
Tikvah Talk

Vol. 34 Iss. 5

Congregation B'nai Tikvah
Walnut Creek, CA

March / April 2015

Shalom, B'nai Tikvah!

By Rabbi Rebecca Gutterman



As I write these words, we find ourselves enveloped in the Torah portions that detail the early stages of the Israelites' journey from slavery towards freedom. One of the readings in our Friday night service reminds us, "the winding way to that promise passes through the wilderness." And it was wilderness for our people, in every sense of that word. This became the setting not only for their literal journey, but also for their coming to understand who they were in relationship to God, each other and themselves. The least provocation – hunger, thirst, resentment or fear of the unknown that lay ahead – could and did cause bouts of complaining and rebellion many times over. It's no wonder that wilderness is still our people's central motif for life's transitions and uncertainties!

It's unlikely that these wilderness moments and seasons, with the struggle they so often bring, are going to disappear anytime soon. The question then becomes, how do we search out meaningful paths through them? Will we, or more to the point, how will we find ways to connect to that sense of promise that passes through the wilderness? In the words of Rabbi Richard Address, "might the moments we spend moving from stage to stage in our own lives define who we are and what we may become?"

I've heard it said that the pause is part of the movement. If that's so, then the Israelites' episodes of stubbornness and spiritual backtracking in the wilderness might actually have been a more constructive part of their journey than they realized. Each of these episodes, while difficult for everyone at the time, led to a renewed sense of purpose on their part, and perhaps even shored up their strength for journey to come.

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Reflections...

By Cantor Jennie Chabon



On February 19 I sent this article out as a weekly email to our community. I had intended to just publish it here, but decided upon encouragement to send it out as an email as well. The day that I sent it, I received several emails back from congregants saying that, for various reasons, they had needed the message in the email that very day. If I hadn't sent it, I wouldn't have reached people when they needed to be found. I have no other explanation for this than God.....

When I was in cantorial school, part of my training involved several months of clinical pastoral education. My classmates and I were getting very good at understanding liturgy and praying our hearts out, but none of us had spent time at the hospital, sitting by the bedsides of sick and dying people. It turns out that in order to become a cantor or a rabbi, this is a pretty critical part of your education. To prepare for this experience, you get basically no training at all. You show up at the hospital, go to the chaplain's office to receive your official badge, and then head off to wherever you are sent for the day.

I was thinking about this period of my life recently as I re-read an amazing book written by a woman named Nadia Bolz-Weber. She is the founding pastor of a church in Denver called House for all Sinners and Saints. In recalling her own time doing chaplaincy training, she tells the story of being sent to the trauma room of an ER one day. After looking around at all the action in the room and not knowing how to help, she found a nurse to ask her what she was supposed to be doing. The nurse said, "Your job is to be aware of God's presence in the room while we do our jobs."

I love this story because it makes the role of clergy of different faiths feel universal. There is a lot that I don't feel prepared to do in all kinds of situations in life, but being aware of God's presence? That one I think I've got covered. What makes that particularly

(continued on page 15)

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.

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

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CONGREGATIONAL OFFICERS

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".....And the women dancing with their timbrels followed Miriam as she sang her song...."

Come celebrate together and join women for B'nai Tikvah's annual Women's Seder/ Sephardic potluck, Sunday, March 29 at 4pm in our social hall.

Get ideas for Sephardic foods (fish, chicken, veggies, salad, charoset, etc.) by picking up one of Cookie Svingos' recipe booklets available in the Temple office, or go on-line and enjoy trying some new tasty dishes. Please RSVP to Ruth Goldenberg, email ruthiegold@gmail.com, or to the "signupgenius" link that will be sent electronically.



Please indicate if you would like to help with some of the tasks for this inspiring event.

Want to get involved?
Want to make some new friends?

Our Membership and Fundraising Committees can use additional volunteers to help plan events.

Contact Judy Blum in the Temple Office for more information.

Tikvah Talk

Tikvah Talk is published 6 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



Moving to the new schedule of every other month for publishing Tikvah Talk, one would think it would give me more time to consider what I would write for the next article. I'll be honest and say it's always a bit of a crunch when I get Judy's notice that the article is due in short order. Part of the reason for feeling the time pressure to think of something original, heartfelt, brilliant to write is how busy myself and the board members have been and how quickly time flies. We have much going on these days.

First and foremost, I want to say how pleased I am to see Friday night services and onegs so well attended these days. I am seeing more engagement in our services, our Shir Joys, and especially our Saturday morning minyans. In talking to people, I only hear positive feedback and long term hopes for our congregation. Last month, we had the Blues and Schmooze and what a success that was! We had more people than the last time, people noshed and talked, and some even danced. And, I don't feel I'm bragging when I say the Tikvah Tones sounded great! We also had Reuven Marko, chairperson of the Reform Movement in Israel, during a Saturday morning service talk about what is going today in Israel, specifically around the Reform Movement and both its spiritual, and political implications. It was very well attended.

Those are just two examples of why we love our temple so much. Before you know it, we'll have the Purim Spiel, the Women's Seder, the Community Passover Seder, among other events that add so much value to the experience we call B'nai Tikvah. And what I will reiterate over and over is that it is you, our membership, who make our temple what it is - a truly haimisch community. Community is, and has always been, our foundation.

