjamin Franklin, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson in 1776 depicts Jews crossing the Red Sea.
- The inscription on the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia is a direct quote from the Torah: "Proclaim liberty throughout the land for all the inhabitants thereof."
- President George Washington sent a letter at the opening of the first synagogue in America in Newport, Rhode Island in 1790: "May the children of Abraham who dwell in the land continue to enjoy the goodwill of the other inhabitants, while everyone shall sit safely under his own vine and there shall be none to make him afraid."
- Throughout our history, Jews have played and continue to play an extraordinary role on the American scene, whether it be in our arts, politics, finance, sports, literature or education.

Your Adult Education committee wishes to share the history of several modern Jewish figures who have made exciting contributions. **Come join us in the B'nai Tikvah library on three Sunday mornings at 10 AM, January 26<sup>th</sup>, February 2<sup>nd</sup> and February 23<sup>rd</sup>.**

---

## Contributions

---

### GENERAL FUND

In memory of Nathan Jacobson  
In memory of Richard Shinozaki  
*Irene Jacobson and Rick Shinozaki*  
In memory of Frank Lerner  
*Jill and Kevin Wilk*  
In memory of Marilyn Siegel  
In memory of Rudolph Fatula  
*Kathryn and Neil Siegel*  
In memory of Ann Christian  
*Joni and Mal Vineberg*  
In memory of Sidney Tatz  
*Shirley and Jeffrey Weiner*  
In memory of Ida Shiela Salusky  
*Monica Salusky and John Sutherland*  
In memory of Charles Trepper  
*Alvin Trepper*  
In memory of Sue Rattner  
In memory of Clara Medvin  
*Deborah and Alvin Medvin*  
In memory of Lillian Weil  
*Arthur Weil*  
In memory of Marion Sirota  
*Ann and Stuart Lutzker*  
In memory of Louis Becker  
*Susan and John Klein*  
In memory of Don Cherry  
*Susan and Joel Friedman*

### RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In memory of Ameda Weiss  
In memory of Leon Weiss  
*Elizabeth and William Roberts*  
In memory of Fritzi Gewing  
*Anna and Walter Gewing*  
In memory of Don Cherry  
In memory of Ted Banberger  
*Barbara and Bill Almy*  
In memory of Jack Levine  
In memory of Lillian Newmark Dauber  
In memory of Jack Dauber  
*Lewis and Paulette Dauber*  
With gratitude for my conversion  
*Kathy Berger*

### CANTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In memory of Sidney Schwartz  
In memory of Marti Ann Schwartz  
*Cindy Turner and Brian Schwartz*  
With gratitude for my conversion  
*Kathy Berger*

### GENERAL FUND FOR CANTOR'S MUSICAL PROGRAMS

In memory of Sydney Rapoport  
*Cookie Svingos*  
In honor of Kathy Berger's conversion  
*Lisa and Howard Wenger*  
In memory of Emily Parker  
*Patricia Viera*  
In memory of Hilda Bloom  
*Susan, John and Sam Rubenfeld*

### CANTOR STEPHEN RICHARDS MUSICAL ENRICHMENT / CHOIR FUND

In memory of Moshe Teitelman  
In memory of Samuel Teitelman  
*Carol and Allen Teitelman*

### ABRAHAM NIVER SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In memory of Henry M. Spack  
*Barbara Spack*  
In honor of Kathy Berger's conversion  
*Patricia and Lorry Marcus*

### CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

In memory of Melvin Barnett  
*Laurie and Steve Rabinowitz*  
In memory of Marc David Kemna  
*Gloria Kemna*  
In memory of Harry Maslow  
*Michael Fischer*

### RABBI SEARCH FUND

In memory of Lawrence Shaw  
*Idelle Lipman*

### TREE OF LIFE – A Leaf has been added

NOVEMBER 29, 2013  
KATHY BERGER'S CONVERSION  
CHUTZPAH CHAVURAH

### *Shalom Connection*

Condolences to  
Karen Nicles and Stacey Epstein and family on the  
loss of father and grandfather, Victor Mazer

Mazel Tov to  
Kathy Berger on her conversion  
Kathy and Steve Weiner on the birth of grandson,  
Brooks William Thenemann

