
Tikvah Talk

Vol. 34 Iss. 4

Congregation B'nai Tikvah
Walnut Creek, CA

January / February 2015

Shalom, B'nai Tikvah!

By Rabbi Rebecca Gutterman



"Each of us has a name," the Israeli poet Zelda wrote, "given by God and given by our parents/ Each of us has a name given by our stature and our smile." Her words are both artful and thought provoking, calling us to deeper reflection. Names are of utmost significance within Jewish tradition. They link us to generations past. When we, or a new child in our family, are named in memory of a loved one we have lost, that person becomes a part of our identity... linked to our heart in a unique way even if we never had a chance to meet. Some stories of how we get our names are more whimsical; I once knew a Samantha so named because her older sister loved the television show "Bewitched!" Then there are the Biblical names, which offer opportunities to articulate connections we feel with our ancestors and what their legacy represents for us.

All this is to say that on Friday January 9, our 6:30pm Shabbat service will offer us an opportunity to learn more about Hebrew names and contemporary Jewish naming rituals with Dawn Kepler, the founding director of "Building Jewish Bridges" (see p. 9). This will be an informative and engaging presentation for all of us, coinciding with the beginning of the second book of the Torah whose Hebrew name is Shemot, or names. Shemot marks the very beginning of the transition from the family narratives of Bereishit (Genesis) to our formation into the people of Israel.

Another upcoming program at B'nai Tikvah it's a pleasure to highlight will take place on Tuesday, February 17 at 7:00pm (see p. 7). Rabbi Sue Levi Elwell, editor of a new anthology called "Chapters of the Heart: Jewish Women Sharing the Torah of our Lives" will join us for an evening of reading, dialogue and book-signing. Hers is a powerful book that invites us as readers to consider different stages, struggles and milestones of our lives through a Jewish lens. As each writer threads a piece of her own story

(continued on page 4)

Reflections...

By Cantor Jennie Chabon



A few weeks ago, we celebrated the release of my third album of Jewish music, *Roots & Branches*. We had a concert in our sanctuary that was the culmination of many months of work and devotion to our musical traditions. It was a night I will never forget.

There were several things that really struck me about this particular evening of music. First and most importantly, the sanctuary was absolutely bursting with people and fantastic energy. There is nothing more thrilling than looking out over our full sanctuary and seeing joy, anticipation and love, and that is exactly what I saw that night.

When I asked people to sing and the room was filled with beautiful song, it was one of the happiest moments of my life.

Second, there were lots of guests at the concert, which was so wonderful for CBT! We are always looking for ways to get more people into the doors of our synagogue, and this was most definitely a successful strategy. Though I made this album for B'nai Tikvah, my hope is that the music will reach far beyond Walnut Creek, and this evening certainly put that hope into motion.

Lastly, I felt so much gratitude for our shul that night. It really is a dream come true to be able to make music that is both fulfilling for me personally and that brings meaning and spirit to our congregation. I feel so supported by our community, which is valuable beyond words. How many people get to say that their work is deeply meaningful AND creatively fulfilling? I DO!

We have long said that B'nai Tikvah is the hidden gem of Walnut Creek, and that has never been more true than now. My friends who came to the concert from other communities all told me how infectious the energy was in our building. I feel a vitality coursing through our shul, inspiring all of the leaders of CBT to think broadly and with vision about the future of our community. If you

(continued on page 13)

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

Saul Bronstone

Son of Madeleine and Trace Bronstone

Saturday, February 14

Kaitlin Shepard

Daughter of Randi and Dave Shepard

Saturday, February 21

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
Secretary	Bob Stern
Treasurer	John Rubenfeld
Past President	John Rubenfeld

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Julia Babka-Kurzrock	Judith Barrall
Bob Canter	Alan Gould
Sandy Gross	Tina Guterman
Bob Grossman	Amy Lichtenstein
Idelle Lipman	Bruce Meyers
Rayna Ravitz	Leeaht Segev

Mary Ann Wittenberg

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

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

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR GALA FUNDRAISER

In keeping with our tradition of conducting our yearly Gala Fundraiser, we need volunteers who have energy, passion for our temple and community, and who want to be part of something special for CBT. Think of the fun you had at the Night On Broadway, Summer Of Love, and Havana Nights.
 We need you!

Contact Harry Wittenberg, Temple President, with your interest. 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



How did we come so quickly to the end of a year and the beginning of a new one? Maybe it's my age, or just how busy last year has been as President of our temple, as a member of the board, as a professional, and as a parent. Looking back, though, how can I ask for a more enriching year? There has been real joy for our temple and our community. So much positive change for many of us.

On the flip side, there has been challenges for others. Some in our community have been challenged by our changes. Outside of our walls, the world seems to have shifted on its axis. This summer Mary Ann and I were in Israel during a tough conflict. After many years of quiet, a tragedy happened. And Europe has seen more anti-semitism than many years before. In Missouri and New York, tragedies of social justice and tolerance happened. Funny how we remember the not-so-good things and we somehow forget the wonder we all still experience.

