
Tikvah Talk

Vol. 34 Iss. 3

Congregation B'nai Tikvah
Walnut Creek, CA

November / December 2014

Shalom, B'nai Tikvah!

By Rabbi Rebecca Gutterman



As of this writing, we have just finished celebrating the holiday of Simchat Torah. Before carrying the Torah scroll into the Social Hall for some celebratory dancing accompanied by our very own Tikvah Tones, we carried out a truly special ritual of unrolling the entire Torah from one end of the Sanctuary to the other. As we prepared to consecrate our students just beginning their Jewish education, Phil asked everyone who was standing behind the parchment holding it up to pick a spot across the room and simply look at the words in front of them. Those moments were a beautiful way to experience the cyclical nature of Judaism, and the beauty that breathes within the Torah's words.

And of course, how wonderful to witness CBT's children -- our future Torah bearers -- busily running from one side to the other counting columns on the parchment and making other discoveries all their own!

And now as the Torah (and yes, the world) turns... the rhythm of Jewish life will bring us forward. From the Chaukah candles illuminating the dark winter nights, to the hopefulness of spring and the mayhem of Purim that follows. Each holiday speaks to us differently, each in its own time, yet they are woven together for *all* time. They form a tapestry that binds us up with each other, engaging us in the full spectrum of emotions and experiences that make us the community we are.

As far as our secular lives, we will take a much needed pause later this month to celebrate Thanksgiving. It's a day many of us look forward to for the warmth of family and friends, and the chance to count our blessings. As we celebrate with glad hearts, let's not

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Reflections...

By Cantor Jennie Chabon



This month, I'm printing the words I shared on Rosh Hashanah morning in my d'var tefillah. I trust that the message will feel relevant even as we move beyond the High Holy Days.

I had a very funny experience with my children last week that I have not been able to stop thinking about. It was Wednesday afternoon and I went with Judah (2.5) to pick up Ezra (9) from a play date. Levi (6) was at soccer with my husband Steve. The plan was for Steve to drop Levi off at home after soccer on his way back to work. I was in charge of dinner, homework and bedtime.

When I'm on my own with the boys, I tend to run the house in a slightly military fashion, checking everything off the list until everyone is in bed and lunches are made. So that was the plan for the night. Piano practice, homework, dinner, baths, bed. Lights out at 8:00. It was going to be a swift and organized two hours. That is, until we started driving home from the play date.

We're two minutes from home when Ezra starts complaining that his foot is stuck in the seat belt in front of him and he can't get it out. I tell him to just wait until we get home and I'll take care of it. 30 seconds go by and he's now really whimpering about his foot. I repeat my previous response.

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To all of our readers.....

Please note that with the increase of congregational emails plus weekly emails from Rabbi Gutterman and Cantor Chabon, Tikvah Talk will now be published bi-monthly.

The next edition will be January 2015..

If you would be added to our email blasts, please contact judyblum@tikvah.org.

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.

Upcoming B'nai Mitzvah

Max Hess

*Son of Jennifer Leeds and Robert Hess
Saturday, November 8*

*Benjamin Stark-Elster
Son of Wendy Stark-Elster and
Steve Elster
Saturday, November 22*

Ari Khalameyzer

*Son of Galina and Sasha Khalameyzer
Saturday, November 29*

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

*Mazel tov to all our B'nai Mitzvah
and their families!*

Rebecca Gutterman, Rabbi
Jennie Chabon, Cantor
Raphael W. Asher, Rabbi Emeritus
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
Website: <http://www.tikvah.org>

CONGREGATIONAL OFFICERS

President	Harry Wittenberg
Vice President	Dan Lapporte
Vice President	Glenn Gould
Vice President	Jared Goldin
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Mary Ann Wittenberg

Calling all Musicians and Singers!!

Join CBT's in house band -
THE TIKVAH TONES!

For more information,
contact Harry Wittenberg
wittenb1@comcast.net.

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 10th 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



Below is part of my Yom Kippur speech – sans the jokes and power point images.

Let me start off by reminding everyone of what an extraordinary year we've had. So many new beginnings and transitions. What is also significant about this year, is that it is the year of Shmita. In Judaism, we love numbers and cycles. Shmita is the seventh year of the agricultural cycle where after 6 years of productivity, we let the soil rest in the seventh year to recover. Shmita can also be translated to a year of "release." It relates to food, economics, social justice, and most of all, personal restoration.

This concept can be extended to our commitments or maybe even our complacency. For some, it is a commitment to limit commercialism in their lives, to others, a release from digital dependency, the list goes on depending on what you want to release from yourself this year. In relating Shmita to B'nai Tikvah, I hope it's a release from any restraint from making a commitment to our temple. We have had one rabbi for 33 years, and now we have a new year of fresh perspectives, a restoration of the health and future of our congregation.

During Rosh Hashanah, I talked about your involvement personally - attending services, attending events, volunteering your time on a committee, and letting me and the board know the things that would interest you. I thank everyone who did put in a suggestion in the box. I also warmed you up to my financial appeal today.