# JANUARY 2014 Tevet - Sh'vat 5774

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
NO Religious School		NO Religious School 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah	(Office Closed)		6:30pm Family Shabbat Service	Parashat Bo 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Shabbat Service - Bar Mitzvah of Adam Newman
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Sisterhood to De Young 9:30am Religious School 12:15pm - 1:15pm Machaneh Ivrit - Session II 3:00pm A Taste of Jewish Cuba	4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School	7:15pm - 9:00pm Mah Jongg			6:30pm Shabbat Service	Parashat Beshalach 9:00am - 9:30am Kids Congregation 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Shabbat Shira! 7:30pm - 10:00pm Game Night!
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9:30am Religious School	5:30pm - 6:30pm Executive Board Meeting 7:30pm Ritual Committee Meeting	4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School	6:30pm - 8:00pm RS Education Committee	Tu BiShvat	7:30pm Shir Joy followed by Tu B'Shevat Oneg	Parashat Yitro 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
NO Religious School	(Office closed) Martin Luther King Day Trembling Before God: Judaism and Homosexuality	4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School	7:15pm - 9:00pm Mah Jongg		6:30pm Shabbat Service	Parashat Mishpatim 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan
26	27	28	29	30	31	
9:30am Religious School 10:00am Jews In America	Winter Nights Homeless Shelter @ Shell Ridge 6:30pm General Board Meeting	Winter Nights Homeless Shelter @ Shell Ridge 4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School	Winter Nights Homeless Shelter @ Shell Ridge	Winter Nights Homeless Shelter @ Shell Ridge	Winter Nights Homeless Shelter @ Shell Ridge 6:30pm Shabbat Service	

**SAVE THE DATE**  
2-22-14  
**Contra Costa Midrasha's Annual Fundraising Event**

Join us February 22, 2014 for an evening of music, food, auctions & more at Beth Chaim Congregation in Danville  
... all supporting Contra Costa Midrasha and its work with teens.

**KIDS CONGREGATION**

Let your child experience the Torah up close.  
Join Cantor Chabon in our Library at 9 am on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month  
January 11 and February 8.

# FEBRUARY 2014 Adar I - Adar II 5774

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
9:30am Religious School 10:00am Jews In America	Winter Nights Homeless Shelter @ Shell Ridge 6:30pm General Board Meeting	Winter Nights Homeless Shelter @ Shell Ridge 4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School	Winter Nights Homeless Shelter @ Shell Ridge	Winter Nights Homeless Shelter @ Shell Ridge	Winter Nights Homeless Shelter @ Shell Ridge 6:30pm Shabbat Service	Parashat Terumah Winter Nights Homeless Shelter @ Shell Ridge 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Shabbat Service - 4th graders participating
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Winter Nights Homeless Shelter @ Shell Ridge 9:30am Religious School 10:00am Jews In America	Winter Nights Homeless Shelter @ Shell Ridge 7:30pm Ritual Committee Meeting	Winter Nights Homeless Shelter @ Shell Ridge 4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School	Winter Nights Homeless Shelter @ Shell Ridge	Winter Nights Homeless Shelter @ Shell Ridge	Winter Nights Homeless Shelter @ Shell Ridge 6:30pm Family Shabbat Service	Parashat Tetzaveh Winter Nights Homeless Shelter @ Shell Ridge 9:00am - 9:30am Kids Congregation 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Winter Nights Homeless Shelter @ Shell Ridge 9:30am Religious School - A DAY OF LEARNING! 1:00pm - 4:30pm Federation Regional Teacher Training	Winter Nights Homeless Shelter @ Shell Ridge 5:30pm - 6:30pm Executive Board Meeting	4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School	6:30pm - 8:00pm RS Education Committee	7:00pm - 8:30pm Rabbi Asher's Spring Course	6:30pm Shabbat Service	Parashat Ki Tisa 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Shabbat Service - Bar Mitzvah of Matthew Holland
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
NO Religious School	(Office closed) Presidents Day	NO Religious School 7:00pm - 8:00pm Social Action Committee Meeting		7:00pm - 8:30pm Rabbi Asher's Spring Course	7:30pm Shir Joy	Parashat Vayakhel 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Shabbat Service - Bar Mitzvah of Elliot Stern
23	24	25	26	27	28	
9:30am Religious School 10:00am Jews In America 12:15pm - 1:15pm Machaneh Ivrit - Session III	6:30pm General Board Meeting	4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School 6:30pm Book Sisters		7:00pm - 8:30pm Rabbi Asher's Spring Course	6:30pm Shabbat Service	

### ONGOING MEDITATION GROUP

You are invited to join our newly formed meditation group meeting each Tuesday morning from 10 to 11 am in the CBT library. Everyone is welcome, those having past experience with meditation and those who have never had that experience.

Each session begins focusing on the Torah portion of the week, a Taste of Torah.

There is no charge for this activity, but an email to [philip.paris@gmail.com](mailto:philip.paris@gmail.com) indicating your interest in attending will be appreciated. Come as often as you can!



## Contra Costa Midrasha

By Devra C. Arons, CCM Director

Contra Costa Midrasha has a lot of exciting events happening this Winter! We invite you to share in the learning and fun!