Rabbi Asher's retirement and Rabbi Gutterman's recruitment are jewels we can gaze at from this past year. Beautiful holiday rituals and events, and a significant number of new families and members. A bright spot for me was receiving emails from a new partnership with Rabbi Edgar Nof from the Reform Temple in Netanya. Just take a moment to read how bright a light he provides in Israel: "I was teaching this week in many groups, about (sic., our matriarch) Rebecca's search for meaning in her life, and how many times each one of us asks what are we meant to do. I have chosen the path of making bridges of connection between Jews and the Jewish tradition, between Jews, Druze, Christians and Muslims and between liberal Jews in Israel and liberal Jews in America and Europe."

"What are we meant to do?" is one of the age-old questions and one for all of us to consider going into the new year. My personal answer is Tikkun Olam - Repair The World. And your definition of "the world" will be different from mine. To me, it's in part our temple, in part our community at large, in part, the greater world. I choose to do little things that make a difference. I don't have resolutions for the new year, I just listen and answer the calls of need.

I am asking everyone in our temple to do the same - to find meaning in all you do, no matter how small it is. I am still asking for 100% participation in the High Holiday Appeal. That's a place you can help. Another is in activities at our temple that enrich us all. We need more people to volunteer - for our upcoming gala, in attending programs, in starting chavura's. The temple needs your contributions and a little of your time. Act locally.

(continued on page 12)

Turn It, Turn It

By Phil Hankin, Religious School Director



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 8, beginning at 9:30am, the religious school staff, Rabbi Gutterman, Cantor Chabon, and I will be hosting a Lehrhaus-like morning of fun and learning for members of all ages. This special morning of education is being provided as a way of allowing the CBT community (Religious School families, parents with teens, empty nesters, couples with no children, singles of any age — any member of CBT) to come together and experience learning of various modalities from the educators of the synagogue. Just as we did last year, 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. If you are looking to exercise your brain, we have classes that will engage you intellectually. If you are looking to exercise your body, we will have a class that will make you "shvitz." If you wish to learn through experience, we will have various "kinesthetic-style" classes. There will be offerings for all types of learners - young, a bit older than young, and not as young as you used to be but still feel young at heart. 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." 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 to arrive at 25 Hillcroft Way and be treated to an educational smorgasbord that will delight your palate. Come one, call all on Sunday February 8, 2015 to CBT's Religious School "Day of Learning." I have a feeling you will not regret it.

On the next page is the listing of the schedule of classes that will be offered: (p.s. — this IS a regular Religious School morning so all students still must attend, but it is intended to be family learning time so at least one parent/grandparent is required to attend with their child.)

Sisterhood News

By Rayna Ravitz, President

Our Chanukah Party was well attended; we made 11 blankets for patients at Children's Hospital. Check out our pictures on Congregation B'nai Tikvah Facebook page. The Chanukah Fair was a lot of fun. We helped the women of Uganda by purchasing more than \$800 worth of handmade bracelets.

Mah Jongg has started again. We are playing on some Wednesday nights (1/7, 1/21 and 2/4) at CBT. Contact Janet Goodman to get on this list - jgoodmanwc@comcast.net.

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. We will have a docent lead tour at 11:30. Museum admission is \$11, seniors \$9. Please RSVP to: Cathie Izen: Cathieizen@gmail.com

Tuesday, January 20 6:30 pm – Book Sisters at CBT
“I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings” by Maya Angelou.
Potluck, bring dairy or vegetarian, no meat.

Saturday, January 31 7:00 pm – Game Night
This was so much fun last year, let's do it again. Mah Jongg, Poker, or bring your own game to play. Joint effort with Men of CBT. Everyone is welcome.

Tuesday, February 17 7:00 pm – Book Sisters
We are having a special meeting this month. Rabbi Sue Elwell, author of “Chapters of the Heart,” will be with us. Everyone is invited and feel free to bring friends. It is recommended that you read the book before the event. You can get the book at <http://www.wipfandstock.com>. Bring your copy—she'll sign it! Rabbi Elwell is a friend of Rabbi Gutterman.

Sunday, February 22 2:30 pm – The Book Club Play
Dean Leshner Regional Center for the Arts.
Tickets are \$40. We have been going annually to a show the last several years. 20 tickets have been reserved at \$40 each. Regular price is \$54. If you are interested in going, please send a check to the CBT office marked – Sisterhood Play. A few seats left. RSVP to: raynaravitz@gmail.com.

Tuesday, March 10 4:30 pm – Contra Costa International Jewish Film Festival
“Magic Men.” Since Sisterhood is sponsoring this film, we can get group tickets for \$9 each. Let me know if you want one.

Sunday, March 15 10:00 am – Learn how to make a necklace out of a T-shirt at CBT
Shirley Weiner is going to teach us. Bring T-shirts in whatever color you want. The best t-shirts to use are Mens' XL.

Tuesday, March 17 7:00 pm – Book Sisters at CBT
“Beyond the Silk” by our own Leslie Rupley. Everyone is invited!

Shalom, B'nai Tikvah.....

(continued from page 1)

through our tradition, any one of us might come to see how our stories play a part as well. This evening is open to all members of B'nai Tikvah. Bring a friend – it's not to be missed!