There is something that is important to the future of our temple. That something is our general operating budget. Even though we've kept our membership fairly stable, our income remained flat because we did not raise our membership commitment this past year. With that and the fact our expenses have risen, and not for extraordinary reasons. For example, with just the rising cost of keeping a congregation running and inflation, our operating budget diminished faster than expected. Some of you may be thinking that the donations we received from Rabbi Asher's retirement events would more than covered our increasing costs - but the reality is, it just kept the size of our deficit lower than it could have been.

So what are we talking about? The answer is we are in the red, about \$39,000 in the red. I will say it is not an amount that is devastating to the temple - our lights are on, our staff is being paid, our programs continue as normal. But this trend of flat revenue to increasing costs is simply not sustainable. What needs to be done is to close that gap. So, my appeal this year is towards our operating budget. Now, I could lay a healthy guilt trip on everyone, but that is not me, nor is it the way our congregation operates. We welcome everyone, and we make ac-

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Turn It, Turn It

By Phil Hankin, Religious School Director



Last week I took in the film "This Is Where I Leave You." It stars Jason Bateman, Jane Fonda, and Tina Fey among others. The premise of the film is about Jason Bateman's character's father who dies after a lengthy illness, and his last wish is for his dysfunctional family to all come the family home to sit *shivah* for seven days. After reading the movie review in the "j" I was intrigued. The movie was a caricature of a Jewish family with no real deep Jewish roots. The dad is characterized as a "Jewish atheist" by his kids. He owns a Sporting Goods store which bears his name, the mom is not Jewish, and the best friend of the youngest son grows up to become the rabbi of the local synagogue. The kids have not stepped foot in synagogue since religious school days and they have no idea what "sitting *shivah*" means, or how to say *Kaddish* for that matter.

What does matter, though, is the premise of how a Jewish ritual brings about closeness within a family. No matter if it is a holiday, Shabbat, or a ritual surrounding a life cycle (*brit milah*, *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, wedding, death), rituals hold an important place in Jewish culture. Much in the same way we have ritualized our T'fillah services in the amphitheater on Sunday mornings at Religious School, there is relief in the knowledge that the regularity and order attached to a Jewish ritual allows us to jump in and feel comfortable even during uncomfortable times. Although some things in Jewish life can seem odd or confusing at times, everything that is found in Jewish life has a purpose and meaning: If you are new to the faith, you are welcomed in via a ritual (e.g. *Brit Milah* for boys, baby naming for girls, immersing in a *Mikvah* for those who convert); When you move into a new dwelling, you make it Jewish through the ritual of affixing a *Mezuzah* to your doorpost; Before you eat, it is customary to say a specific blessing over your particular food and you ritually wash your hands before saying said blessing. These are but a few of the multitude of rituals that Judaism presents to us so as to make meaning of who we are and who we are a part of.

I challenge you in this month of November (and hopefully moving forward) to create a family ritual that you will incorporate into your lives. In my family, we are trying to ritualize the creation of a "Family Date Night" once per month. In a busy household of 2 teens and 2 working parents, we rarely find time for the family to be together – just the 4 of us. We will sit down at the beginning of the month, look at the calendar together, and decide on one evening when we can spend quality, unplugged time together. It just so happens that October's family date night included seeing "This Is Where I Leave You" (it is an R rated movie so don't go and see it with your young kids). Try out a family date night or another family ritual and report back to me on what you did, what meaning it holds for your family, and how you decided on that particular ritual.

I was so thrilled to have such a great turnout for our membership brunch in October that I forgot to make my plea for someone to chair Sisterhood. Or even to be Vice President. So consider this my plea. I do have many helpers to make this job fun - thank you to Cookie Svingos, Susan Friedman, Janet Goodman and Hilary Balfour.

In case you missed it, there were many good ideas for programming this year and many volunteers for CBT projects. It will be a fun and rewarding year for us!

We are looking for vendors for our Chanukah fair on December 7. If you are interested in having a table or know someone who might be, please email Jill Wilk - jillawilk@gmail.com or call me.

Mah Jongg has started again. We are playing on some Wednesday nights at CBT. Contact Janet Goodman to get on this list. jgoodmanwc@comcast.net.

Tuesday, November 18, 6:30 pm – Book Sisters

“Daughter’s Keeper” by Ayelet Waldman

Meet at Sunrise Bistro. RSVP: raynaravitz@gmail.com.

Sunday, December 7, 9 am-12:30 pm - Chanukah Fair at CBT

Please plan on doing your holiday shopping. Looking for vendors, see message above.

Tuesday, December 9, 6:30 pm – Sisterhood Chanukah Party

Our annual Chanukah party will include “no-sew” blankets, eating and schmoozing. Bring an unwrapped Toys for Tots. Also, bring prom dresses to donate to the “Princess Project.” Thank you to Barbara Grossman for coordinating. Potluck dinner. RSVP: raynaravitz@gmail.com

Tuesday, December 16, 6:30 pm – Book Sisters

“And the Mountains Echoed” by Khalid Houssini

Sunday, January 11 Visit to Contemporary Jewish Museum

Arnold Newman: Masterclass exhibit. Newman was one of the most productive, creative, and successful portrait photographers of the twentieth century.