"Travel Around the World" on February 22, 2014 with Contra Costa Midrasha at our 6<sup>th</sup> annual fundraiser event, happening at Beth Chaim Congregation at Danville. The event will feature the live music of B'nai Tikvah's house band, "The Tikvah Tones," international food, drinks, a dessert reception, and silent and live auctions. The highlight of the evening will come from Midrasha teens, who will share the impact of Midrasha on their lives. All are invited to attend. Proceeds support Contra Costa Midrasha's programs, teens and educators.

If you are looking for more Jewish adult education, then join Midrasha on the third Wednesdays in January, February and March for a series of Jewish educational forums, taught by Contra Costa Midrasha's sponsoring synagogue rabbis. Here is the schedule:

January 15, 2014: Rabbi Aderet Drucker from Congregation B'nai Shalom

February 19, 2014: Rabbi Dan Goldblatt from Beth Chaim Congregation

March 19, 2014: Rabbi Raphael Asher from Congregation B'nai Tikvah

Each evening will feature an hour-long educational session from 7:30-8:30pm, followed by time to snack and schmooze, ending at 9:15pm. All three sessions will occur in the library at Congregation B'nai Shalom (74 Eckley Lane in Walnut Creek, at the Midrasha site, during Midrasha) \$18 for all three sessions! Online RSVP and payment is requested by January 10, 2014 at [www.shop.ccmidrasha.com](http://www.shop.ccmidrasha.com). (No one will be turned away for lack of funds...) Any adult or parent in our community is welcome to attend.

Our Midrasha teens return to Camp Newman on January 31 – February 2, 2014 for our Winter retreat. This weekend-long retreat provides time for teens from all four Midrasha campuses to get to know each other while celebrating Shabbat and learning together. Highlights of these weekends often include hikes, star-gazing, and a raucous Havdalah and dance session lead by community songleader, Eric Schoen. All Midrasha teens are invited and encouraged to participate. Scholarships are widely and easily available. To RSVP or learn more, visit [www.shop.ccmidrasha.com](http://www.shop.ccmidrasha.com) and click on the "retreats" icon.

For further information about any of these events visit Contra Costa Midrasha's website at [www.ccmidrasha.com](http://www.ccmidrasha.com) or contact Devra Arons, CCM Director at 925/944-4701 or [office@ccmidrasha.com](mailto:office@ccmidrasha.com). We look forward to sharing these events with you!

## President.....

(continued from page 3)

I hope I have not alienated anyone by being so forward and direct. I do this fully knowing I can trust our community to understand my reasons for asking. I love our clergy, staff, and community. And I, as much as anyone reading this, truly wants us to survive and thrive. So please struggle in your dilemmas for giving, or not giving, and know I am rooting for the side that brings peace and comfort in giving, knowing just how good it is to do so.

If you remember my joke during my speech, when God opened the heavens over a retiring congregant who was waiting for a message from Adonai to make him rich by winning the lottery, Adonai replied "Meet me halfway, buy a ticket."

Have a safe and happy winter break!



Cantor Chabon sang a few duets with Eliana Kissner at a recent concert.

### *B'nai Tikvah Gift Shop*

Tallitot, Bags and Kippot  
Mezuzot Yads Kiddush Cups  
Candles and Candlesticks  
Challah Boards Tzedaka Boxes Jewelry  
Greeting Cards, Books  
Spice Boxes and Havdalah Sets  
SHOFARS and lots more!

The Gift Shop is open on Sunday mornings during Religious School or by appointment. Please call Irene Korn at 925.673.9300.

Proceeds from the shop benefit Congregation B'nai Tikvah projects.

Congregation B'nai Tikvah  
25 Hillcroft Way  
Walnut Creek, CA 94597

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Permit No. 71  
Walnut Creek, CA

**CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED**

For membership information, please contact the Temple Office.

**WINTER NIGHTS!**

Winter Nights is a shelter program for homeless families transitioning to permanent housing.

We will again be providing meals and overnights at Shell Ridge for the Winter Nights program from January 27<sup>th</sup> to February 10<sup>th</sup>.

During our designated two week period, CBT congregants can volunteer to bring and serve meals to residents.

There will also be a few overnight shifts available.

A Signup link will be forthcoming for your participation.

Thank you to Madeleine Bronstein who has volunteered to be this year's CBT coordinator of the Winter Nights program.

**SISTERHOOD & MEN OF CBT INVITE YOU TO  
GAME NIGHT**

Saturday, January 11<sup>th</sup>  
7:30 pm  
CBT Social Hall

Play Poker, Mah Jongg or any board game you would like to bring.

Please bring a nosh to share.

RSVP to [raynaravitz@gmail.com](mailto:raynaravitz@gmail.com)  
by January 10<sup>th</sup>

Adults only please!