Each of us has a name, and so does our community. To return to the poet Zelda's words, the name B'nai Tikvah (children, or community of hope) is so named to remind us that we are always aspiring... always searching out new reasons to hope, to celebrate and to dream together. We take pride in who we are, and search out ways to be even better. “The good things in life last for limited days, but a good name endures forever,” said the sage Ben Sira long ago. How does Congregation B'nai Tikvah live up to its name for you? As a new secular year comes into focus, that is one question with room for many responses. As your rabbi I can assure you that I am eager to listen to your voice.

May 2015 bring joy and fulfillment to our community!



Sisterhood News.....

Friday, March 20 7:30 pm – Sisterhood Shabbat
Come to services for our annual Sisterhood Shabbat. Find out who our “Sisterhood Woman of the Year” will be?! We will have speaker from Trinity House in Walnut Creek. Participation by the Sisterhood Members is lovely.

Sunday, March 29 4:00 pm – Women's Seder
Lead by our Cantor Jennie Chabon. This will get you in the mood for Passover. Potluck, Sephardic dishes. No dairy, meat only. Ruth Goldenberg will coordinate the food. Call her to get a recipe or let her know what you would like to make. Email: ruthiegold@gmail.com or 925.837.0858.

CBT Community Day of Learning - February 8, 2015

(not just for Religious School families!)

Schedule of Classes:

9:30am – 10:00am – Community T'fillah service	10:00am – 10:45am – Class Offerings #1	
10:45am – 11:10am – Community Brunch	11:10am – 11:55am – Class Offerings #2	12:00pm – Dismissal

Class Offerings:

- ☆ **The Jewish Calendar** (*Instructor ZVIA BITANSKY*) A holiday is on its way! Which will it be? Who is the bearer of holiday tidings? The Jewish calendar, of course. Yes, we have our very own calendar! It is different than the civil (or Gregorian) calendar. The Jewish calendar is a lunar calendar that is adjusted. It divides time according to the cycles of the moon. To understand what that means you need to become a moon watcher. Join me in learning and exploring the story of the Jewish Calendar.
- ☆ **You're in the Army Now!** (*Instructor MOR PERETS*) During this 45 minute class you will be introduced to the Israeli army, in Hebrew – *Tzahal*, and will learn about different units in the army and about the Special Forces. You will also get a taste of what boot camp is, while taking orders from an officer and running around for training purposes. This experience can be fun for the whole family and give you a broad sense of what the Israeli Army is all about...
- ☆ **Midrasha Madness – Bumper Stickers, Israeli Hip-Hop and more!** [Mandatory for all 7th grade students and parents. 1st hour only] (*Instructor DEVRA AARONS, 7th Grade teacher and Director of Contra Costa Midrasha*) Inviting all 7th grade parents and teens to get a taste of Midrasha! We'll listen to the music of hip-hop band, Hadag Nachash (The Snake Fish), talking about it as a window into Israeli culture. Through their song, "Shirat Hasticker" (The Sticker Song), we'll also create bumper stickers based on our personal passions and interests. This lesson will be a model for the type of learning that happens at Midrasha. We'll also take some time that morning to discuss the Midrasha experience with teens who are in it. Join in for what makes Midrasha teens, "Thank G-d its Wednesday!"
- ☆ **Twisting the God Pretzel: Jewish Yoga [2nd hour only]** (*Instructor DEVRA AARONS, 7th Grade teacher and Director of Contra Costa Midrasha*) Get connected with your body and your inner holiness with this easy, low-key yoga class. We will do some easy yoga moves, talk about being "b'tzelem elohim" or created in the image of G-d and some light meditating. You don't have to come dressed "yoga chic" from Lululemon, but loose clothes are recommended.
- ☆ **Unlocking the Secrets of the Prayer Book:** (*Instructor CANTOR CHABON*) Have you ever come to services and wondered why certain prayers follow others? Why you bow when you do? Why some melodies never change and others are ever-changing? Join Cantor Chabon in an exploration of the prayer book and get answers to all of your liturgy questions! The path to feeling comfortable with Shabbat prayer begins with understanding the siddur. Come with questions and we'll engage in a lively discussion.
- ☆ **Lech Lecha, Putting a Family Lens on the Story of Abraham** (*Instructor ELLEN FASMAN*) What are the different ways of studying Torah? By using the story of Goldilox and the Three Bears, we will learn the traditional methods of Torah study... and explore the Parshat Lech Lecha.
- ☆ **Israel, let's go! Come take a virtual tour!** (*Instructor JULIA BABKA-KURZROCK*) Come learn about Israel... plan a future trip or just learn more about Israel: her ancient history, modern inventions and high tech, family destinations, night life, culture, successful agriculture and irrigation, mountains, deserts (yes, Mr. Twain, they're still there), vineyards (excellent wines), great cuisine and more. If you have photos from your trip to Israel, please contact Morah Julia to get them in the slide show.
- ☆ **Jewish Aerobics – Israeli Dance until you Shvitz [1st hour only]** (*Instructor PHIL HANKIN*) Once upon a time, I made a living teaching Israeli dance at camps, synagogues, and even Bar/Bat Mitzvah parties. Better yet, I was 15 pounds lighter. Interested in getting your shvitz on? We will learn the basic Israeli dance steps so you will not feel like an outsider during the next group Hora. We will also look at the evolution of Israeli dance as a form of storytelling.
- ☆ **Pirkei Avot Through Art** (*Instructor HAGIT MILLER*) Pirkei Avot. What is it? These are the Torah's views on ethics and interpersonal relationships. Rabbi Ben Azzai said "*Mitzvah Goreret Mitzvah Avera*h Goreret Averah." Come learn what Ben Azzai's Mishnah (teaching) means by participating in a discussion followed by an art project.
- ☆ **The Gift of Challah** (*Instructor ALIZA MAY*) What is the biblical origin of the word "Challah" and what is its importance in Jewish ritual? In this workshop we will have a lively discussion about bread, the earth, the home ritual of Shabbat, and the practical experience of braiding and baking Challah in different braiding styles.
- ☆ **"And now that you don't have to be perfect, you can be good"** (*Instructor RABBI GUTTERMAN*) Join Rabbi Gutterman for a look at some of our most memorable stories from the Torah, in which flawed human beings do incredible things. What can their lives teach us about our own strivings? How can Judaism help us celebrate our successes, and forgive ourselves for our weaknesses? This will be a lively discussion for parents and students alike! Recommended for students in grades 4 and above.