Tuesday, January 20, 6:30 pm – Book Sisters

Sunday, February 22, 2:30 pm– The Book Club Play

Monday, March 9, 7:30 pm - Sisterhood to Contra Costa Jewish Film Festival

Sunday, March 29, 4 pm - Women’s Seder

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forget the opportunities that Jewish life offers for giving thanks. One example is a blessing found in our Shabbat service called *Hoda'ah*. With these words of appreciation, we express gratitude to God as the foundation of our blessings, and the creative power at the heart of our lives.

And of course, gratitude can always be expressed with our hearts *and* our hands. Take some time as the 5775 begins to think about how B'nai Tikvah can use your ideas, contributions and hands-on help. There are always ways in, and our community will become even stronger as more and more members find them. These are the opportunities which ensure that for us, thanksgiving need not come just once a year.

Indeed, nearly four months after my arrival at CBT I continue to give thanks: for your spiritual dedication, your intellectual curiosity, your openness to change and your warm embrace.



**CHANUKAH BEGINS
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16**

**Shop the
CBT Gift Shop
for of all of your Chanukah needs!**

**Sunday, December 7 & 14
9 am - 12:30 pm**

**Decorations.....Gelt.....Dreidels
Largest Selection of Menorahs
Israeli made candles
Great Chanukah Books & CDs
Beautiful Wrapping Paper
Jewelry, and other Wonderful Gifts
Plates, Napkins, Cups, & All Your Party Needs
plus LOTS more!!!**

**Grandparents - come check out all the things
your little ones need for Chanukah!**

**All Proceeds from the
Chanukah Boutique
benefit your synagogue.**



Reflections...

(continued from page 1)

When we get home, I go to the back of the van to deal with his foot and discover that he has wrapped his ankle so many times in the seat belt that it's stuck. Completely stuck. The seat belt has locked and there is absolutely no give whatsoever. No matter what magical things I try, his foot does not budge. I call my next door neighbor. She tries without success to remove his foot, and suggests that I call 911. Call 911 to get my kid's foot out of a seatbelt?! You've got to be kidding me. No way! She then suggests that I drive to the closest fire station to see if someone there can help me.

Off we go...

To make a long and ridiculous story short, what happens next is that the guys at the first fire house have no luck helping me, and send us on to the next fire house, where they've called ahead to let them know we're coming. At this point, by the way, it's way past dinner.

When we pull up to the second fire house, there they are, three big Oakland fire fighters waiting outside to greet us: me and my kids in my minivan, with my son's foot stuck in the seat belt. I'm dying laughing. They clearly have nothing else going on at station number 2, because every fire fighter there proceeds to come out to help us. They use a cool tool to take out the bolt at the bottom of the seat belt, free Ezra's foot, give him a few stern warnings about never doing that again, and we're on our way. 1.5 hours behind the imaginary schedule in my head for the evening.

I share this story with you because you know what happened when I got the kids home late? They ate dinner, took a bath, and went to bed. Happy. With a funny story to boot. Yes it was late, and no, not all homework was done perfectly. But that was ok too.

I think it's really important to remember on days like that that life takes unexpected turns all the time. There's nothing we can do about it. But what we can control is how we react when things don't go according to our plan. My experience last week was harmless, of course, but it stood out for me because so often, the moments that take us by surprise are not so innocuous. A sudden illness. A sudden death. A lost friendship. A personal crisis. We have very little control over those twists and turns in life, but we have a great deal of control over how we respond to them.

People frequently come to me during a crisis, whether as their cantor or their friend. They have questions about how God could allow such suffering in the world, how God could have created a world so filled with tragedy. I have no answers to those questions. The question I ask myself and my congregants over and over again is not, as Rabbi Naomi Levy asks, "Why did this happen? But: How will I go on?" (*To Begin Again*, pg. 8)

It is easy to feel singled out when you are suffering, to feel like no one can relate to your pain. But all you have to do is look around you at any social gathering, at any service, at this beautiful community surrounding you, to know that you are not alone in your suffering. You may not see it on the surface, but within the heart of every person hides a silent anguish that is yearning to be acknowledged.

In a few minutes we will move into the text of the Unetaneh tokef, into this very challenging piece of liturgy. As we sing, I encourage you *not* to focus on the idea of God as puppet master controlling your fate next year as the text suggests, "*who will live and who will die*". Focus, instead, on the role you play. On the role you play along with God. Yes, the theme of God as judge is absolutely woven into these High Holy Days. But that is not the God I turn to in my darkest moments. My God is not a being who controls my life or the fate of the world. Not a being who *eliminates* suffering, but a being who stays *with* me in my suffering and helps me to withstand it. I look to God to help me to be my best self despite whatever challenges come my way.

We conclude the first part of the Unetaneh Tokef with these words: *Ut'shuvah, Ut'filah, Utz'dakah*. *T'shuvah*, returning to myself; *T'filah*, sitting in prayer and contemplation, *utz'dakah*, taking care of the world. These are the things that will determine my year ahead and my ability to handle the challenges that arise with dignity and grace. This is what we come back to again and again, what gives us strength when we feel helpless: our sense of our best selves, our ability to turn to prayerful contemplation, and our responsibility to take care of the world around us no matter what.