I also want to take this opportunity to welcome our newest members who were honored during the Saturday minyan and Family Shabbat in February. New members are our future and we're glad you're with us.

Finally, I want to let everyone know the main ingredient that makes our temple thrive is our volunteers. We are blessed to have a small number of congregants who do so much for us - from being on the board, to setting up our events, to our Men of CBT and Sisterhood. I am now appealing to everyone else in our congregation. We need more help. We have discussing our next fundraiser, and we need help with that. If you have ever thought of making a real contribution, join the board or a committee - we especially need help with our membership committee and we need to get a fundraising committee off the ground. Contrary to popular belief, it is not overwhelming work - just a couple of hours here and there - and you will

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Turn It, Turn It

By Phil Hankin, Religious School Director



Here are clues to the following riddle:

Significance: Remembers the defeat of a plot to exterminate the Jews

Observances: Public reading of a book of while blotting out the villain's name

Length: 1 day

Customs: Costume parties; drinking; eating fruit-filled triangular cookies

What am I? Hopefully you answered the Jewish holiday of Purim. If so, you won a lifetime supply of Hamentaschen from Costco. What significance does this holiday hold on the Jewish calendar? Purim is one of the most joyous and fun holidays as it commemorates a time when the Jewish people living in Persia were saved from extermination. But why all the revelry and hoopla? Because we are commanded to "eat, drink, and be merry." We are commanded to boo and hiss and attempt to blot out the name of Haman at his very mention during the public reading of the Scroll of Esther. And according to the Talmud, we are required to drink until we cannot tell the difference between "cursed be Haman" and "blessed be Mordecai" (though opinions differ as to exactly how drunk that is). When else can you come to Temple drunk and be loud and obnoxious and dress up in costume? I love this holiday because of its irreverent nature. The High Holidays are solemn and reflective, Passover has its dietary restrictions, and Sukkot makes us eat and sleep outside for a week. But on Adar 14 we party in the streets like its Mardi Gras.

For all the joy on this holiday, Jewish custom tells us that we cannot fully enjoy the day without remembering those less fortunate than ourselves. Therefore, we are commanded to send out gifts of food or drink, and to make gifts to charity. The sending of gifts of food and drink is referred to as Mishloach Manot (lit. sending out portions). It is always the balance that we Jews keep in order to make the world a better place.

Finally, it is also customary to hold carnival-like celebrations on Purim, to perform plays and parodies, and to hold beauty contests. To this end, Congregation B'nai Tikvah will be holding Purim festivities, beginning on Wednesday evening March 4, with our Annual Purim Spiel, Megillah Reading, Pizza Dinner, Carnival games, and Hamentaschen. The evening begins at 5:30pm with dinner and games, followed by the reading of the Megillah and "The Megillah According to Broadway" Spiel. We end the evening with Hamentaschen and refreshments. Then, on Sunday March 8, CBT Religious School's 7th Grade class is sponsoring its annual Mitzvah Day program for the school families and the congregation in lieu of regular classes. There will be many hands-on projects available to participate in, both onsite and off, including:

(continued on page 5)

Tuesday, March 10 – 4:30 pm – Contra Costa International Jewish Film Festival

“Magic Men.” Since our Sisterhood is sponsoring this film, we can get group tickets for \$9 each. Let me know if you’d like one no later than March 5. RSVP to raynarav@gmail.com.

Tuesday, March 17 – 7:00 pm – Book Sisters at CBT

“Beyond the Silk” by our own Leslie Rupley. Everyone is invited to this event.

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 a speaker from Trinity House in Walnut Creek for which Nessa Wilk is actively collecting magazines. (Drop them in the basket in the lobby.) Participation by the Sisterhood Members is lovely.

Sunday, March 29 – 4:00 pm – Women’s Seder

Led by our Cantor, Jennie Chabon. This will get you in the mood for Passover for sure! The seder will be potluck with Sephardic dishes being served. No dairy - meat or vegetarian only. Ruth Goldenberg will coordinate the food so please call her at 925.837.0858 to get a recipe or let her know what you would like to make. Or email: ruthiegold@gmail.com.

Sunday, April 12 – 10:00 am Learn how to make a necklace out of a T-shirt at CBT

Shirley Weiner is going to teach us how to do this. Bring T-shirts in whatever color you want. The best t-shirts to use are Mens XL. Bring a 12” ruler, Tailors chalk if shirt is dark or a pencil if shirt is light, Tacky glue and scissors that cut fabric.

Tuesday, April 21 – 6:30 pm – Book Sisters at CBT

Susan Friedman will lead a discussion of “Chapters of the Heart” edited by Rabbi Sue Elwell. This book was presented at the February meeting. Potluck dinner, vegetarian or dairy.

Tuesday, May 19 – 6:30 pm – Book Sisters at CBT

“The Glass Castle” by Jennette Walls

Books recommended by Book Sisters:

“What we Talk about When We Talk About Anne Frank” by Nathan Englander

“The Golem and the Jinni” by Helen Wecker

“A Guide for the Perplexed” by Dara Horn

“Steve Jobs” by Walter Isaacson

“The Goldfinch” by Donna Tartt

“The Mathematician’s Shiva” by Stuart Rogstaczer

Shalom, B’nai Tikvah.....

