
Tikvah Talk

Vol. 35 Iss. 2

Congregation B'nai Tikvah
Walnut Creek, CA

November / December 2015

Shalom, B'nai Tikvah!

By Rabbi Rebecca Gutterman



I write these words the day after Simchat Torah, though by the time you read them the High Holidays will be behind us and 5776 at B'nai Tikvah will be in full swing. That said, these days were so that some measure of reflection is in order!

Many of you shared incredibly positive feedback about your personal experience of these services, and I thank you for that. I also experienced moments of gratitude and fulfillment of my own during this season. Among them were how eagerly the new prayerbook was embraced, the privilege of including congregants in chanting Torah and Haftarah, feeling little ones and their families embrace the holidays with sweetness and laughter at our children's services, and how taken people were with their fellow congregants' reflections on what makes B'nai Tikvah feel like home. That's just to name a few!

The moment of greatest transcendence was also the biggest surprise. It was a new initiative, meaning we were truly all in it together. Towards the end of Neilah, the concluding service on Yom Kippur, we invited people to experience a few private moments in front of the open ark, either on their own or in small groups of friends or family. As Cantor Chabon began to sing Leonard Cohen's "Halleluyah," people quietly formed a line and came forward.

And then? As those of you who were there, or who heard about it know by now, you just kept coming forward! It's been two weeks, and words still escape me when trying to convey the fullness and beauty of those moments. And it's not every day that words escape a rabbi!

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Reflections...

By Cantor Jennie Chabon



Anyone who knows me knows that Yom Kippur is my favorite Jewish day of the year. I have had many conversations trying to explain why I think it is so magical and powerful, but most people don't tend to agree with me. Until this year, that is.

If you spent Yom Kippur with us, then you know that all of our services were quite incredible, beginning with the intensity of Kol Nidrei and moving straight through the beauty of the following day. But if you were with us for our afternoon and Neilah services, then you understand that you participated in something unprecedented in our B'nai Tikvah history.

For those of you who weren't there, allow me to paint a liturgical picture for you. It has been a dream of mine for many years to invite congregants onto the bima during the Avodah service to join me in a full prostration before the ark. I believe (and know from experience) that bringing prayer into your body adds an incredibly powerful layer to the prayer experience. It is one thing to offer a modest bow while praying, to offer a hint of supplication. It is another thing entirely to give yourself over completely, to offer your whole body, your entire being, to lay it all down before the ark.

The text of the Avodah service says that when the people stood outside the Temple gates and heard the high priest utter God's sacred name, they fell on their faces. They were so overcome that they fell to the ground in awe. They offered all of themselves to what they believed in most. How often do we, as American Jews, witness people being willing to fall to the ground for what they believe in? For years I have prostrated by myself at this point in the service, even though the text describes the people prostrating together. And for years I have longed to be joined by my congregation in prostration. So this year, we decided to invite people to prostrate

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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*
Jason Pollack & Leeaht Segev, *Interim*
Co - Directors 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	Dan Lapporte
Vice President	Glenn Gould
Vice President	Jared Goldin
Secretary	Julia Babka-Kurzrock
Treasurer	John Rubenfeld
Past President	Harry Wittenberg

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Bob Grossman	Kelly Kaplan
Idelle Lipman	Bruce Meyers
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Samantha Youngman	

Upcoming B'nai Mitzvah

Bar Mitzvah of Zachary Small
 Son of Gwendolyn and David Small
 Saturday, November 7

Bar Mitzvah of Matthew Winchell
 Son of Tal and Jonathan Winchell
 Saturday, November 14

Bat Mitzvah of Elizabeth Paul
 Daughter of Jenifer and Benjamin Paul
 Saturday, November 21

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

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

Come and get to know your Shul!

Learn about our different committees and
 interest groups and
 how you can get involved.

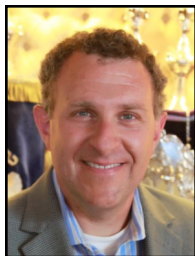
Friday, November 20th at Shir Joy Services.
 Watch your e-mails for details.

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 Dan Lapporte



Our High Holydays 5776 ended with Simchat Torah, the unrolling and rerolling of our Torah, on October 6th. As the fervor and spirituality of the High Holy Days starts to wane, we can focus on the rest of 5776 which promises to be an eventful year for B'nai Tikvah.

For those of you who joined us for the High Holydays, I hope the experience was everything you wanted and more. For those of you who couldn't make it, we were privileged to use "Mishkan Hanefesh," the new Reform Machzor, thanks to a remarkably generous gift from the William Kerr Foundation with Bill Sweet as Trustee. "Mishkan Hanefesh" offered a new way to experience the High Holydays that is symbolic of another change at B'nai Tikvah: Tikvah 2.0. Tikvah 2.0 is the next major release of our Temple. It's not abandoning our roots, but more an addition to what we already have. A big component of Tikvah 2.0 is increased transparency into our operations, so here we go.

In my appeal for our General Fund, I asked for 100% participation and hoped to raise \$50,000. As of September 30, we have

20.9% participation and have raised \$15,888. The General Fund is used to pay the operating expenses of our Temple and I will continue reporting our results through my regular Tikvah Talk articles.

Why? Because you have a right to know where we stand on this appeal and

other financial matters of our Temple. I know we can do better, particularly in the participation column, so please be sure to send in your High Holyday pledge as soon as possible. Remember, whether it's \$18, \$1,800 or anything else, we're looking to build our financial stability and giving to the General Fund is a great way to do that. As always, if you have questions or concerns, please e-mail me at bnaitikvahpresident@gmail.com.