Contributions

GENERAL FUND

In memory of Sara Sadetskiy
In memory of Avrum-Moyshe Sadetskiy
In memory of Peisah Sadetskiy
Rakhil & Naum Sadetskiy
In memory of Gerald Kowitz
Leslie Kowitz & Eric Roswall
In memory of Lynn Billy
Wendy and Dale Billy
In memory of Laurel P. Wolf
Andrea and Harold Wolf
In memory of Benjamin Edelman
Miriam and Stanley Newman
In honor of the Treger/Roberson Family
Rose Ann and Samuel Treger
In honor of Sandra Hope Leon
Elaine Leon
In appreciation of the High Holy Days
Rosalie Stern
In honor of Idelle Lipman
Bari Mantel
In memory of Roman Nudelman
Bella Nudelman
In memory of Doris Levine
Vicki and John Anderle
In memory of Chester Tobias
Carol and Allan Tobias
In memory of Harry Rabiner
Karen Lapin
In memory of Ben Ettelson
In memory of Stanley Val Goldin
In memory of John Levich
Trish and Jared Goldin
In memory of Dorothy Polay Bushell
Yonina and Barry Bushell
In memory of Jerome Berres
Kimberly and Brian Zagon
In memory of Yuri Moskalenko
Yelena Yaltanskaya and Doba Moskalenko

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In memory of Sylvia K. Schwartz
In memory of Harry J. Schwartz
Joan and Richard Schwartz
In memory of Esther Appleberg
Idelle Lipman
In appreciation of the High Holy Day services
Robin and Larry Gordon

CANTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In appreciation of the High Holy Day services
Robin and Larry Gordon

CANTOR'S CD FUND

In memory Ruth Eskenazi
Leah Eskenazi and Darrell & Ben Murray
In support of Cantor Chabon's CD
Deborah Sandler
In memory of Charlotte Gilman
Carol Reif and Jeffrey Gilman

RABBI ASHER'S EMERITUS FUND

In honor of Rabbi Asher's retirement
Marsha and David Bocan

JAMES COHEN MEMORIAL FUND

In memory of Annette Cohn's Mother
In memory of Deborah Hodges
Lance and Robert Canter

CANTOR STEPHEN RICHARDS MUSICAL ENRICHMENT/CHOIR FUND

In memory of Ruth Schultz Goldenberg
Ruth and Larry Goldenberg
In memory of Adele Morse Platt
Marjorie and Cantor Stephen Richards
In honor of Irene Jacobson
Lisa and Howard Wenger

STEPHAN JASPAN RELIGIOUS SCHOOL FUND

With thanks to the religious school
Kristin and Barry Mendelson

ABRAHAM NIVER SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In memory of Bernard Marcus
Patricia and Lorry Marcus

MORDOH/NADJARI HOLOCAUST EDUCATION FUND

In memory of Dorothy Welch
Zaffy and Denis Welch

SOCIAL ACTION FUND

In memory of Lily Maslow
Michael Fischer
In appreciation of the High Holyday services
Dr. Michael Kaiser and Larry M. Sanders

Welcome to our new members...

Martha Jensen

Holly and Joel Grossman
Avi 1/31/09, Ezra 2/9/11, Ayla 4/24/14

FOR THE YOUNG ONES IN OUR COMMUNITY AND THEIR PARENT(S)



Bring your little one to **TIKVAH TOTS**,
a play group designed for the littlest members of our community.
It is an informal gathering of kids and parents in our beautiful social hall
with lots of toys and games
for the kids to play with. On the 2nd Friday of the month,
join other families to schmooze and play from 10 - 11 am.
Rabbi Gutterman will lead the group in Shabbat blessings and a story
to close out the hour.
November 14 and December 12

TOT SHABBATS and FAMILY SHABBAT SERVICES

Mark your monthly calendar for the 1st Friday of the month!

November 7 and December 5

Tot Shabbat at 5:30 pm

Pizza dinner at 6 pm

Family Shabbat service 6:30 pm

Dinner reservations due the Wednesday before.

\$10 adults, \$5 children 5 - 12

Reservations can be made on line or by sending a check to the Temple Office.

K'TAN TAN - SUNDAY FUN !!

What to do on a Sunday morning especially if you have an older child
in Religious School?

Come to the Social Hall Sunday, November 16 from 10 am - noon
for music time, special art projects and lots of fun and playing!

Appropriate for children under 5!

No charge to attend. For Qs email Leaht Segev - leaht@hotmail.com.



CHANUKAH FAIR

Get all your gift shopping done in one place!

*A portion of proceeds from sales benefit
CBT Sisterhood.*

*Sunday, December 7th
9:00am - 12:30pm CBT Social Hall*

Current vendors include:

Aimee Golant, Arbonne International, Mosaic Naturals, Party Lite
Premier Designs, Silpada
Stella and Dot, Stampin' Up
Thirty-One and many more!!!

For more information or to participate
as a vendor, please contact Jill Wilk -
jillawilk@gmail.com



Join Men of CBT

for Schmeer & Schmooze
Sundays

Short lectures from
The S.F Institute for Jewish Medical Ethics
will be presented and discussed:

November 16- Medicine in Israel
December 14- Genetics

10 am CBT Library
For Q contact Men.of.CBT@gmail.com.

HIGH HOLYDAY THANK YOUS!