Contributions

GENERAL FUND

In memory of John Sutherland
In memory of Ida Shiela Salusky
Monica Salusky & John Sutherland
In memory of Eda Leibson
Ellin and Craig Sadur
In memory of Robert Pomeroy
Lance and Robert Canter
In memory of Ann Christian
Joni and Mal Vineberg
In memory of Reba Rabiner
Karen Lapin
In honor of the birth of our grandson Hugo Birks Tama
Sharon and Hugh Tama
In memory of Elizabeth Grossman
In memory of Aaron Greenfield
Steven Greenfield
In memory of Bob Pomeroy
In memory of Bruce Macrae
Lynette and Alan Scharlach
In honor of the installation of Rabbi Gutterman
Phil and Nicky Weismehl
In memory of Jerome Kushnick
Beverly and Phillip Winslow
In memory of Louis Becker
Susan and John Klein
In memory of Frank Lerner
Jill and Kevin Wilk
In memory of Emily Parker
Patricia Viera
In memory of Sue Rattner
In memory of Clara Medvin
Deborah and Alvin Medvin
In memory of Charles Trepper
Alvin Trepper
In memory of Lewis Patuto
Julie and Joseph Patute

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

With thanks to Rabbi Gutterman
Lara & Joel Rosen
In honor of the birth of our grandson
Pamela and Albert Palitz
In appreciation of Rabbi Gutterman
Paul Cohen
In memory of Lawrence Shaw
Idelle Lipman
In memory of Fritz Gewing
Anna and Walter Gewing
In memory of Phil Weiner
Kathy and Steve Weiner
In appreciation of B'nai Tikvah
Judith and Scott Barrall

CANTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In appreciation of B'nai Tikvah
Judith and Scott Barrall
In memory of Marti Ann Schwartz
Cindy Turner and Brian Schwartz

GENERAL FUND FOR CANTOR'S MUSICAL PROGRAMS

In memory of Sydney Rapoport
Cookie Svingos
In memory of Sidney Schwartz
Cindy Turner & Brian Schwartz
In memory of Anthony Aaron Micco
Faith Micco

JAMES COHEN MEMORIAL FUND

In memory of Alfred Groff's father
Arlene and Alan Gould

CANTOR STEPHEN RICHARDS MUSICAL ENRICHMENT/CHOIR FUND

In memory of Sidney Solomon
In memory of Bob Pomeroy
Marjorie and Cantor Stephen Richards
In memory of John Sullenberger
Susan and John Klein
In honor of Cantor Richards
Danielle Usatin and Nicholas Zaiko

ABRAHAM NIVER SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In memory of Victor Mazer
In memory of Selma Mazer
Karen & Kevin Nicles
In memory of Henry M. Spack
Barbara Spack

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

In memory of John Sullenberger
Kathy and Marc Berger
Judy and Walt Blum
In memory of Robert Pomeroy
Judy and Walt Blum
Bonnie and Mark Tornheim
In appreciation of CBT
Judy Weil
In memory of Harry Maslow
Michael Fischer

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



Fun with **TIKVAH TOTS** continues in the new year! Families with little ones are invited to join our monthly Friday morning playgroups: January 9 and February 13, from 10:00-11:00am. The first 45 minutes are devoted to free play for the kids and chat time for adults. To close out the hour, Rabbi Gutterman leads the group in Shabbat songs, with a story, the blessings and an informal Kiddush of juice and challah. Formal rsvp's are not required, though if you know you'll be attending and can let Judy Blum in our office know (judyblum@tikvah.org) that's always helpful. Tikvah Tots is ideal for children 3 years old and younger, and the grown-ups who love them! New and returning attendees are welcome; we look forward to seeing you.

TOT SHABBATS and FAMILY SHABBAT SERVICES

Start 2015 off by marking your monthly calendar for the 1st Friday of the month!

January 2 and February 6

Warm up with 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, January 25 and February 22
from 10 am - noon

for music time, special art projects and lots of fun and playing!

Appropriate for children under 5!