Now that that's out of the way, let me share a few other amazing things happening at B'nai Tikvah:

- Our 18th Annual Restaurant Walk on October 6 featured 23 restaurants and drew over 600 people strolling the streets of downtown Walnut Creek. And raised over \$14,000!
- Our Tikvah 2.0 Havurah Survey has launched which will give you the opportunity to join other B'nai Tikvah members in smaller groups.

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Religious School News

By Leeaht Segev, Interim Co-Director of Education



It is cliché but true, our lives are busier than ever. We have soccer, dance, play dates to juggle, dinner to prepare, the list seems never ending. Many of us work full time on top of all the daily responsibilities. By the time Friday night rolls around, we are tired and ready to rest. Who has the energy to then come to Shabbat Services?

Recently I was asked to cover for a Board member who had Bimah coverage. It was just a regular Friday night service. I couldn't even remember when or if I had been to a non-family Shabbat Service on my own. As Friday night drew near, I was regretting my decision: I was exhausted, I had a busy weekend ahead of me, but I couldn't abandon my post! So I fed the kids dinner and came to services.

It wound up being one of the nicest evenings I have had in quite a while. Maybe because I was so busy and tired is what made the night so perfect. It forced me to both disconnect and connect: disconnect from my never ending to-do list but at the same time connect with the Jewish community I chose for my family. I sat on the Bimah and watched as others did the same. We all left our struggles at the door of the Sanctuary to connect together through familiar prayers and songs. To stop and realize we are part of something bigger, to take a moment to be grateful and thankful. Afterwards, at the oneg I had a chance to have lovely conversations with members whose paths I would have probably not crossed otherwise. All their children had grown and left home, but again, it was the shared connection that we all had made the choice to be here.

So now you ask, what in the world does this have to do with religious school? It has everything to do with it in fact. While I will be the first to tell you the importance of a solid Jewish education, I will also be the first to tell you that just as important is the bigger picture. Allowing our children to see they are part of an almost 3000 year old community, as well as finding comfort in the familiar melodies, we forge deeper connections with those around us. There is only so much we can do as Directors in the five hours a week your children are with us. As a parent myself I can tell you first-hand how much being active in synagogue life has enhanced my children's connection to religious school. They look forward to school, to learning, to seeing friends.

So I urge all of you, go right now to the Tikvah website. Look at the calendar, find a service or event that appeals to you and your family. Make an effort to attend Family or other services. We even offer dinner now before most Family and Shir Joy services, so you can take a break from cooking!

I look forward to seeing you and building this amazing village together.

Sisterhood News

By Rayna Ravitz, President

Our membership brunch on October 4th had great attendance! Everyone had lots of ideas for programming and volunteered to lead the projects.

Tuesday, November 17 - Book Sisters 6:30 pm

"The Invention of Wings" by Sue Monk Kidd
Potluck dinner – dairy no meat.

Tuesday, December 8 - Sisterhood Chanukah Party 6:30 pm

Our annual Chanukah party will include "no-sew" blankets (which we donate to Children's Hospital), eating and schmoozing. Bring Toys for Tots, books to share and prom dresses (if you have) to donate to the "Princess Project" for Barbara Grossman.
Potluck (dairy - no meat) dinner.

Tuesday, December 15 - Book Sisters 6:30 pm

"Me Before You" by Jojo Moyes
Potluck (dairy - no meat) dinner.

Please RSVP to raynaravitz@gmail.com for these events.

Books recommended by Book Sisters:

"The Two Hotel Francforts" by David Leavitt (3.5 stars on Amazon 272 pages)

"The Thread: A Novel" by Victoria Hislop" (4.5 stars on Amazon 390 pages)

What we Talk about When We Talk About Anne Frank" by Nathan Englander (4 stars, short stories, 240 pages)

"The Golem and the Jinni" by Helen Wecker (4.5 stars 512 pages)

"A Guide for the Perplexed" by Dara Horn (4 stars, 368 pages)

"Steve Jobs" by Walter Isaacson (4.5 stars, almost 600 pages)

Still in Hardcover:

"The Girl on the Train" by Paula Hawkins (4 stars 326 pages)

"The Nightingale" by Kristin Hannah (5 stars, 448 pages)

"All the Light We cannot See" by Anthony Doerr (4.5 stars, 531 pages)

TEAM TRIVIA NIGHT 2015!

Saturday, November 7, 2015

Doors Open @ 6:30 p.m.

Play starts @ 7:00 p.m.

100 fun, brain-challenging questions

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

No walk ups.

For more information,
check out the flyer on our website.

Welcome to our Newest Members

Rebecca and Darren Bauer-Kahan

Aiden 11.8.09, Gabrielle 10.13.11, Mican 5.5.14

Cassie and Jared Burns – Coffin

Noah 1.28.08, Colin 1.13.10, Julia 9.21.13

Karen and Jay Dougherty

Alice and Richard Lasky

Sylvia and David Pearlstein

Kyle 12.19.08, Jacob 9.13.14

High Holyday Thank You!

We are grateful to all who helped with all the High Holyday tasks!