By Mary Ann Wittenberg

The Ritual Committee would like to thank all the individuals who volunteered to help to with our High Holiday needs. Your participation ensured that the holidays were truly special. Thank you to: Idelle Lipman, Wendy Billy, Cookie Svingos, Bonnie Potter, Marty Potter, Steven Potter, Leah Eskenazi, Lisa Wenger, Howard Wenger, Martha Jensen, Jordana Green, Allison Negrin, Burt Gunter and Roberta, Janet Brandess, Daniel Jones, Ian Jones Pat Maroney,,Mary Okocha, Steve Rabinowitz, Laurie Rabinowitz, Ryan Rabinowitz, Tom Appelbaum, Jeanie Appelbaum, Bob Grossman, Amy Lichtenstein, Irene Korn, Art Korn, Bruce Presnick, Laura Presnick, Claire Bernardo, Ivy Noceto, Jane Martin, Michael Samuels, Mike Cohn, Annette Cohn, Brad Rose, Lorraine Rose Lerman, Bob Stern, Harrison Stern, Alan Gould, Ed Helwig, Alan Schwartz, Bob Canter, Sandy Gross, Paula Reinman, Jared Goldin, Walt Blum, Art Mancini, Dan Levy, John Rubinfeld, Andrew Newman, Toni Dine, Irene Korn, our wonderful choir members, Irene Jacobson, Dwight Stone, Lisa Zeiler, Nina Flyer and all of the members provided food for Selichot, Rosh Hashana and Break the Fast and decorations for our sukkah. We apologize in advance, but please let us know if anyone has been forgotten.

We hope that you had a good time helping out and developed enduring bonds with the other congregants. Rest up for next year!

ON-GOING PROGRAMS AT CBT

Open Bridge Wednesday mornings at 10 am.
Contact Phil Paris for details - Philip.paris@ymail.com.

YOGA -The Gentle Way
Mondays from 12:30 - 1:30 pm
Thursdays 6 - 7 pm
Contact Dr. Laura Presnick drspresnick@earthlink.net.

JEWISH MEDITATION - A TASTE OF TORAH
Tuesday mornings from 10 - 11 am
Each session begins focusing on the week's Torah portion.

2 AL-ANON GROUPS MEET AT CBT
Tuesdays from 12 - 1 pm, Fridays 10:30 - 11:30 am
Contact Al-Anon for more information.

The Story of the Jews

Many of us did not see the excellent PBS production, *The Story of the Jews*, which aired during this past year.

However, our Adult Education committee will be presenting each of the five episodes in the coming months.

The TV host for this presentation is Simon Schama, who is both charming and highly informative on the subject of our Jewish heritage. This series begins in ancient times, continues with a dazzling cast of historical characters and includes stunning location photography. It really should not be missed. Our programs will be presented in the sanctuary on Wednesday evenings at 7:30 pm.

Here is the schedule:

November 12th - In the Beginning
December 10th - Among Believers
January 7th - A Leap of Faith
February 11th - Over the Rainbow
March 18th - Return



NOVEMBER 2014 Cheshvan - Kislev 5775

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
Midrasha Fall Retreat at Camp Newman 9:30am - 12:00pm Religious School 10:00am - 12:00pm K'tan Tan 10:00am - 11:00am Schmeer & Schmooze 1:00pm NJOP 7:30pm 2016 B'nai Mitzvah parents meeting	12:30pm - 1:30pm Yoga 6:30pm General Board meeting	10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School 7:00pm - 9:00pm Midrasha BODM	10:00am Open Bridge 7:15pm Midrasha	6:00pm - 7:00pm Yoga	6:30pm Shabbat Service	Parashat Lech-Lecha 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9:30am - 12:00pm Religious School 1:00pm NJOP	12:30pm - 1:30pm Yoga 7:30pm Ritual Committee Meeting	10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School	10:00am Open Bridge 7:00pm - 9:00pm Mah Jongg 7:15pm Midrasha	6:00pm - 7:00pm Yoga	Camp Newman Fall Kallah 5:30pm - 6:00pm Tot Shabbat 6:00pm - 6:30pm Pizza dinner 6:30pm Family Shabbat Service	for grades 4-6 Parashat Vayera 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Shabbat Service - Bar Mitzvah of Max Hess
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Camp Newman Fall Kallah for grades 4-6 9:30am - 12:00pm Religious School for Grades K-3 and 7 only 1:00pm NJOP	12:30pm - 1:30pm Yoga 6:30pm - 8:00pm CBT Ed Committee Meeting	10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School	10:00am Open Bridge 7:15pm Midrasha 7:30pm The Story of the Jews	6:00pm - 7:00pm Yoga	10:00am Tikvah Tots 6:30pm Shabbat Service - 5th graders participating	Parashat Chayei Sara Trivia Night! 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
9:30am - 12:00pm Religious School 10:00am - 12:00pm K'tan Tan 10:00am - 11:00am Schmeer & Schmooze 1:00pm NJOP	12:30pm - 1:30pm Yoga 6:00pm Executive Board meeting 6:30pm General Board meeting	10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School 6:30pm Book Sisters 7:00pm - 9:00pm Midrasha BODM	10:00am Open Bridge 7:00pm - 9:00pm Mah Jongg 7:15pm Midrasha	6:00pm - 7:00pm Yoga	7:30pm Shir Joy - Michael Eselun speaking	Parashat Toldot 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Shabbat Service - Bar Mitzvah of Benjamin Stark -Elster
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
NO Religious School 1:00pm NJOP	12:30pm - 1:30pm Yoga	NO Religious School 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah	NO Midrasha 10:00am Open Bridge	Office Closed Thanksgiving	Office Closed 6:30pm Shabbat Service	Parashat Vayetzei 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Shabbat Service - Bar Mitzvah of Ari Khalameyzer
30						
NO Religious School						