(continued from page 1)

And for us, think about those times we pause to assess our circumstances. To quiet our minds, to take a breath and reflect on what our next wisest step may be. Without those pauses, our forward motion would have far less richness and dimension.

I want to offer you one step in particular that may be just the one you are looking for to move your own Jewish journey forward. This coming fall after the High Holidays, I plan to offer another Adult B’nai Mitzvah course of study, to which Cantor Chabon will be a contributing teacher as well. It will be similar to those offered at B’nai Tikvah in the past, in that it will span two years, will cover a range of topics from holidays to life cycle events to liturgy, and will culminate in students having the experience of reading from the Torah at one of our Shabbat services in the Spring of 2017.

Our course will also focus on Jewish identity and community building. Beyond the structure and content of what we’ll learn together, we will reflect on how these aspects of our tradition do or don’t speak to us... and how they might stretch us in ways we haven’t thought of. Adult B’nai Mitzvah will be a journey towards making meaning and finding the engagement in Judaism that speaks most powerfully to each of us.

Announcing a new class at B’nai Tikvah
with Rabbi Gutterman

“Mighty Wrestlings:
Family Relationships in Torah”

This course is for anyone who has ever wanted to gain greater familiarity with our formative stories in the Torah, with an eye towards what they have to teach us in our everyday lives.

There is a wealth of material on topics like parents and children, sibling rivalry, jealousy, aging and forgiveness. No prior experience with Torah Study required. Our course will meet on Tuesday evenings from 7:00-8:30pm on March 24, March 31, April 7, April 14 and April 28. As a contemporary take on our sage Hillel’s words might read: “Mothers... fathers... all the rest is commentary!”

Come and join us.

Turn It, Turn It.....

(continued from page 3)

- ✧ The making and delivering of 125 Mishloach Manot baskets to the residents of the Reutlinger Community for Jewish Living.
- ✧ Making blankets and then delivering the blankets to Shelter's Inc in Martinez
- ✧ Clearing brush and cacti at Walnut Creek Open Space.
- ✧ repairing care packages for Israeli Soldiers.
- ✧ Volunteering at Urban Adamah in Berkeley.
- ✧ Making animal toys to be delivered to a local shelter.

More info will follow soon about which projects you can sign up for and how many slots are available. Hopefully you will all join us on this joyous weekend, ready to "eat, drink, and be merry," and to dress up as your favorite Purim character.

Chag Purim Samech!!

IT'S GONNA BE "A BROADWAY" PURIM!!

This year Purim falls on a Wednesday night - we're starting early so you don't get home late on a 'school' night.

We'll sing, dance, eat, be entertained, and play games.
This is a family event so everyone is welcome and encouraged to COME IN COSTUME!

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4

Everything begins with dinner and carnival games in the social hall at **5:30pm**. At **6:30** we will transition into the sanctuary for the reading of the Megillah, a 'Broadway' Purim Shpiel.

Sign up for the pizza dinner (\$10 / adults, \$5 / children) no later than noon on Tuesday, March 3.
RSVP to judyblum@tikvah.org, drop your check off or Members can sign up on line.

You'll hear some old melodies and favorite songs -
HELLO ESTHER
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
FARMESHT, FARTUMMELED AND FARBLONDGET
FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD

Come and enjoy the community celebration as we get together to take part in an evening of "feasting and merriment" at CBT!

PASSOVER AT THE CBT GIFT SHOP!

Our Gift Shop will be having its
Passover display
Sunday morning March 22nd and 29th
9:00 am - 12:00 pm.

Items on display include:

paper plates and napkins

Seder plates,

Haggadot,

matzah holders,

candle holders and candles,

story books and cookbooks,

Elijah and Miriam cups,

and much more.



(but NO FOOD!)

Irene and Susan look forward to helping you.

Supporting the Gift Shop supports
Your synagogue!



Blues and Schmooze's fantastic entertainment!

Contributions

GENERAL FUND

In memory of David Lewis
Sue and John Lewis

In memory of Eva Tsukerman
Geniya Levikova and Carlos Trujillo

In memory of Sidney Tatz
Shirley and Jeffrey Weiner

In memory of Arthur Becker
Susan and John Klein

In memory of Gertrude Sherman

In memory of Bernice Scharlach
Lynette and Alan Scharlach

In memory of Mildred Newman

In memory of Henry Newman
Miriam and Stanley Newman

In memory of Nathan Jacobson

In memory of Richard Shinozaki
Irene Jacobson and Rick Shinozaki

In memory of Milton Blink
Robin and Larry Gordon

In memory of Anna Billy
Wendy and Dale Billy

In memory of Hannah Glesser
Jordana Green

In honor of the Arnold-Noble Family
Laurence Noble

In memory of Fanny Malkov

In memory of Avrum Girsch Malkov
Rakhil and Naum Sadetskiy

In memory of Harold Wolf Jr.
Andrea and Harold Wolf

In memory of Rudolph Vynanek
Joni and Mal Vineberg

In memory of Shoshana Maizel Fogel
Yonina and Barry Bushell

In memory of Frank Potuto
Julie and Joseph Patute

In memory of Harry Denwitt
Nancy and Arthur Solomon

In memory of Marion Sirota
Ann and Stuart Lutzker

In memory of Abram Eyzerman

In memory of Geniya Hesin
Geniya Levikova and Carlos Trujillo

In memory of Adlin Peter Viera

In memory of Michael Hill McFarlane
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Kathy and Steve Weiner