Tracy and Aaron Benhamou, Wendy Billy, Annette and Mike Cohn, Jane Enloe, Bob Felix, Dan Fisher, Carla Garrett, Alan Gould, Trish and Jared Goldin, Jordana Green, Ed Helwig, David Jacoby, Daniel Jones, Sasha Khalameyzer, Irene Korn, Dan Lapporte, Amy Lichtenstein, Idelle Lipman, Linda, Bruce and Sam Meyers, Alison Negrin, Andrew Newman, Mary Okocha, Bonnie, Marty and Steven Potter, Laura and Bruce Presnick, Steve and Ryan Rabinowitz, Lorraine Lerman Rose and Brad Rose, John Rubinfeld, Michael Samuels, Cookie Svingos, Lisa Wenger, Jonathan Winchell and Harry Wittenberg.**



Moving books and furniture for High Holyday services.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU to Mary Ann Wittenberg and Bob Grossman for organizing everyone and to Martha Jensen who helped with everything plus created and donated the beautiful flowers which adorned our bima at services.

**We apologize if any names were missed.

In addition to our amazing Religious School,
Monthly Family Services and Tot Shabbats held on the first Friday of the month,
we have three great programs for your under five year olds!

ALL FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC - TELL YOUR FRIENDS!

Gan Gani – Monthly Sunday drop off Pre-K Class 10am - noon

Monthly Jewish Themes as highlighted below
for children ages 4-5 - the year prior to Kindergarten.

Registration required - contact School Director or Temple Office for a form.

Adult(s) do not attend.

October 18th Life in a Synagogue

November 15th Shabbat

December 13th Hanukkah

January 24th Tu BiSh'vat

February 21st Torah

March 20th Purim

April 17th Passover

May 15th Israel and Yom Ha'Atzmaut



K'Tan Tan – Monthly Sunday Family Playgroup 10am - noon

Children up to five years old

No registration required - adult(s) attend.

Music, toys, art, snack, parachute, bubbles and more!

Same Monthly Jewish Themes as **Gan Gani** but with different activities.

October 4th Life in a Synagogue

November 1st Shabbat

December 6th Hanukkah

January 10th Tu BiSh'vat

February 7th Torah

March 6th Purim

April 3rd Passover

May 1st Israel and Yom Ha'Atzmaut

Tikvah Tots – Weekly Friday Playgroup 10am - 11 am

Children up to three years old.

No registration required - adult(s) attend.

Informal and low key. Free play for little ones, chat time for adult(s), and circle time with Shabbat songs and blessings
(and juice and challah of course) led by Rabbi Gutterman at the end!

Check Temple calendar at www.tikvah.org for exact dates.

THE TIKVAH TONES WANT YOU!

The Tikvah Tones are always looking for new talent in our temple. If you play an instrument with proficiency and can read some music or charts - we want you. The Tikvah Tones has been steadily growing over the past few years and we are open to any and all musicians who have a passion to learn new music, be challenged, and to have a blast playing with terrific musicians. We especially need a drummer, but we welcome all instruments, including vocals.

If you're interested in learning more, write to Harry Wittenberg at wittenb1@comcast.net.

Contributions

GENERAL FUND

In memory of Flo Burns
Robin and Larry Gordon

In memory of Carol Gunter
Bert Gunter

In memory of Leon S. Milsner
Donna and Richard Milsner

In memory of William Tama
Sharon and Hugh Tama

In memory of Peisah Sadetskiy

In memory of Avrum-Moyshe Sadetskiy

In memory of Sara Sadetskiy
Rakhil Sadetskiy

In memory of Yuri Moskalenko
Yelena Yaltanskaya and Doba Moskalenko
Rakhil Sadetskiy

In memory of Myron Billy
Wendy and Dale Billy

In memory of Roland Forest Tullis
Christine and Murray Sheldon

In memory of Esther Vineberg
Joni Vineberg

In memory of Sandy McReynolds
Diane and Victor Leventhal

In memory of Hilda De Lowe
Judi and Larry De Lowe

In memory of Sam Blumberg

In memory of Ida Nankin
Alvin Trepper

In memory of Marni Levine
Kimberly and Brian Zagon

In honor of the Congregation
Morlye Schweitzer

In memory of Dave Appleberg
Idelle Lipman

In memory of Sylvia Schwartz

In memory of Harry J. Schwartz
Joan and Richard Schwartz

In memory of Diane Dalton

In memory of Marjory Spector
Loren Burns

In memory of Reba Rabiner

In memory of Harry Rabiner

In memory of Richard Katz
Karen Lapin

In memory of Doris Levine
Vicki and John Anderle

RABBI GUTTERMAN'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In memory of Flo Burns
Lisa Noble and Jeff Arnold

In honor of Rebecca's Bat Mitzvah
Cathy and Andrew Clauson

In memory of Jennette Hurwitz' father
Loren, Stan, Dean, Ellen and Kendra

In memory of Nenad Saric's father
Loren Burns

In appreciation of beautiful High Holy Day Services
Tina and Eric Eisenman
Robin and Larry Gordon

In memory of Lisa Gewing
Anna and Walter Gewing

CANTOR CHABON'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In memory of Flo Burns
Leslie and Bill Rupley

In honor of Rebecca's Bat Mitzvah
Cathy and Andy Clauson

In appreciation of beautiful High Holyday Services
Tina and Eric Eisenman
Robin and Larry Gordon

RABBI ASHER'S EMERITUS FUND

In memory of Flo Burns
Marcia and Harvey Maslin
Kathy and Steve Weiner

With appreciation for naming our twin granddaughters
Kathy and Steve Weiner

In memory of Dr. Ephraim Engleman
Loren Burns

CANTOR'S MUSIC FUND

In memory of Flo Burns

In memory of Edward Ravitz
Rayna and Richard Ravitz

In memory of Flo Burns
Annette and Mike Cohn
Iris and Isidore Kaplan
Nancy and Arthur Solomon