DECEMBER 2014 Kislev - Tivet 5775

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
NO Religious School	7:30pm Ritual Committee Meeting	10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School 7:00pm Social Action Comm Mtg	10:00am Open Bridge 7:00pm - 9:00pm Mah Jongg 7:15pm Midrasha	6:00pm - 7:00pm Yoga	5:30pm - 6:00pm Tot Shabbat 6:00pm Pizza dinner 6:30pm Family Shabbat Service - 3rd graders participating	Parashat Vayishlach 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
9:00am - 12:00pm Chanukah Boutique in Gift Shop 9:30am - 12:00pm Religious School 9:30am - 12:00pm Sisterhood Chanukah Faire!	12:30pm - 1:30pm Yoga 6:30pm - 8:00pm CBT Ed Committee Meeting	10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School 6:30pm - 8:30pm Sisterhood Chanukah Party 7:00pm - 9:00pm Midrasha BODM	10:00am Open Bridge 7:15pm Midrasha 7:30pm The Story of the Jews	6:00pm - 7:00pm Yoga	10:00am Tikvah Tots 6:30pm Shabbat Service	Parashat Vayeshev 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan 7:00pm Wine & Cheese Reception 8:00pm CD Release Concert!!
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
9:00am - 12:00pm Chanukah Boutique in Gift Shop 9:30am - 12:00pm Religious School 10:00am - 11:00am Schmeer & Schmooze	12:30pm - 1:30pm Yoga 6:00pm Executive Board meeting 6:30pm General Board meeting	Chanukah: 1 Candle NO Religious School 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 6:30pm Book Sisters	Chanukah: 2 Candles Midrasha celebrates Hanukkah 10:00am Open Bridge 7:00pm - 9:00pm Mah Jongg	Chanukah: 3 Candles 6:00pm - 7:00pm Yoga	Chanukah: 4 Candles 7:30pm Shir Joy w/Choir - bring your Menorah!	Chanukah: 5 Candles Parashat Miketz 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Chanukah: 6 Candles NO Religious School	Chanukah: 7 Candles 12:30pm - 1:30pm Yoga	Chanukah: 8 Candles NO Religious School 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah	Chanukah: 8th Day NO Midrasha 10:00am Open Bridge	Office Closed	6:30pm Shabbat Service	Parashat Vayigash 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study
28	29	30	31			
NO Religious School	12:30pm - 1:30pm Yoga	NO Religious School 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah	NO Midrasha 10:00am Open Bridge			



This month I want to share a little insight into the inner workings of Contra Costa Midrasha, specifically our core classes.

Wednesday nights at CCM begin at 7:15pm with teens going to their “core classes” by grade. Here is a breakdown of the themes and areas of focus for each grade:

- 8th Grade: This is the first year of our Midrasha teens coming together from our three participating synagogues. Therefore our big goal for these teens is to bring them together, to create a cohesive community. The group focuses on getting to know each other while doing mitzvah projects and discussing different ideas of community.
- 9th Grade: Midrasha calls its 9th grade curriculum, “Etagar.” This Hebrew word translates to challenge. The materials focus on challenging our teens to reconsider different concepts of their identity and notions of Jewish identity.
- 10th Grade: The focus of this year aims to provide teens with a window into life in Israel, with the goal of connecting our teens with Israel. Teens during this year discuss not only the places in Israel but more importantly ideas that guide life there and individuals, often “off the beaten path” who are making a difference in Israel today.
- 11th Grade: We know how difficult the junior year is for CCM teens. Therefore the focus area of this year at Midrasha is creating sanctuary. Teens are challenged to think about ideas of sanctuary – what is it, where is it “supposed to exist” and most importantly, how to create it for themselves.
- 12th Grade: Only in its second year now, CCM is spearheading an effort to make senior year truly special for Midrasha teens. The focus is on the transition from high school to college. Split into three units – self care, building a family and building an adult Jewish identity – seniors spend the entire two hours of Midrasha together. Each month these teens also go off campus to enrich their experience and strengthen their community. Their first “field trip” was to Sunrise Bistro, where they ate a very healthy meal and got to talk about different ideas in Judaism related to self-care or shmirat haguf, “guarding the body.”

These topics get more deeply explored on retreats. Our amazing group of educators create intense workshops for our teens to engage in Jewish learning on Shabbat. For many of our teens and educators, these weekends are the glue that hold together our weekly meetings. It impacts the teens on two levels. One – deeper learning helps create deeper friendships between teens. Two – the workshops created for retreats enable the weekly learning to be cemented, as they are often more experiential.