In memory of Lillian Kalish Weiner
Susan Light and Rob Weiner

In memory of Jeanette Vine

In memory of Malcolm Vineberg, III
Joni and Mal Vineberg

In memory of Judy Blum's father
Chanel and Tracy Benhamou
Laurie and Steve Rabinowitz
Lisa and Howard Wenger
Marcia and Harvey Maslin
Mary Ann and Harry Wittenberg
Patricia and Charles Eisner
Anna and Walter Gewing
Hanna and Fred Carter

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In memory of Max Gewing

In memory of David Gross

In honor of Lo Shem Chavurah
Anna and Walter Gewing

In memory of Esther Leventhal
Diane and Victor Leventhal

In memory of Milt Bobier

In memory of Eileen Slavin
Ronna and Barry Slavin

In memory of Janet Rupley Church
Leslie and Bill Rupley

In honor of Toby Wasserman's speedy recovery
Shirley and Paul Kadden

In memory of Mary Okocha's sister
Midori and Paul Antebi

In memory of Alice Kushnick
Beverly and Philip Winslow

In memory of Lillian Kornhauser
Nancy and Norman Friedman

In honor of Akimi's and Benjamin Nelken's marriage
Pam and Albert Palitz

In memory of Judy Blum's father
Leslie and Bill Rupley

CANTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

With thanks to Cantor Chabon
Leah Salomon and Jason Dulkan

In memory of Henry Wilk

In memory of Nathan Lerner

In memory of Jean Glazer

In memory of Etta Rankin
Nessa and Robert Wilk

RABBI ASHER'S EMERITUS FUND

In honor of the birth of our son Elliot
Zoe Palitz and Brian Goldman

In honor of Elliot's bris and Akimi's wedding
Merriem and Shepard Palitz

In honor of Akimi's and Benjamin Nelken's marriage
Pam and Albert Palitz

In memory of Ted Deutsch
Regina Deutsch
Judy and Walt Blum

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

Fun with TIKVAH TOTS continues!

Families with little ones are invited to join our monthly Friday morning playgroups:

March 13 and **April 17**, from 10:00-11:00am.

(Please note the date change in April from the 2nd to the 3rd Friday of the month, due to Passover).

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 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

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

MARCH 6

Warm up with Tot Shabbat at 5:30 pm

Pizza dinner at 6 pm

Family Shabbat service 6:30 pm

Dinner reservations due Wednesday, March 4.

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

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

(Due to the timing of Pesach, which begins on Friday April 3, there will not be an April Tot Shabbat or Family Service. So be sure to join us in March!)



The Tillie and Rene Molho Endowment for Holocaust Remembrance of the Jewish Community Federation and Foundation of the Greater East Bay invites you to

An evening



ON THE *Holocaust*

and Resistance

Wednesday, April 15, 7:15pm
Temple Isaiah

"How do We Speak about the Holocaust and Contemporary Anti-Semitism to Younger Generations?"

Guest Speaker:

Dr. Michael Berenbaum

Project Director of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum (1988-1993)

Prayers of Remembrance and Candlelighting

Admission is free and open to the public. For information, contact 510.809.4953 or riva@jfed.org.

Contributions.....

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GENERAL FUND FOR CANTOR'S MUSICAL PROGRAMS

In memory of Molly Weiss Tanner

Leslie and Bill Rupley

In memory of Jackie Boyd

Sharon and Ron Brown

In memory of Belle Lerner

In memory of Frank Lerner

Nessa and Robert Wilk

In memory of Stanley Kaplan

In memory of Howard Kaplan

Kelly and Aaron Kaplan

In memory of Lewis Patuto

In memory of Mordechai Ravid

In memory of Linda Moore McCay

Mary Ann and Harry Wittenberg

In appreciation of Cantor Chabon

Laura and Bruce Presnick

JAMES COHEN MEMORIAL FUND

In memory of Robert Zeimer

In memory of George Maisels

In memory of Goldie Cohen

In memory of Dorothy Rosenbloom

Sally Cohen

CANTOR STEPHEN RICHARDS MUSICAL ENRICHMENT/CHOIR FUND

In memory of Samuel Teitelman

In memory of Moshe Teitelman

Carol and Allen Teitelman

In memory of Mildred Volov

In memory of Sidney Volov

Ruth and Larry Goldenberg

STEPHAN JASPAN RELIGIOUS SCHOOL FUND

In memory of Blanche Resnick

Carol and Matthias Kurzrock

ABRAHAM NIVER SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In memory of Nathan Bronstone