In memory of Ben Brown
Sharon and Ron Brown

In memory of Ruth Eskenazi
Leah Eskenazi

In memory of Charlotte Gilman

In memory of Stanley Gilman
Carol Reif and Jeffrey Gilman

In honor of Aaron Benhamou's High Holyday Aliyah
Chanel and Tracy Benhamou

CANTOR STEPHEN RICHARDS CHOIR FUND

In memory of Flo Burns
Susan and John Klein
Sharon and Frank Krhoun

In memory of Stephanie Woldman

In memory of Myron Woldman

In memory of Ruth Ellis Wise
Marjorie and Cantor Stephen Richards

In memory of Harriet Gardner
Carol and Allen Teitelman

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with me, either on the bima or in the aisles. In all honesty, I didn't believe that anyone would take that leap. I didn't believe that our congregation had in it people who were willing to be brave enough to walk before a room full of searching souls and lay it all down on the ground.

How wrong I was. As the rabbi and I turned to the ark, we paused to allow people to come up. And then, out of the corner of my eye, I saw one person, then two, then several, step onto the bima and take their place beside us. I'm not sure if I have ever felt a stronger sense of community than I did in that moment, as I bent my knees and lowered to the ground with congregants on either side of me. As my forehead touched the ground, I held back tears as I felt a piece of ancient loneliness disappear from within me.

God is such a trickster, my spiritual director says. Just when you think you have something figured out; just when you think you understand how everything is going to flow, the veil is pulled back and you are reminded: I had no idea at all. Grace descends to tell you once again that you are, in fact, not in control.

I thought that nothing could top that experience on Yom Kippur afternoon, but lo and behold, Neilah was even more incredible still. With just 15 minutes to go before the end of the holiday, we invited people to come onto the bima and stand before the open ark for a few moments by themselves. Once again, we had no idea who, if anyone, would decide to join us. And once again, B'nai Tikvah blew us away. While our accompanist Irene and I sang Leonard Cohen's *Hallelujah*, we left the ark open as people made their way onto the bima, alone and in groups, to have just a few more moments of prayer and proximity before the gates closed. This was what Neilah is meant to be: raw, vulnerable, open devotion. The room was absolutely vibrating with energy and potential. And hope. It pulsed with the hope that if this kind of unexpected electric connection is possible, then absolutely anything is possible.

It is said that the Buddha reached enlightenment not by thinking, but by feeling. He felt his way to a connection to all beings. His mind got out of the way and his heart led him to be completely unmasked and pure. I don't think it's likely that any of us will reach enlightenment, but we are surely closer after so many beautiful souls were willing to remove their masks to reveal their true, unpolished selves. I have never been more proud of B'nai Tikvah than I was on Yom Kippur afternoon. And I have never been more excited to see how you surprise me in the coming year. There is hope indeed.

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So I'll just say this. From my position, standing to the side while facing the ark, as both witness and participant, this is what I saw. Many of you held each other or leaned on each other. Some of you cried. Some of you stood with utter seriousness that conveyed you were having exactly the experience you needed to have. I had the sense, watching each of you, that your stories were playing out in a way that only you knew about. To stand quietly and absorb that, as your rabbi, made me feel that something precious and mysterious was in the air enveloping us all.

According to Maimonides, one of our most important scholars and teachers of Torah, the essence of true teshuvah happens when we approach familiar situation and are able to muster a different response to it than we might have in the past. Seeing so many of you stand before the ark in a way you never had before, and knowing it's not something you necessarily would have done before, made me wonder what the coming year might look like if we took that response and extended it forward. Suppose each of us challenged ourselves to take a risk and try one new thing among the rich experiences B'nai Tikvah offers. There are so many... choices range from enrolling in an Adult Ed. class, coming to a service you haven't attended in the past, attending a lecture or community event here, becoming part of a havurah or bringing a new individual or family to our synagogue and encouraging them to join us. And more.

I look forward to our continued success as we find meaningful paths into Temple lives, as we come forward for ourselves, and show up for each other.



Consecration of our new students on Simchat Torah

Men of CBT

By Bob Grossman, President

Join us in the next few weeks for some fun and a little house-cleaning!

Monday, November 2th - Poker Night 7 pm

I have an Idea for a fun fundraiser. We the Men of CBT work well as a team and there is power in numbers. Thanks to Bruce Meyers who came up with the idea of calling us The Merry Mensches. First, we are planning an event to clean our Shul.

On Sunday, November 29th from 9 am - 1 pm the Merry Mensches will be cleaning the kitchen and replacing some of the needed utensils. If you have some new or slightly seasoned items for the kitchen such as LARGE frying pans, an electric mixer, serving utensils, knives, food baskets, please contact me. MenofCBT@gmail.com.

Join us for Men's Night Out Wednesday, December 2 at 6:30 pm at Skipolini's! Let's support them because they support us and participate in our Restaurant Walk. RSVP so I know how many to save a seat for!