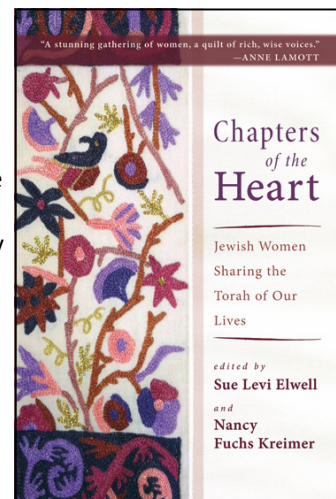
No charge to attend. For Qs email Leaht Segev - leeaht@hotmail.com.



CHAPTERS OF THE HEART

On Tuesday, February 17 at 7:00pm, Book Sisters invites you to meet and learn from the editor of "Chapters of the Heart" – a powerful collection of essays by leading Jewish thinkers and change-makers. Rabbi Sue Levi Elwell will share her experiences as editor and contributor to this acclaimed volume that welcomes you into the lives and the stories of extraordinary Jewish feminists. Each of the writers asks, "how does this chapter of my life reflect — or challenge — my understanding of myself as a Jew? When does Judaism help or hinder me as I make my way through my day, my week, my life?" We'll meet a range of wise women who ask themselves challenging questions; you may discover some deep questions and insights of your own.

Rabbi Elwell's presentation will include Q&A and an opportunity for book signing. This very special event is free and open to the entire community.



Men of CBT

By Bob Grossman, President

The Contemporary Jewish Museum - Sunday, January 18

Join us for a walk through of the Arnold Newman Master Class Series from 11 am to 3 pm. We will also have lunch. Destination to be determined....

Arnold Newman (1918–2006) was one of the most productive, creative, influential and successful portrait photographers of the twentieth century. With great sensitivity and care, he incorporated the personal environment, the work, and the intellectual background of the subject in his photographs. For more information about the exhibit, visit www.the.cjm.org.

Game Night Is Back at CBT - Saturday, January 31

There will be Poker, Mah Jongg, and other board games.

Come, schmooze and play. Please bring a nosh to share. Poker players - this time we are playing for real dollars!! \$25 buy-ins gets you \$300 in chips and you can buy in as much as you like. At the end of game night Prizes will be awarded to the 1st, 2nd and (depending on # of players) 3rd place winners with the most \$\$\$.



This will be a FUNDRAISER for the Men of CBT with funds going towards upcoming events. Men, come and support our Men of CBT even if you don't play poker. There will be other games as well to play like Rummy-que, and Sequence.

We are playing Bocce.....Sunday, February 22

Join us for Bocce Ball at Campo de Bocce in Livermore. We will all meet at CBT at 11 am and carpool. Bocce Ball entrance fee will be paid for by the Men Of CBT. Brunch and drinks are Dutch!!! We have always enjoyed the fun competitiveness with the group.

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.

Experience the Israel Behind the Headlines
The April 2015 Community Trip to Israel
Sunday, January 11 4:00 pm
CBT Library

Join Rabbi Asher and Riva Gambert at an informational meeting where details of our exciting journey to the heart of Israel will be explored.

Plus a special sneak preview of the 20th Annual East Bay International Jewish Film Festival and a screening of the Israeli short feature *Dear God*.

Admission is free.



Photo from "Dear God," an 13-minute short feature from the Haifa Film Festival.

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 Jewish Federation
The Jewish Community Foundation
OF THE EAST BAY

Learn to Chant Torah with Cantor Chabon!

For centuries the Torah has been chanted using cantillation, an ancient system of markings called tropes that teach you how to chant the text.

It's complex and incredibly interesting.

Cantillation brings the Torah to life, emphasizing important words or phrases and drawing the listener's attention to those phrases through music.

It's a very powerful way of connecting to the Torah.

If you have ever wanted to chant Torah,
now is the time!

The class will be held on four Thursdays from 7:30-9:00 in our library: January 22nd, February 5th, 12th, and 19th.
(No class on January 29th.)

For Qs and to sign up email cantorhabon@tikvah.org.

JANUARY 2015 Tevet - Sh'vat 5775

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
	12:30pm - 1:30pm Yoga	NO Religious School 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah	New Year's Eve NO Midrasha 10:00am Open Bridge	New Year's Day Office Closed	5:30pm Tot Shabbat 6:00pm Pizza dinner 6:30pm Family Shabbat Service	Parashat Vayechi 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9:30am - 12:00pm Religious School	12:30pm - 1:30pm Yoga	10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School 7:00pm - 8:00pm Social Action Meeting - w/guest speaker	10:00am Open Bridge 7:00pm Mah Jongg 7:15pm Midrasha 7:30pm - 8:30pm The Story of the Jews	6:00pm - 7:00pm Yoga	10:00am Tikvah Tots 6:30pm Shabbat Service w/guest speaker	Parashat Shemot 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
9:30am - 12:00pm Religious School 11:00am Sisterhood to CJM 4:00pm - 5:00pm Community Israel Trip Meeting	12:30pm - 1:30pm Yoga 6:00pm Executive Board meeting 6:30pm - 8:00pm CBT Ed Committee Meeting 7:30pm Ritual Committee 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	7:30pm Shir Joy	Parashat Vaera 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
NO Religious School 11:00am - 3:00pm Men of CBT to CJM	Martin Luther King Day Office Closed 12:30pm - 1:30pm Yoga	10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School 6:30pm Book Sisters	NO Midrasha 10:00am Open Bridge 7:00pm Mah Jongg	6:00pm - 7:00pm Yoga 7:30pm - 9:00pm Trobe Class	6:30pm Shabbat Service	Parashat Bo 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan 7:00pm 7th grade Havdallah event 7:00pm - 10:00pm Blues & Schmooze
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
9:30am - 12:00pm Religious School 10:00am - 12:00pm K'tan Tan	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	10:00am Open Bridge 7:15pm Midrasha	6:00pm - 7:00pm Yoga	Midrasha Winter Retreat at Camp Newman 6:30pm - 7:30pm Shabbat Service - 4th graders participating	Parashat Beshalach 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan - Shabbat Shira! 7:30pm Game Night!