In memory of Isaac Bronstone

Madeleine and Trace Bronstone

MORDOCH/NADJARI HOLOCAUST EDUCATION FUND

In memory of Howard Wisner

The Burns Family

In memory of Judy Blum's father

Zaffy and Denis Welch

SOCIAL ACTION FUND

In memory of Matthew Miller

Julie and Robert Miller

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

In memory of Eleanor Cohen

Barbara Johnston

In memory of Marc Kemna

In memory of Daniel Bristow

Gloria Kemna

With thanks to Rabbi Asher & Judy Blum

Anna and Walter Gewing

In honor of Marcy Rubin's Birthday

Susan and Howard Geifman

In memory of David Ziegler

Suzy Ziegler

In memory of Mary Gross

Paula Reinman and Sandy Gross

In memory of Jean Kindall

In memory of Mary Okocha's sister

Katherine and Marc Berger

In memory of Leon Saner

In memory of Barak Ravid

Mazel Tov to the Guss Family on the birth of Hannah

The Paul Family

TREE OF LIFE - a leaf has been added

In living memory

Eleanor Colton Cohen

Mom, Nana, Gigi

Barbara Johnston

In loving memory

Renee & Harry Denwitt

Nancy and Arthur Solomon

Shalom Connection

Condolences to:

Mary Okocha and family on the loss of her sister,

Linda Moore McCay

Stacey Epstein-Corbett and family on the loss of her brother,

Matthew Epstein

Barak Ravid and family on the loss of his father,

Mordechai Ravid

Judy Blum and family on the loss of her father, Ted Deutsch

Mazel Tov to:

Anne and David Bloomberg on the birth of their daughter,

Ruth Hannah

Debra and Gary Zupo on the birth of their daughter,

Quinlyn Fae

Debbie and Marc Usatin on birth of granddaughter,

Lilian Rose Usatin Marks

Janet and Leo Brandess on the birth of grandson,

Zakary Rich

Susan and John Klein on the marriage of David and

Le Michelle Nguyen

Albert and Pam Palitz on the marriage of Akimi and

Benjamin Nelken



YOU'RE INVITED TO OUR ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL PASSOVER SEDER
 Led by Rabbi Gutterman

WHERE: Congregation B'nai Tikvah Social Hall

MENU: A complete Passover meal catered by Sunrise Catering
CHOICE of: brisket of beef, Mary's roasted chicken or
 stuffed squash w/quinoa (GF)

WHEN: Saturday, April 4. Arrive at 6:15 p.m.
 Seder will begin promptly at 6:30 p.m.

COST: 48 / Adults, \$25 / children 4-12 (members)
 \$58 / Adults, \$30 / children 4-12 (guests)

RSVP: Reservations due Tuesday, March 31.

Ceremonial wine
 will be served for the
 Seder.
 If you'd like to bring
 a nice bottle
 for dinner,
 you are welcome
 to do so.

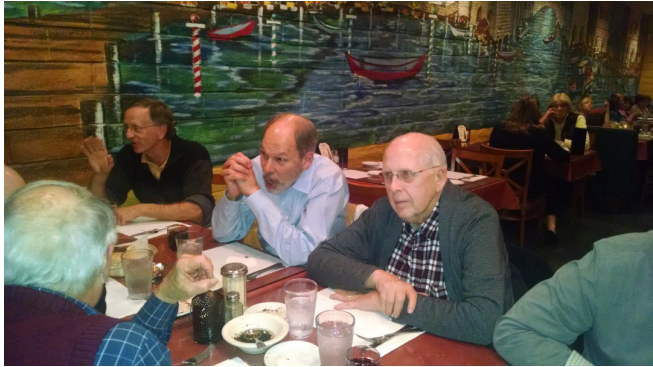
Please return the portion below with your check payable to Congregation B'nai Tikvah
 and mail to CBT, 25 Hillcroft Way, Walnut Creek, CA 94597.
 Members can also make reservations on line.

| Name(s): | Entrée choice: | | |
|----------|----------------|---------|------------|
| | Brisket | Chicken | Vegetarian |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

Enclosed is my (our) check for: _____ adults member \$48 / guest \$58
 _____ children member \$25 / guest \$30

Reservations due Tuesday, March 31.
All reservations must be accompanied by payment.

Our next Men's night out will be Tuesday, March 31st at 7pm (The Tuesday before Passover). Restaurant TBD. Our last Men's night out was at Tullio's in Walnut Creek where a group got together and had a warm evening.



On April 17th The Men of CBT will host Rev. Will McGarvey, Executive Director of the Interfaith Council of Contra, who will speak during our Shir Joy service.

April 19th's Shmeer and Schmooze will include Dr. Jeremy Lieb, a urologist from Pacific Urology in Walnut Creek and CBT member. We will hold a round table and he will discuss Men's Health. Save the date!

Oakland A's Jewish Heritage Night vs Baltimore is scheduled for Tuesday evening, August 4th. Tickets will be available soon so contact me at men.of.cbt@gmail.com to order yours. We ran out last year so reserve your tickets soon!

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 drsresnick@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 BLOOD DRIVE HAS RETURNED: CBT has not hosted a blood drive in several years, but we are doing so this year, through Blood Centers of the Pacific (BCP), on **Sunday, May 3rd from 9:00 to 1:00** in our Social Hall.