Thank you to the generous restaurants who participated in
A Taste Of Walnut Creek 2015 -
Our 18th Annual Restaurant Walk

1515 Restaurant Lounge.....Buckhorn Grill
CreamCrepes Ooh La La.....Extreme Pizza
Home of Chicken & Waffles
HubcapsLottie's Creamery.....Main Street Kitchen
Opa!.....The Original Mel's Diner
Peet's Coffee and TeaPomegranate Restaurant
Pyramid Alehouse.....Salvatore Ristorante
San Francisco Creamery Co.
Silk Road.....Skipolini's Pizza.....The Candy Counter
Tomatina.....Veggie Grill
Vitality Bowls.....Walnut Creek Yacht Club

Please patronize these establishments and be sure to thank them for making our fundraiser a success!

Save the Date!

Contra Costa Midrasha Presents our 2016 Gala...

Totally Awesome

80's

IT WILL BE TOTALLY RAD!!

Saturday, February 20, 2016 • 6:30-10:30pm
San Ramon Community Center
Dinner, Live & Silent Auctions, Dancing
80's attire encouraged!

Information and tickets at
shop.ccmidrasha.com

Renown expert on Issues of Religious Pluralism in Israeli Society coming to B'nai Tikvah

On Thursday November 19 at 7:00pm, we are honored to welcome Rabbi Uri Regev as a guest speaker.

He is a rabbi and an attorney, and the founding president of Hiddush, a non-denominational and non-partisan Israel-Diaspora partnership rooted in the commitment to — and deep love for — the State of

Israel, and the belief that realizing the promise of religious freedom and equality will strengthen Israel as a democracy and a Jewish state, as well as the relationship between Israel and World Jewry, especially that of the next generation.



Join us for his informative and engaging presentation: "The well-being of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state may depend on us. Are we meeting the challenge?"

Rabbi Regev's lecture is free and open to the public. An \$18 donation is suggested.

Contributions.....

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STEPHAN JASPAN RELIGIOUS SCHOOL FUND

In honor of the Education Committee

Karen and Dan Levy

In memory of Klara Bekker

Irina Pekar and Aleksandra Dunayovich

MORDOCH/NADJARI HOLOCAUST FUND

In memory of Flo Burns

In memory of Dorothy Welch

Zaffy and Denis Welch

With thanks to Zaffy Welch, Judi DeLowe, Kathy Weiner, and Tami Robinson

Loren Burns

In memory of Flo Burns

Barbara Melton

SOCIAL ACTION FUND

In memory of John Sutherland

Monica Salusky and John Sutherland

HELP THE MORTGAGE FUND

In memory of Dorothy Simmons

Lynette and Michael Simmons



TIKVAH L'ATID
HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Thank you to the CBT members who have joined Tikvah L'Atid, CBT's Legacy Society, in the last nine months. CBT added at least 18 new members to our legacy donor list, which means that we will be receiving a \$10,000 grant from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation and the Jewish Federation/Foundation of the East Bay.

The Legacy Committee is very grateful to both foundations and to the following new legacy members: Chanel and Tracy Benhamou, Annette and Mike Cohn, Barbara Fenichel, Ellen Fenichel, Trish and Jared Goldin, Paula Reinman and Sandy Gross, Tina Guterman and Doug Polcin, Susan and John Klein, Amy Lichtenstein, Idelle Lipman, Deborah and Al Medvin, Susan and John Rubenfeld, Leslie and Bill Rupley, Deborah and Marc Usatin, Paula and Mike Weintraub, Zaffy Welch, and one member who wishes to remain anonymous.

We will have the opportunity to repeat this accomplishment in 2016.

Shalom Connection

Condolences to:

Randall Block and family on the loss of his father, Sy Block

Judy Niver and family on the loss of her father,

Philip Hartman

Cookie Svingos and family on the loss of her mother,

Esther Rapoport

Mazel Tov to:

Karen Lapin on the birth of granddaughter,

Mila Hazel Nordhausen

David and Shari Safianoff on the birth of grandson,

William Safianoff

Florence and David Specland on the birth of great

granddaughter, Quinn Fay Schumacher

Have a simcha to share?

Please let us know! Email judyblum@tikvah.org.

The B'nai Tikvah Gift Shop

has many wonderful gifts for sale.

Not only do we have a large selection of Judaica items, we also carry some of the nicest jewelry at great prices.

Do you know anyone with a birthday coming up or how about something for yourself?

Save the dates for this year's Chanukah Boutique -

November 15, 17, and 18

December 1, 2, and 6

(during Religious School and Midrasha).

Dates are a little different this year because of how the holidays and the school calendar is falling.

Think about it - the Gift Shop profits benefit

B'nai Tikvah in many ways.

Gift Shop shopping is doing a mitzvah!

Chag Sameach, Irene

Every year I, on behalf of Contra Costa Midrasha and our Board, am honored to speak at one or two of our partner synagogues. Below you will find a version of the High Holiday speech I gave on the second day of Rosh Hashanah at B'nai Shalom, but slightly modified to include teens from B'nai Tikvah. I hope it informs you about our programs and the ideals we aim to materialize in our work with the Jewish teens of our collective Contra Costa community.

Shanah Tovah. Thank you for for this community's amazing support and for sharing some time with me today, so I can tell you about Contra Costa Midrasha. For those of you who are not familiar with Contra Costa Midrasha, we are the extension of your synagogue's Jewish education program - for teens. When your teens complete their 7th grade year at your Hebrew school, their next step is Contra Costa Midrasha - a place for Jewish teens from B'nai Shalom, B'nai Tikvah, Beth Chaim and Jewish teens who have never set foot in a synagogue to take a next step in their Jewish education through their senior year in high school. Our program, a combination of formal and informal Jewish learning meets on Wednesday nights from 7:15-9:15pm. We also participate in three retreats a year at Camp Newman with Jewish teens from all over the East Bay. And this year we are starting a new leadership program, once a month on Sunday afternoons, designed to help teens make a difference in the world by learning about philanthropy, doing the fundraising and participating in social action.