BUILDING JEWISH BRIDGES FRIDAY, JANUARY 9

Join us for services on Friday, January 9 at 6:30pm, when Dawn Kepler, founding director of Building Jewish Bridges, will be our guest speaker. Dawn has worked extensively with interfaith and intercultural couples and families for 18 years, helping them find meaningful paths into Judaism. As part of her work, she enjoys creating new Jewish rituals, and will be speaking with us about the special place name and naming rituals holds in our tradition. This dovetails with the start of a new book of the Torah called Shemot, in which the Twelve Tribes of Israel are named. Dawn's presentation will be one that speaks to all of us; please join us in welcoming her back to B'nai Tikvah!



Jeff Gilman, Phil & Nicky Weismehl at Roots & Branches concert

FEBRUARY 2015 Sh'vat - Adar 5775

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Midrasha Winter Retreat at Camp Newman 9:30am - 12:00pm Religious School	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	Tu BiShvat 10:00am Open Bridge 7:00pm Mah Jongg 7:15pm Midrasha	6:00pm - 7:00pm Yoga 7:30pm - 9:00pm Trope Class	5:30pm Tot Shabbat 6:00pm Pizza dinner 6:30pm Family Shabbat Service w/Tu B'Shevat Oneg	Parashat Yitro 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan 4:30pm - 5:30pm Tu B'Shevat hike - Lafayette Reservoir 6:00pm NFTY event
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
9:30am - 12:00pm Religious School - 2nd Annual Day of Learning for all Families	12:30pm - 1:30pm Yoga 6:00pm Executive Board meeting 6:30pm - 8:00pm CBT Ed Committee 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 7:30pm - 8:30pm The Story of the Jews	6:00pm - 7:00pm Yoga 7:30pm - 9:00pm Trope Class	10:00am Tikvah Tots 6:30pm Shabbat Service	Parashat Mishpatim Shabbat Shekalim Valentine's Day 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Shabbat Service - Bar Mitzvah of Saul Bronstone
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
NO Religious School	Office Closed Presidents' Day (Washington's Birthday) 12:30pm - 1:30pm Yoga	NO Religious School 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 7:00pm Book Sisters	10:00am Open Bridge 7:15pm Midrasha	6:00pm - 7:00pm Yoga 7:30pm - 9:00pm Trope Class	7:30pm Shir Joy - Men of CBT Shabbat	Parashat Terumah 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Shabbat Service - Bat Mitzvah of Kaitlin Shepard
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
9:30am - 12:00pm Religious School 10:00am - 12:00pm K'tan Tan 11:00am Men of CBT - Bocce Ball 2:30pm Book Sisters to Leshar	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	10:00am Open Bridge 7:15pm Midrasha	6:00pm - 7:00pm Yoga 7:00pm - 9:00pm Choir rehearsal	6:30pm Shabbat Service	Parashat Tetzaveh Shabbat Zachor 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan



Cantor Chabon, Rita Zeiler & Shira Kammen during Roots & Branches concert

Tu B'Shevat @ Lafayette Reservoir

On Saturday, February 7, in honor of Tu B'Shevat, we'll be taking a community walk around the Lafayette Reservoir.

We'll gather at the Recreation Area, 3849 Mount Diablo Blvd at 3:00pm.

Park at one of the numbered spaces as you enter the park, and as you're facing the Reservoir, go to the left through the parking area toward the playground/group picnic area to meet. We'll plan to leave at 3:15, return about an hour later, and close with informal conversation with Rabbi Gutterman about Judaism and the environment, and an early Havdallah to end Shabbat.

All are welcome to join us!

“Why Midrasha Teens and Staff are Grateful for Midrasha”

This Winter we’ve been trying a new way for all of us to think about Contra Costa Midrasha with what I am calling our “gratefulness” campaign. During break, we are asking our teens and educators to share their thoughts about Midrasha, specifically how or why they are grateful for Midrasha. Here are a few highlights:

I am grateful to Midrasha because...