*BCP uses an online appointment system, so **all you have to do is:**

1. Go to BloodHeros.com, click on the *donate blood* link, and enter sponsor code *CBT* to register with your name (it is helpful, but not required, to put your email address in too because you will get automatic reminders and other useful information) and **find an appointment time that suits you**

2. Always good to make sure that you are eligible, which you can determine by going to: <http://www.bloodcenters.org/docs/eligibility.pdf> for eligibility information

3. On the morning of the Drive (May 3), you can fill out your Health Questionnaire online, ahead of your appointment, at www.bloodcenters.org. You can also fill it out when you arrive at CBT (just not as efficient for you)

Here is some information about the benefits of giving blood:

- Every one donation of blood saves three lives
- 20 percent of recipients are children
- Giving blood is 100 percent safe
- You can get your cholesterol screened if you want to
- You earn points every time you donate which can be used for movie tickets, DVD's and the like
- You can have a delicious nosh afterward
- You can relax in a comfortable chair, with fellow congregants, looking out at our picturesque view of Mt. Diablo

FAMILY MARKET/LET'S FEED THE KIDS: ICCCC Food Security Task Force/Let's Feed the Kids has asked us to join with them in providing food/produce to the Shelter Inc. Pittsburg Shelter at 84 W. 6th Street where there are 8 families in transitional housing. The food would be provided at the end of the month when EBT/food stamps have run out for the families. We are looking for two volunteers the last Wednesday each month from 1:30-4:00 to share a shift with Shell Ridge volunteers to set up the Family Market (food that will be purchased by Let's Feed the Kids) and help the residents as they fill their bags with their selection of what they would like/need. Please email me if you would like to sign up for a shift - tguterman@aol.com

MARCH 2015 Adar—Nisan 5775

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|---|---|--|--|---|--|
| 1 9:00am - 12:00pm Shop CBT Gift Shop! 9:30am - 12:00pm Religious School | 2 7:30pm Ritual Committee Meeting | 3 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School | 4 Erev Purim Midrasha celebrates Purim 10:00am Open Bridge 5:30pm - 6:30pm Pizza dinner & games 6:30pm - 7:30pm Purimshpiel & Megillah Reading | 5 Purim 7:00pm - 9:00pm Choir rehearsal | 6 Shushan Purim 5:30pm - 6:00pm Tot Shabbat 6:00pm Pizza dinner 6:30pm Family Shabbat Service | 7 East Bay Intl Jewish Film Festival Parashat Ki Tisa 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Shabbat Service - 6th graders participating |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| East Bay Intl Jewish Film Festival | | | | | | |
| 9:00am - 12:00pm Shop CBT Gift Shop! 9:30am - 12:00pm Religious School - MITZVAH DAY 10:00am - 11:30am NJOP class | 6:00pm - 7:00pm 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 5:00pm Sisterhood to Film Festival 7:00pm - 9:00pm Midrasha BODM | Midrasha (CCM visits the Film Festival) 10:00am Open Bridge 7:00pm Mah Jongg | 7:00pm - 9:00pm Choir rehearsal | 10:00am - 11:00am Tikvah Tots 6:30pm Shabbat Service | Parashat Vayakhel-Pekudei Shabbat Parah 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| East Bay Intl Jewish Film Festival 9:00am - 12:00pm Shop CBT Gift Shop! 9:30am - 12:00pm Religious School 10:00am - 11:30am NJOP class | | 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School 7:00pm Book Sisters | 10:00am Open Bridge 7:15pm Midrasha 7:30pm - 8:30pm The Story of the Jews | 7:00pm - 9:00pm Choir rehearsal | 6:00pm - 7:15pm Pot Luck Dinner 7:30pm - 8:30pm Shir Joy - Sisterhood Shabbat | Parashat Vayikra Shabbat HaChodesh 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 9:00am - 12:00pm Shop CBT Gift Shop for PASSOVER! 9:30am - 12:00pm Religious School 10:00am - 11:30am NJOP class | 6:30pm General Board meeting | 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School 7:00pm - 8:30pm Mighty Wrestlings.... | 10:00am Open Bridge 7:00pm Mah Jongg 7:15pm Midrasha | 7:00pm - 9:00pm Choir rehearsal | 6:30pm Shabbat Service w/Choir | Parashat Tzav Shabbat HaGadol 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9:00am - 12:00pm Shop CBT Gift Shop for PASSOVER! 9:30am - 12:00pm Religious School - School Chocolate Seder 10:00am - 11:30am NJOP class 4:00pm Women's Seder | | NO Religious School 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 7:00pm - 8:30pm Mighty Wrestlings.... | 10:00am Open Bridge 7:15pm Midrasha | | (no Shabbat service) 1st Night Passover | 2nd Night Passover 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 6:30pm - 7:30pm Community Seder |

Join us for Shabbat Dinners!

Pizza dinner (at 6 pm) between our Tot Shabbat and Family Shabbat, Friday, March 6.
Adults \$10, children \$5. Reservations due the Wednesday before.

Pot luck dinner (from 6 - 7:15 pm) before Shir Joys services,
Friday, March 20 and April 17. Watch your email for the sign up genius!