Please remember that enrollment/registration for the 2014-15 year at Contra Costa Midrasha is still open! To enroll, please go directly to our online enrollment at <http://shop.ccmidrasha.com>.

Lastly, please save the date - February 28, 2015 for CCM’s Annual Fundraiser Event.

UNDER ONE TENT

Contra Costa Jewish Book & ARTS Festival 2014-2015

Story Tellers: Writers on Writing
November 6, 2014 at 10:00 am @ B’nai Shalom

BT Member Leslie Rupley (Beyond the Silk Mills),
Donna Kaulkin (Brenda Corrigan Went Downtown),
and Debbie Cohen (Keeper of the Scale)
all recently published authors, will respond
to interview questions about how their novels
evolved from conception to print.
Q&A, Book Signing \$5 at the door.



For a complete line-up: jfed.org/underonetent or call 510.809.4953 for a brochure.

Sponsors: Beth Chaim Congregation, Chabad of Contra Costa, Congregation B’nai Shalom, Congregation B’nai Tikvah, Contra Costa Jewish Community Center, Contra Costa Jewish Day School, Diablo Valley Hadassah, Lehrhaus Judaica, Reutlinger Community for Jewish Living, Temple Isaiah.



President's Message.....

(continued from page 3)

commodations to membership dues accordingly to keep all of our members active. We also try to save money every way we can, but there is a limit to that as well. I have a story that shows what some people will do to save money.

I learned a lot last year, so this year, I want to make it extremely easy on everyone to make a financial commitment to our temple so that we are operating in the black again and are financially healthy.

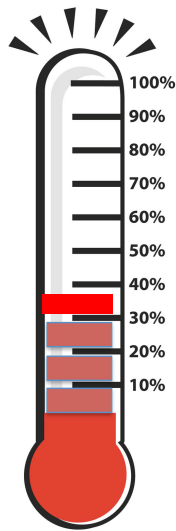
Here are a few ideas:

1. Attend our fundraisers
2. For those who can, consider under-writing our gala or portions of it..
3. Make a donation for your life cycle events.
4. Bring us new members - that will make a huge difference for us, not only financially, but having new people in our community only adds to the richness of our congregation.
5. The final consideration is something I know everyone here can do. Look at the tabs on your High Holy Day ticket and turn one down..... Today, I'd like to start that tradition at B'nai Tikvah of 100% participation. Please help me begin this new tradition.

I know everyone can contribute something. Relating back to Shmita, help us restore our budget and pledge what feels comfortable to you - go as far as you can. For those who had a tough financial year, a lower amount is absolutely welcomed. For those who had a good year, then truly consider going to a higher amount. Again, I am not specifying a particular amount, but I would like to see something from everyone.

Consider this a true mitzvah. Okay - That's my ask. What will your contribution to our operating budget do for us? It pays for the salaries of our staff. It pays for the utilities. It pays for custodial help, supplies for the office, our internet bill. I can keep going - my point is that our current level of membership commitment is not enough. We do not want to dip into our rainy day fund, and as you can imagine, with our drought, it's not raining much these days!

Update - I am pleased to report that at print time, we have received donations totaling just over \$30,000. You can still send yours in - just write HHD appeal in the memo of your check. We gratefully accept your donation!!



Social Action

By Tina Guterman, Chair

Our Social Action Shabbat speaker this year is again Mike Eselun, Staff Chaplain/Oncology Spiritual Care Specialist at the UCLA Center for Integrative Oncology. He will be speaking at the Shir Joy Shabbat service Friday, November 21st at 7:30 pm. He was well received last year (based on feedback that we received from congregants), and will follow up this month on the topic of, "exploring our relationship to our own stories, and how we use them in the attempt to make spiritual sense of our lives."

All of our members should have received a flyer for the Holiday Dinner Drive benefiting the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano. If you can, please send in your donation to support families during the holiday season.

And to keep the needy warm, we will be collecting coats through the end of the year for Vestia. Please check your closet and bring in the coats you are no longer wearing.



On the Sunday morning following Rabbi Guterman's installation, the Religious School students all recited the Shehecheyanu.

GO WHERE YOUR HEART TAKES YOU!




April 19-28, 2015 Community Trip to Israel

- Design your own experience and discover Israel your way!
- Five customized excursions each day: Historic Israel, Social Action/Geopolitical, Arts & Culture, Green & Hi-Tech, Jewish Learning.
- Optional pre-trip to Poland April 14-20.
- Subsidies available.

Learn More: 510.809.4953 or israel2015@jfed.org.



The B'nai Tikvah Trivia Guys Present



TEAM TRIVIA NIGHT 2014!

Saturday, November 15, 2014

Doors Open @ 6:30 p.m. Play starts @ 7:00 p.m.