But I am not really here to tell you about the nuts and bolts of our program. The High Holidays are a time to think big, to take a giant step back and examine our lives and if needed, turn our lives to a new direction. I've been thinking a lot lately about Midrasha. I really like the idea that's been rolling around in popular culture about a "third home." Where your first home is where you live, the second home is where you work - your office or school and the third home is well, more like a sukkah. A place you don't go to all the time, but when you are there it's very special, sacred and even transformative. And lately, I've been seeing that Midrasha is that sukkah for our teens.

A sukkah, as you know, is comprised of three key walls that support it. So too are there three KEY values at Contra Costa Midrasha that support its existence. The first concept is best understood through the words of teen Jack Joseph, shared this at graduation last May, "Being at Midrasha has allowed me to see that the world didn't decide who I was or whether or not I could express myself; rather, I could be myself in all my strangeness, no matter what. Here, no one gives a hootenanny. In fact, they encourage you to show off your uniqueness, since it only adds to the vibrancy of the community."

The second wall or key concept is how our educators make a difference in the lives of our teens. Sammie Fox (from Beth Chaim) taught me this last year. She explained, "The educators at Midrasha are better known as mentors. We are welcomed into their classes as students, but by the end of the day we are old friends. The mentors found at Midrasha are the type of people who dispel judgment and encourage self-growth. Their lessons go beyond Midrasha on Wednesday night and remain purposeful throughout our lives."

The back foundational wall of the Midrasha Sukkah serves as the place where our teens build a stronger relationship to Judaism. Jared Brogdon explained this, "In my five years of Midrasha, I've received all different kinds of [Jewish] experiences - from learning about movies by Jewish film directors from Maimone, hearing fact about Israel - along with its history and current-day life from Danny and learning about the true benefits of [Jewish] meditation with Shlayma."

In the Rabbi's instructions to how we are to create a sukkah, one wall is supposed to stay open, to remind us of Abraham's hospitality to others - that our sukkah should also be a welcoming place, a place to build community and friendship. Over the years so many teens have told me of how grateful they have been to have Midrasha as a place that helped them build powerful friendships. As Melanie Barrall explained, "It has been an amazing 5 years at Midrasha and I am so thankful for the amazing friends that I have made. All of you have changed my life and taught me new perspectives. I will take all of the love and the lessons you all have shared with me onto the next part of my life."

My favorite part of a sukkah is the roof - designed to be a covering, but not opaque. Through the palm fronds above you, we are supposed to be able to see the stars, to imagine the bigger universe - a place where the light in the sky - even at night can illuminate our faces and help sharpen our dreams. It was Talia Schaer who even though she was in Israel, still joined us last Spring for graduation - via Skype. She said, "My time in high school has not been my favorite time, but every single week I cannot wait to go to Midrasha. It is the light in the middle of each week. I go there and feel immense joy. I am surrounded by the kindest and funniest staff you will ever meet, and I get to see my best friends. These are the people I can bare my soul to and know I am not being judged. Midrasha has given me this second home and family and so much love." In short, Midrasha IS a sanctuary, an aron ha-kodesh for our teens. That mystical place, like the roof of a sukkah, where you can see past the reeds of the daily world and see into the more meaningful places of the universe.

One of the Hebrew terms used for the High Holidays is, "Aseret Y'mey T'shuvah" or the Ten Days of Turning - a time to define where in our life we will find purpose and meaning. Today I offer Midrasha as a place for our teens to find purpose and meaning, a place where each week, they can turn and face themselves and each other (truly face to face in person and not filtered through a computer or smart phone lens). A place that feeds the Jewish soul of our teens: honoring - not judging - each teens' uniqueness, sharpening their community and friend-making skills, connecting them to their Jewish identity, giving them sanctuary and providing mentorship - a spiritual Jewish ship (or sukkah!) to guide them through the challenging teens years.

And thank you to this community - to B'nai Tikvah's clergy, staff, Board, families and whole community for continuing to be a strong pillar of Midrasha. We exist in true partnership with you. Thank you.