- “...I finally figured out what being Jewish means to me!” – Delaney Hoffman, Class of 2016
- “...being Jewish is a wonderful privilege.” – Jared Brogdon, Class of 2015
- “...I can make connections with all the amazing Jewish in the area where we can all be ourselves.” – Jack Joseph, Class of 2015 (and a member of B’nai Shalom!)
- “...I get the opportunity to be in a Jewish community, where everyone shares their love and respect for one another.” – Harrison Ellman, CCM educator

The campaign has also highlighted the value of Midrasha as a community creator for our teens. Two of our staff event wrote they are grateful because, “we’ve been friends for 10 years.” Emma Rosenthal grew up at Beth Abraham in Oakland and Josh Neuman grew up at B’nai Shalom in Walnut Creek. They met and maintained their friendship at Midrasha retreats. Over the years they have stayed close and now they both teach at Contra Costa Midrasha.

Many studies have shown that teens’ Jewish identity comes largely out of having close Jewish friends and networks. So while it may seem like Midrasha is only a place for social interactions, those friendships are the foundation upon which all Jewish connections happen. For example, both our 11th and 12th grade students are deeply bonded as classes. It allows the teens to be vulnerable with each other. In turn, this enables their educators to hold meaningful conversations that are impactful and transformative.

We created this campaign specifically to share with you – our community – what Midrasha gives to our teens and to our staff. We invite you to join us this holiday season to see this photo exhibit (updated images can be seen each week on Contra Costa Midrasha’s Facebook page) – where our teens, staff, parents, alumni and more – share their stories of gratitude for Midrasha. We hope that you will show your reciprocal thankfulness by making a “gift of gratitude” to Contra Costa Midrasha. Thanks! To make a gift, visit our website, www.ccmidrasha.com and click on the “Donate Now” button in the upper right hand corner.

Our Winter/Spring 2015 semester begins January 7th. This is a great way for teens to join Midrasha mid-year! 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 - for CCM’s Annual Fundraiser Event. This year’s theme is “superheroes.” We invite all of you to join us again this year at Beth Chaim Congregation at 6:30pm for an evening of music (courtesy of B’nai Tikvah’s house band, “The Tikvah Tones”), great food and desserts and drinks, featuring “superhero” themed cocktails. (Krazy Kryptonite punch, anyone?) Your support of Contra Costa Midrasha will make you a Midrasha superhero! For more information about this event, or to purchase event tickets visit our website at www.ccmidrasha.com/annual-event.

For more information about Contra Costa Midrasha’s 2014-15 year, visit our website at www.ccmidrasha.com, or contact us at office@ccmidrasha.com or 925/944-4701.



President's Message.....

(continued from page 3)

Thinking globally, be informed about what is happening in Israel. Be informed about what is happening right here in America. Discuss your opinions, write a letter to elected officials, contribute in some small way to social justice, and bring more people to our temple. You can make a big difference. Don't discount Margaret Mead's claim that it takes but a single person to make a huge difference.

At the beginning of this new year, think of your family, your friends, and then what you can give back to our community. This has been a remarkable year for us. Let's celebrate it through action in the coming year.

I hope this year shines upon all of you and that you feel the magic of a new year.

Ken He Ratzon - May It Be God's Will.



Bob Canter was honored during Religious School's Chanukah assembly for his many years as a teacher and CBT board member.

GAN SHALOM CEMETERY

The Board of Trustees of Congregation B'nai Tikvah has approved the establishment and the location of the B'nai Tikvah Garden at Gan Shalom Cemetery, 1100 Bear Creek Road, Briones.

For those who have purchased plots and those considering a "pre-need" purchase,

please contact Jay Lewis, Managing Funeral Director at Sinai Memorial Chapel, 3415 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, at (925) 962-3636.



Social Action

By Tina Guterman, Chair

Thank you to everyone who donated coats over these past couple of months. At the time of this writing (Mid December), we have collected about 30 coats, which have been distributed to families through Vestia and are of great use to those who need them.

CBT's Tzedakah Recipient for January-March: Social Action's next meeting will be **Tuesday, January 6th at 7:00 pm.** Please join us to hear a presentation, by Amy Lynch, director of **ARM of Care**, which is a local agency that provides expressive arts therapies (art, recreation, movement) to youth in our area who have been victims of human trafficking. ARM of Care currently has partnered with 6 agencies serving sexually exploited youth and is continuing to expand. For the months of January through March, ARM of Care will be B'nai Tikvah's Tzedakah recipient. Hope that you can come to hear about this important work. Light refreshments will be served.

Update on DACA: The Social Action Committee is continuing its involvement with the Multi-Faith Immigration Coalition for Action (MICA) supporting immigration justice programs. Last year MICA launched a successful program to provide financial assistance and general support to Dreamers and their families who were applying for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status. Over \$5000 was raised by congregations supporting 20 applicants, but more is needed. There is now a waiting list and this spring a similar process will begin for the estimated 5 million undocumented parents of U.S. citizens who will be eligible for new status under President Obama's Executive Order. MICA is also participating in a program to assist undocumented immigrants and children who have been released on bond awaiting deportation proceedings. A change of clothes, toiletries, and snacks are being collected and volunteers are also needed to accompany these people to airports, bus stations, or back to families in whose custody they have been released. If you are interested in donating money, supplies, or learning how to help with post-release accompaniment, please contact Michael Fischer at 925-212-9653 or mjf1155@ca.astound.net.