APRIL 2015 Nisan - Iyar 5775

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|--|--|--|-------------------------|---|---|
| 29 9:00am - 12:00pm Shop CBT Gift Shop for PASSOVER! 9:30am - 12:00pm Religious School - School Chocolate Seder 10:00am - 11:30am NJOP class 4:00pm Women's Seder | 30 | 31 NO Religious School 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 7:00pm - 8:30pm Mighty Wrestlings.... | 1 10:00am Open Bridge 7:15pm Midrasha | 2 | 3 (no Shabbat service) 1st Night Passover | 4 2nd Night Passover 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 6:30pm Community Seder |
| 5 3rd Night Passover NO Religious School 10:00am - 11:30am NJOP class | 6 4th Night Passover 7:30pm Ritual Committee Meeting | 7 5th Night Passover 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 4:00pm - 5:45pm NO Religious School 7:00pm - 8:30pm Mighty Wrestlings.... | 8 6th Night Passover NO Midrasha 10:00am Open Bridge 7:00pm Mah Jongg | 9 7th Night Passover | 10 Last Day Passover Office Closed 5:30pm - 6:00pm Yiskor Service 6:30pm Shabbat Service | 11 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan |
| 12 NO Religious School 10:00am - 11:30am NJOP class | 13 6:00pm - 7:00pm Executive Board meeting 6:30pm - 7:30pm General Board meeting | 14 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School 7:00pm - 9:00pm Midrasha BODM 7:00pm - 8:30pm Mighty Wrestlings.... | 15 10:00am Open Bridge 7:15pm Community Yom HaShoah 7:15pm Midrasha | 16 Yom HaShoah | 17 10:00am - 11:00am Tikvah Tots 6:00pm - 7:15pm Community Pot Luck dinner 7:30pm - 8:30pm Shir Joy - Social Action Shabbat | 18 Parashat Shmini 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan |
| 19 9:00am - 12:00pm Shop CBT Gift Shop! 9:30am - 12:00pm Religious School 10:00am - 11:30am NJOP class | 20 6:30pm - 8:00pm CBT Ed Committee Meeting | 21 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School | 22 Yom HaZikaron 10:00am Open Bridge 7:00pm Mah Jongg 7:15pm Midrasha | 23 Yom HaAtzma'ut | 24 6:30pm Shabbat Service | 25 Parashat Tazria-Metzora 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan |
| 26 9:00am - 12:00pm Shop CBT Gift Shop! 9:30am - 12:00pm Religious School 10:00am - 11:30am NJOP class | 27 | 28 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School 7:00pm - 8:30pm Mighty Wrestlings.... | 29 Midrasha (7th Grade Open House) 10:00am Open Bridge | 30 | 1 5:30pm - 6:00pm Tot Shabbat 6:00pm Pizza dinner 6:30pm Family Shabbat Service - 2nd graders participating | 2 Parashat Achrei Mot-Kedoshim 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan |



Welcoming a new student to school!

A Window into Wednesday Nights...

At this time of year I do a lot of work with our next incoming class of 7th graders. I meet with teens and parents to introduce them to Midrasha and to share what it is that we do. Here are the questions I hear most often... **What makes Midrasha so special? Why do teens consider Midrasha to be a sanctuary or the “calm space in the middle of their crazy weeks?”** A recent Wednesday night at Midrasha provide a great window to answering that question. For one, **we not only address topics (through a Jewish lens) that are hot on the minds of our teens**, we also provide experiential ways for our teens to deal with those issues. For example, over the last few weeks our 12th graders have been learning about fear and courage. On the final Wednesday in January our seniors went on a field trip to the Diablo Rock Gym in Concord to go rock-climbing. Why? Because it’s a way for them to experience their fear, in a safe environment and with a group of people they already trust. Secondly, **Midrasha provides a space for parents to also work with our staff to better understand their teens.** That same week, teen and family therapist Rikki Sudikoff from Jewish Family and Children’s Services offered a workshop for our 8th grade parents and teens about creating better communication between each other. It’s often a very popular workshop, which includes some fun role-play scenarios. Our parents often leave feeling like it was both fun and useful. Thirdly, Midrasha retreats are the glue of our program. Our Winter retreat, which happened at beautiful Camp Newman, provided a chance for almost 200 Jewish teens from all over the East Bay to be together for Shabbat – to celebrate, relax and hang out together. Over the years our teens have told me that those retreat weekends are where they make the friendships that last them a lifetime. After a weekend of our educators spending time with Midrasha teens, there is also an added level of trust that allows for deeper learning and sharing on Wednesday nights. It’s a great circle.

And speaking of our educators, I have struggled over the years with what is the “right” term to define these amazing people who are the backbone of our organization. I recently spoke with senior, Sammie Fox, who coined this term – Midrasha staff are not just educators but more importantly, mentors. I pressed her further to explain this idea. Educators, she explained, impart information, but they don’t always care about your continued emotional well-being. Midrasha mentors, she said, “have traveled with me, care about me and I travel with them.” Challenge solved. From now on our Midrasha staff will be called educator-mentors. This is a title that suits them so much better for the care and focus they give to our Midrasha teens.

Finally, **I invite all 7th grade teens and parents to mark their calendars for our annual Open House on April 29th.** This is a night for 7th graders to experience Midrasha as it actually happens. They will spend the first hour together, doing fun activities to get to know one another. Then, at break, they will enjoy donuts with the whole community. Finally, during the second hour, 7th graders can join in with any elective that is happening this semester. And parents are invited to an information session, getting the full picture of the five year experience at Midrasha. It’s a great way to test the waters at Midrasha, for teens and parents.

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>.

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.

NJOP Hebrew reading class

Our Hebrew prayer book is the product of careful appraisal and creation over many generations. For anyone familiar with Hebrew letters, but wants to more easily read and translate the words in our Jewish prayers, welcome to our new Hebrew reading class. The National Jewish Outreach Program (NJOP) is sponsoring this free class to start on Sunday mornings. There is no tuition and no charge for the text materials. We will meet in the B’nai Tikvah library at 10 AM for six Sunday mornings starting March 8th.