NOVEMBER 2015 Cheshvan - Kislev 5776

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Religious School 10:00am - 12:00pm K'Tantan - Shabbat 10:00am Social Action Meeting 12:30pm - 2:30pm Security & Safety Training	7:00pm Men of CBT - Poker Night 7:30pm - 8:30pm Ritual Committee Meeting	10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School 7:00pm Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class	10:00am Open Bridge 7:00pm - 9:00pm Mah Jongg 7:15pm Midrasha	6:00pm - 7:00pm Yoga! 7:30pm - 9:00pm Choir rehearsal	Midrasha Fall Retreat 10:00am - 11:00am Tikvah Tots 5:30pm Tot Shabbat 6:00pm - 6:30pm Pizza dinner 6:30pm Family Shabbat Service	Parashat Chayei Sara 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Shabbat Service - Bar Mitzvah of Zachary Small 6:00pm - 11:00pm Trivia Night
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Midrasha Fall Retreat Religious School 2:00pm - 3:00pm Community Commemoration Yitzhak Rabin	6:30pm - 8:00pm Education Committee	10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School 7:00pm Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class	10:00am Open Bridge 7:15pm Midrasha	6:00pm - 7:00pm Yoga! 7:00pm - 8:00pm Adult Ed Committee Meeting 7:30pm - 9:00pm Choir rehearsal	URJ Camp Newman retreat 10:00am - 11:00am Tikvah Tots 6:30pm Shabbat Service - 2nd graders participating	Parashat Toldot 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Shabbat Service - Bar Mitzvah of Matthew Winchell
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
URJ Camp Newman retreat Religious School 9:30am - 12:00pm Chanukah boutique open 10:00am - 12:00pm Gan Gani - Shabbat	6:00pm - 6:30pm Executive Board Meeting 6:30pm General Board Meeting	10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 4:00pm - 5:45pm Chanukah boutique open 4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School 7:00pm Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class 7:00pm Midrasha BOD meeting	10:00am Open Bridge 7:00pm - 9:00pm Mah Jongg 7:15pm - 9:15pm Chanukah boutique open 7:15pm Midrasha	6:00pm - 7:00pm Yoga! 7:00pm - 9:00pm Chanukah boutique open 7:00pm Rabbi Uri Regev speaking 7:30pm - 9:00pm Choir rehearsal	10:00am - 11:00am Tikvah Tots 6:00pm - 7:15pm Shabbat dinner 7:30pm Shir Joy - "Committee" Shabbat	Parashat Vayetzei 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Shabbat Service - Bat Mitzvah of Elizabeth Paul
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
(no school)		(no school) 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 7:00pm Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class	NO Midrasha 10:00am Open Bridge	(Office Closed) Thanksgiving	(Office Closed) 6:30pm Shabbat Service	Parashat Vayishlach 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study
29	30					
(no school)	5:30pm - 6:30pm Executive Board Meeting					

JOIN OUR CBT COMMUNITY FOR DINNER!

Friday, November 6

Pizza dinner 6 pm

Between our 5:30 Tot Shabbat & 6:30 Family Shabbat

\$10 adults, \$5 children

Reservations due Wednesday, November 4

Friday, November 20

Dinner at 6 pm. Shir Joy at 7:30.

No need to decide where to eat!

Gotta Eatta Pita is cooking for us.

\$18 adults, \$9 children

Reservations due Wednesday noon, November 18.

Send your check to the Temple Office. Members can sign up through the Members Only section of our website.

DECEMBER 2015 Kislev - Tevet 5776

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
		10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah	10:00am Open Bridge	6:00pm - 7:00pm Yoga!	10:00am - 11:00am Tikvah Tots	Parashat Vayeshev
		4:00pm - 5:45pm Chanukah boutique open	6:30pm Men's Night Out!	7:30pm - 9:00pm Choir rehearsal	5:30pm Tot Shabbat	9:00am Lay Led Torah Study
		4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School	7:00pm - 9:00pm Mah Jongg		6:00pm - 6:30pm Pizza dinner	10:00am Morning Minyan
		7:00pm Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class	7:15pm - 9:15pm Chanukah boutique open		6:30pm Family Shabbat Service	
			7:15pm Midrasha			
		8	9	10	11	12
1st Night of Chanukkah	2nd Night of Chanukkah	3rd Night of Chanukkah	4th Night of Chanukkah	5th Night of Chanukkah	6th Night of Chanukkah	7th Night of Chanukkah
Religious School	7:30pm - 8:30pm Ritual Committee Meeting	10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah	10:00am Open Bridge	6:00pm - 7:00pm Yoga!	10:00am - 11:00am Tikvah Tots	Parashat Miketz
9:30am - 12:00pm Chanukah boutique open		4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School	7:15pm Midrasha	7:30pm - 9:00pm Choir rehearsal	6:30pm Shabbat Service - Choir & Menorah lighting!	9:00am Lay Led Torah Study
10:00am - 12:00pm K'Tantan - Hanukkah		6:30pm Sisterhood Chanukah party				10:00am Morning Minyan
		7:00pm Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class				
		7:00pm Midrasha BOD meeting				
		13	14	15	16	17
8th Night of Chanukkah	5:30pm - 6:30pm Executive Board Meeting	10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah	10:00am Open Bridge	6:00pm - 7:00pm Yoga!	10:00am - 11:00am Tikvah Tots	Parashat Vayigash
Religious School		4:00pm - 5:45pm Religious School	7:15pm Midrasha		6:00pm - 7:15pm Shabbat dinner	9:00am Lay Led Torah Study
10:00am Gan Gani - Hanukkah	6:30pm General Board Meeting	6:30pm Book Sisters			7:30pm Shir Joy	10:00am Morning Minyan
		7:00pm Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class				
		20	21	22	23	24
(no school)		(no school)	NO Midrasha			(Office Closed)
		10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah	10:00am Open Bridge			6:30pm Shabbat Service
		7:00pm Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class				
		27	28	29	30	31
(no school)		(no school)	NO Midrasha			
		10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah	10:00am Open Bridge			

JOIN OUR CBT COMMUNITY FOR DINNER!

Friday, December 4

Pizza dinner 6 pm

Between our 5:30 Tot Shabbat & 6:30 Family Shabbat

\$10 adults, \$5 children

Reservations due Wednesday, December 2

Friday, December 18

Dinner at 6 pm.

Shir Joy at 7:30.

Watch your email for dinner details!

Send your check to the Temple Office. Members can sign up through the Members Only section of our website.

President's Message.....