Welcome to our newest members

Anjali and Judson Brandeis
Sydney, 8.12.02, Sabrina 5.26.04,
Owen 6.1.06, Olivia 6.1.06

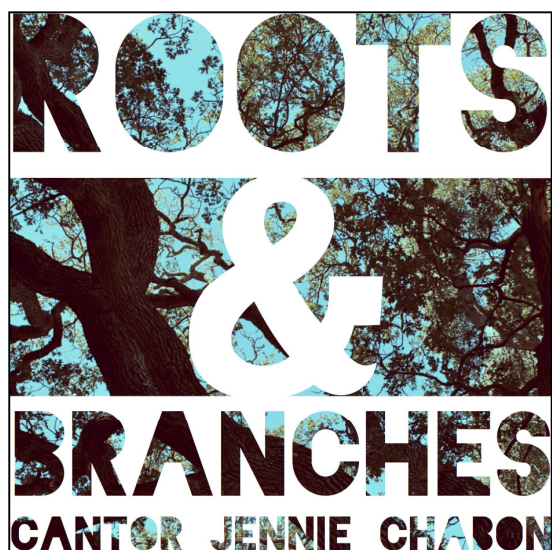
Donna and Barry Brian

Beth and Carl Riseman

(continued from page 1)

have ever been interested in increasing your participation at our sweet shul, now would be a great time to get more involved. We have so much potential and our future depends on your voices.

As we begin 2015 and you find yourselves envisioning the year ahead, I encourage you to contribute your time and energy to our wonderful community at B'nai Tikvah. It really is a unique and special place because of the people who choose to belong here. We welcome your thoughts and ideas and most of all, your beautiful spirits that give us all hope for the Jewish future.



Cantor's 3rd CD is available through the Temple Office or Gift Shop. \$18 donation each. Members can purchase on line.

Shalom Connection

Condolences to:

Pat Eisner and family on the loss of her father,
Robert Pomeroy
Joseph Patute and family on the loss of his brother,
Lewis Patuto

Mazel Tov to:

Lynette and Alan Scharlach on the birth of grandson,
Owen Gerard Quezada
Melanie and John Sandler on the birth of granddaughter,
Perla Kay Anesoar
Nancy and Arthur Solomon on the birth of granddaughter,
Calli Renee Solomon

By Phil Paris, Chair

The Story of the Jews

Everyone is invited to see the final three episodes of our recent Wednesday evening series, The Story of the Jews as narrated by Simon Schama. We have already seen the earliest parts of our history including our bondage in Egypt and the Exodus as led by Moses after ten devastating plagues suffered by the people of Egypt. We continued with centuries of discrimination and abuse, broken up by periods of relative freedom and a marvelous age of creativity while living in Arab countries. Unfortunately, those periods of acceptance came to a cruel end as Jews were expelled from the lands of Spain and Portugal. Nevertheless, the Jewish people persevered, maintaining their faith and looking forward to an uncertain future. Come to our sanctuary on the following Wednesday evenings at 7:30 and learn just what was in store for them.

January 7th - A Leap of Faith
February 11th - Over the Rainbow
March 18th - Return

TRIVIA NIGHT RECAP!!

Nearly 100 players on 13 teams participated in the 12th Congregation B'nai Tikvah Team Trivia Challenge in November. They tackled 100 challenging questions while enjoying hors d'oeuvres, snacks, wine and dessert.

The final results were close, with the top three teams finishing with 85, 84 and 83 correct answers respectively. All proceeds from the event, about \$2300, went to support this year's High Holiday Appeal.



Rabbi Gutterman's first Trivia Night!

Thanks to all who attended for your support. And a great big thanks to our volunteers, without whom the evening could not have happened – Annette Cohn, Bob and Mason Grossman, John and Susan Klein, Amy Lichtenstein, Rich Sauve and Terri Waterman – and to the Grocery Outlet, the Men of CBT, and Rocco's Pizzeria Ristorante, all of whom donated food, drinks or prizes for the event.

The CBT Trivia Guys -
Bob Canter, Mike Cohn and Dave Specland

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

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

For membership information, please contact the Temple Office.

WHAT TO DO ON A DREARY SATURDAY EVENING IN JANUARY?!

Come to CBT!

"Blues and Schmooze" with the Tikvah Tones

Saturday, January 24 7 - 10 pm

You asked for it and you got it!

The renowned Tikvah Tones are back for your listening and dancing pleasure and for no apparent reason other than getting our community together for a relaxed evening of music and just plain schmoozing with your community.

They'll play cool jazz, Jewish music, blues & rock n' roll.

No dress code - come as comfortable as you want to be.

We ask that you do bring an \$18 donation pp, a plate of nosh, and if you love to drink a particular wine or beer - bring that too!

So don't miss this night of just hanging out.

RSVPs are appreciated. Just let us know you're coming!!

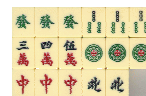
Email judyblum@tikvah.org.

SISTERHOOD & MEN OF CBT

INVITE YOU TO
GAME NIGHT AT CBT!

Come play
Poker and Mah Jongg
Bunko or bring a board game
for something different.

Saturday, January 31
7:30 pm CBT Social Hall



Please bring a nosh to share.
RSVP to raynaravitz@gmail.com
by January 25.



Adults only please!