If you are interested in joining or just want to find out more information, you can email Phil Paris at philip.paris@ymail.com.

President's Message.....

(continued from page 3)

make a tremendous contribution. I can't tell you how much people who volunteer really enjoy the tasks, and even mores, getting to know other congregants - equally as wonderful. So please - think seriously about doing something for the temple - Judy Blum will be happy to talk with you about what we need and what you can do without taking much time out of your regular schedules. Please, this is important and I guarantee you will love the experience.



Books Sisters at "The Book Club" at Leshner

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.



SEE A FILM. SEE THE WORLD

March 7 – 15 at the
Century 16 Theatres Pleasant Hill
Join Congregation B'nai Tikvah on
Tuesday, March 10 5pm

Magic Men

Makram Khoury (*The Syrian Bride, Munich*) won the "Best Actor" award at the Israeli Oscars for his performance in this profound and, at times, humorous drama. As Avraham, an amateur magician, he is upset when his boss sends him to Greece, the country of his youth. But he is even more unhappy upon learning that his travelling companion will be his estranged son Yehuda (Zohar Strauss of *Srugim*), now a devout Hassidic rapper.

Their whirlwind journey will stir up old wounds that will further test the father and son relationship.

Co-sponsor: Congregation B'nai Tikvah Sisterhood.

For a complete schedule and to purchase tickets: www.eastbayjewishfilm.org.



(continued from page 1)

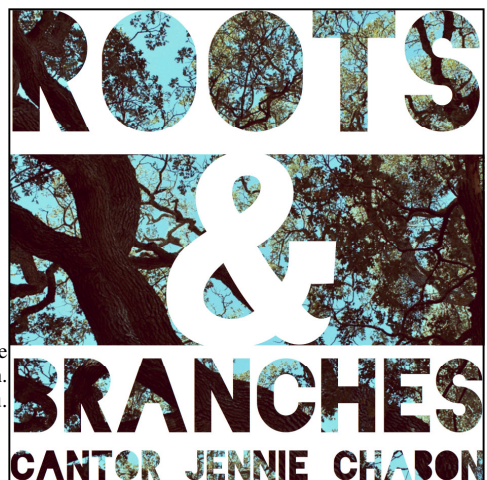
interesting in a Jewish context is that in general, Jews are pretty shy when it comes to talking about God and faith. We don't broadcast our belief in a public way, preferring instead to make our personal relationships with God a very private thing. This, despite the fact that God is central to every piece of our liturgy, to the Torah, and to all of the mitzvot. It's one thing to be a "cultural Jew", or even an atheist Jew. Those kinds of Jews I can understand. But a Jew who believes in God and doesn't want to talk about it? That kind of Jew has always been a mystery to me. Which brings me back to Nadia's book. Reading this book has helped me to understand Christianity and Jesus for the first time in my life. I've never been able to imagine believing in a God who is both human and Divine. But what I finally get about Christianity is this: by believing that God is a person who lived and suffered and experienced life like we do, the concept of God becomes infinitely more relatable. Many Christians talk to God and about God all the time because God for them is a person, with a face and emotions and a life story to hold onto. I can't personally imagine a man being Divine, but I can certainly understand how much easier it would be to talk to and about God if God were a person.

The Jewish concept of God is primarily transcendent--a lofty, intangible presence, which is why it requires so much faith to believe. We don't have a face to attach to this Being. I think I understand now that that's a big piece of why Jews are so much more private about God. It's very hard to put into words a belief in something that you can't see. So I would like to share this with you:

God for me is a feeling deep within my being, and way beyond my broadest imagination. I have felt the presence of God sweep over our sanctuary enough times to know that for me, God is most definitely real. God lives within me and far above me, and stays with me through my greatest joys and my deepest pain. I do not believe that God causes suffering or success. I believe that faith in God enables us to withstand our own suffering and that God rejoices with us when we soar.

As we approach Passover, and re-tell the story of the Exodus -- arguably one of the most majestic of our stories about God -- I urge you to think about your relationship to God. I

Cantor's 3rd CD is available through the Temple Office or Gift Shop. \$18 donation each. It can also be purchased through our website and sent to you.



The Story of the Jews

Everyone is invited to see the final episode 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 at 7:30 pm and learn just what was in store for them.

Wednesday, March 18th - Return



Rabbis Gutterman and Elwell introducing "Chapters of the Heart."

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

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
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Walnut Creek, CA

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

For membership information, please contact the Temple Office.

PASSOVER begins Friday, April 3

Our beautiful Gift Shop will be open for all of your Passover Seder needs.
Sunday morning, March 22nd and 29th
(see page 5)

Our CHOIR will be singing at Shabbat services
Friday, March 27th at 6:30 pm

CANTOR CHABON will be leading a WOMEN'S SEDER
Sunday, March 29th at 4 pm
(see page 2)

Our RELIGIOUS SCHOOL STUDENTS are having a
CHOCOLATE SEDER Sunday, March 29th
(How cool is that?!)

RABBI GUTTERMAN's leading her first CBT COMMUNITY SEDER.
Saturday, April 4th at 6:30 pm
(see page)