(continued from page 3)

We have a vibrant community here with some fantastic opportunities ahead of us. As I said mentioned during my High Holyday speech, "Synagogue life is what you make of it." I also referenced a great article published in the Jewish Journal titled "Why Join a Synagogue?" For those of you who are interested, here is the web address of that article: http://www.jewishjournal.com/religion/article/why_join_a_synagogue

Sisterhood is hosting a Chanukah Faire!!!

Sunday, November 15 9am - 1pm

Vendors so far include
Stella & Dot, Silpada, Thirty-one bags,
Paper flowers, Party lite

Anyone wanting to participate as a vendor should contact
brittanyyoungman@gmail.com.

There's an APP for US!



Access our calendar, member directory
(log-in needed) and our website
quickly and easily.

Search for "CBT membership management."
(Membership Management is our
database software program.)

YITZHAK RABIN: LIFE, DEATH, AND LEGACY

A SYMPOSIUM marking THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS ASSASSINATION

Sunday, November 8, 1:00 – 5:00 pm The Magnes, 2121 Allston Way, Berkeley

Yitzhak Rabin (March 1, 1922 – November 4, 1995) was the fifth Prime Minister of Israel. A year after winning the Nobel Peace Prize along with Shimon Peres and Yasir Arafat, he was assassinated by Yigal Amir following a peace rally attended by more than 100,000 in Tel Aviv.

This program is presented by the Jewish Federation of the East Bay and Lehrhaus Judaica. Co-sponsors include:

A Wider Bridge
American Jewish Committee
Anti-Defamation League
Berkeley Hillel
Beth Jacob Congregation
Congregation Beth El
Congregation Beth Israel
Congregation B'nai Shalom

Congregation B'nai Tikvah
Congregation Netivot Shalom
Consulate General of Israel
Contra Costa JCC
Contra Costa Jewish Day School
Hadassah: Berkeley, Diablo Valley, Oakland
Oakland Hebrew Day School
Tehiyah Day School

Temple Beth Abraham
Temple Beth Sholom
Temple Beth Torah
Temple Isaiah
Temple Israel
Temple Sinai

KEYNOTE PANEL

Fred Rosenbaum (Rabin's Life), Prof. Amos Giora (Rabin's Death), Zohar Avigdori (Rabin's Legacy)

WORKSHOPS

Zohar Avigdori — *Rabin's Values and Legacy in Israel*; Deputy Israeli Consul General Ravit Bir

Tova Birnbaum — *How the "gunshot" caused secular Israelis to ask: What is a "Jewish" State?*

Prof. Amos Giora — *The Climate of Extremism Before and After the Assassination*

Dr. Eran Kaplan — *Leadership at the Crossroads: Rabin, Oslo and a Changing Israel*

Fred Rosenbaum — *Everything at Risk: How Rabin Led Israel to Victory in the Six Day War and Changed the Middle East*

Donna Rosenthal — *Civil Discourse in Israel Following the Assassination*

CLOSING

Rabbis Peretz Wolf-Prusan and Rabbi James Brandt

Multi-media installation Rabin: Searching for Peace Through Our Memories

Admission is free. Due to space limitations, registration is strongly recommended: www.lehrhaus.org.

For more info: 510.809.4953 or riva@jfed.org.

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Taste of CCJDS
1st-7th grade students are invited to visit our classrooms for the day
Wednesday, November 11

K-8th Grade Open House
Sunday, November 15,
4:30-6:00pm
Preschool families join us for a Sunday FunDay starting at 3:00pm

Middle School Open House
Thursday, January 28,
6:00-8:00pm

School Tours and Lunch
October 22, November 12, December 15, January 14,
11:00am-12:30pm
Enjoy a delicious hot lunch and tour of CCJDS! Kindly RSVP
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Lafayette, 94549

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Briones, CA 94553

Jay Lewis (FD#1523)
Associate Executive Director
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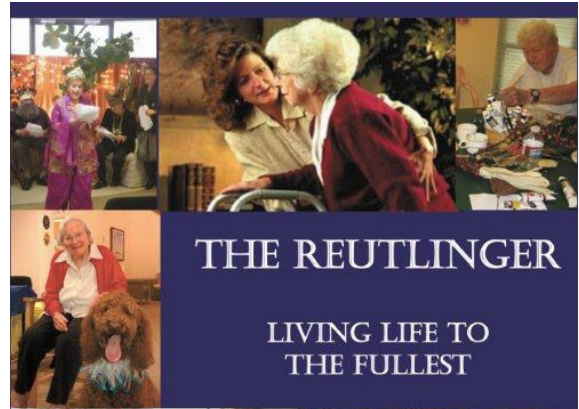


PREMIER PROPERTIES

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.



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Bring in gently used books for all age children.

<http://www.eastbaychildrensbookproject.org/>



Have YOU visited the Tzedaka box in our Lobby?

All donations received through the end of December will be sent to MEALS ON WHEELS.

Meals on Wheels enhances the lives of older adults in Contra Costa County who have a full range of needs by providing coordinated care that enables older adults to live independently and with dignity for as long as possible.

<http://mowsos.org/about/>

This organization was selected by Men of CBT



Congregation B'nai Tikvah
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Walnut Creek, CA 94597

Non-Profit Org.
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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

For membership information, please contact the Temple Office.



CHANUKAH BEGINS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6



Shop the Gift Shop of all of your Chanukah needs!

Sunday, November 15 and December 1
9 am - 12:30 pm
Tuesday, November 17 and December 2
4 - 5:45 pm
Wednesday, November 18 and December 6
7:15 - 9:15 pm

Decorations.....Gelt.....Dreidels
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Great Chanukah Books & CDs
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