Over 100 fun, brain-challenging questions

Entry fee \$180 per team; teams of 6-8 players

- The event you've waited all year for is back: The 12th edition of Congregation B'nai Tikvah's Team Trivia Challenge. Movies, music, current events, history, pop culture, sports, cooking, geography, television, even Canadian Prime Ministers. We've got all that for you and more!
- This isn't Jeopardy and you don't need to be a trivia expert to play. It's a TEAM event with 6-8 players per team -- you use your collective minds to answer the questions. Just work with your teammates to puzzle out the answers. You'll be surprised to discover just how much you can come up with together.
- This event is open to everyone, B'nai Tikvah members or not, so get a team from your office, school, or neighborhood. Have friends in other synagogues? Challenge them to field a team. Don't have enough for a full team? No problem. Sign up as a single or small group and we'll do our best to pair you up that night! (Registration fee for individuals is \$30 per person.)
- We welcome teams of high school and college students. Even if you don't think you'd enjoy playing, you can be a team sponsor. We're happy to accept donations that can be used to sponsor student teams or otherwise support the event. And we're always looking for eager volunteers who can help us before and during the event.

- **ADVANCE EVENT REGISTRATION ONLY – NO TEAM WALKUPS THE NIGHT OF THE EVENT!**
- **COST IS \$180 FLAT RATE PER TEAM; TEAMS ARE A MAXIMUM OF 8 PEOPLE. WE SUGGEST A MINIMUM OF 6. COST FOR INDIVIDUALS NOT ASSOCIATED WITH A TEAM IS \$30 PER PERSON.**
- **PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY REGISTRATION.**
- **CASH OR CHECKS ONLY; PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO "CONGREGATION B'NAI TIKVAH." SORRY; WE ARE UNABLE TO ACCEPT CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS FOR THIS EVENT**

Register Now:

Team Contact: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

I/We Don't Have a Team But Still Want to Play: (Name) _____

Mail your entry to: Congregation B'nai Tikvah, 25 Hillcroft Way, Walnut Creek, CA 94597, or via fax to 925-933-6833.

Have questions or need more information? Contact The B'nai Tikvah Trivia Guys – Bob Canter, Mike Cohn and David Specland – at TheCBTTriviaGuys@gmail.com or call the Temple Office, 925-933-5397.

Adult Education

By Phil Paris, Chair

Marijuana – Part 2

There is so much we know about marijuana, it was not possible to include it all in last month's article. So here is more information for all those who are either smoking or considering smoking marijuana.

1 - About 10 % of those using marijuana will become addicted, meaning their lives will be severely affected either at work or in their relationships.

2 - Marijuana affects driving skills by reducing alertness, concentration, coordination and reaction time.

3 - High doses of marijuana can lead to panic attacks and worse, attacks of psychosis, meaning distorted perceptions, crazy thoughts and paranoia.


4 - The main ingredient in marijuana, THC, is absorbed by the fatty tissues in the body and is very slowly excreted from the body. Traces of marijuana can be found in the blood and urine for weeks after the last smoke.

5 Marijuana contains more than 400 chemicals, making its effects on any person totally unpredictable.

Phil Paris is former Director of Medical Services for the New York based Mount Sinai Hospital Narcotic Rehabilitation Center with experience in treating over 3,000 patients suffering from narcotic addiction. He is currently Project Director for Stop Stigma Now, a group of substance abuse professionals dedicated to removing the stigma associated with the long term treatment of addiction.

ABOUT-FACE


Yitzhak Rabin: His Life and Legacy



Wednesday, December 10, Noon & 7:00 pm
Congregation B'nai Shalom, 74 Eckley Lane, Walnut Creek

This moving exhibit chronicles the life of Yitzhak Rabin, Israeli Prime Minister, war hero, and Nobel Peace Prize recipient. Through an artful assemblage of photographs, media accounts, and statements by Israeli academics, journalists and political leaders, the exhibition reveals a view into the political divisions and religious extremism that led to Rabin's 1995 assassination, and describes how his teachings have become a rallying cry for peace, pluralism and a return to the values upon which Israel was founded.

Admission is free and open to the public. For more information and a complete schedule of exhibit times: 510.809.4953 or riva@jfed.org.



Shalom Connection

Condolences to:

Linda Buda and family on the loss of her father,
Sam Buda

Lance Canter and family on the loss of her brother,
John Sullenberger

Mazel Tov to:

Susan and John Klein on the marriage of Josh and
Sara Hope Schiffman

Nancy McIlroy and Pat Maroney on the birth of
grandson, Charles Zev Abraham

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.

CD #3 RELEASE NIGHT!!

*Join us
Saturday, December 13, 2014
for Cantor Chabon's
CD Release Concert.*

*A wine & cheese reception begins
the evening at 7 pm.*

Concert at 8 pm.

Admission \$18.

*Reservations can be made on line, by
sending a check to the Temple Office or
paying at the door.*

*CDs will be available through the Temple Office
and Gift Shop beginning
Sunday, December 14.
\$18 donation each.*

CHANUKAH AT CBT!!

Gift Shop will be open for all of your Chanukah
needs
Sunday, December 7 and 14
9 am - 12:30 pm

Sisterhood is hosting a Chanukah Faire
Sunday, December 7
9 am - 12:30 pm

Sisterhood Chanukah Dinner
Come make No-Sew Blankets
Tuesday, December 9
6:30 pm

Chanukah Zimriah in our Religious School
Sunday, December 14
11 am

Shir Joy Service along with the Choir
Come on the 4th night of Chanukah
and bring your menorah!
Friday, December 19
7:30 pm