



CONGREGATION  
B'NAI TIKVAH

# TIKVAH TALK

January/ February 2017

Walnut Creek, CA

Vol. 36 Iss. 3

## SHALOM, B'NAI TIKVAH!

By Rabbi Rebecca Gutterman



Shortly after I arrived at our congregation, we expanded the practice of saying the *Mi Shebeirach* from occasional Friday night services and the High Holidays to every Kabbalat Shabbat. The moment may be brief, but even so it illustrates the Jewish value of remembering sorrow even at times of joy such as Shabbat.

When I meet the eyes of each of you sitting in the Sanctuary on these evenings and encourage you to share the names of your family members or friends who are ill, the seriousness in the room is palpable. Sometimes there are many names to share, sometimes just a few. Sometimes it is the first our congregation hears that one among us is facing injury or surgery. Sometimes there are tears. Always, there is a feeling that we are held together in a web of caring and connection, whether our prayer is for someone we know or don't know, or whether we ourselves are recovering from a bad blow and leaning on B'nai Tikvah for solace.

The Talmud tells us that one who visits the sick removes one sixtieth of that person's illness. Why one sixtieth? It's a curious fraction to be sure. Perhaps this teaching is communicating something about both our capabilities and our limitations when it comes to caring for those living through dark times of sickness and suffering. Our prayers cannot take away someone's difficult or diminished circumstances. On the other hand, the knowledge that we are thinking of them and including them in our *Mi Shebeirach* has the potential to let the light in, even if just a little bit. It is also a healing opportunity for the pray-ers (us, in other words) to bring the name and essence of someone we love into the room with us, and to know that we are not alone in our fears and concerns.

Another thing that makes a difference from one Shabbat to the next is our willingness to show up for B'nai Tikvah members who need it. We are always striving to find new and better ways of answering that call, and responding to the overall Jewish imperative to care for those in need. Did you know, for example, that our congregation has a Chesed Committee? *Chesed* means kindness, and this is a group of volunteers who are on hand for practical assistance like making meals, providing a ride to or from medical appointments and other such tasks. We are always looking for more people to be a part of this committee, and in particular now, for someone to take over the volunteer coordination when the need arises. Lisa McLaurin has been filling this role for years, and will be stepping down soon. We thank her for her good work on behalf of the Chesed Committee and encourage anyone interested in the torch being passed to them to contact the main office so we can put you in touch with

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## REFLECTIONS...

By Cantor Jennie Chabon



I don't know about all of you, but I'm ready to say goodbye to 2016. It makes me sad to be ending the year with a heavy heart. But there was just so much tragedy and grief and unexpected pain this past year that I think many of us are ready to leave it behind, and begin a new year that at least has the potential to be more

hopeful.

I am writing this article just days after the Ghost Ship warehouse fire in Oakland that took the lives of 36 beautiful young souls as they were celebrating the night away. There were so many articles going around about how, at a different time or place, it could have been any of us. And yet, it took the media no time at all to begin demonizing and blaming whomever they could: the landlord, the city of Oakland, the young people themselves for choosing to live and celebrate life in a risky and dangerous space. Where is the compassion in that kind of response to tragedy? Where is the love? Where is God in that kind of blame and shame?

As I set my own intentions for 2017, I keep hearing three words swirling around my head: compassion, empathy and joy. We have no idea what will come our way this year. Try as we might to control everything, the hard truth is that unexpected wonderful and terrible things happen all the time. It is how we respond to those things that gives meaning to our lives.

Compassion, according to Dr. Brene Brown, is "the deeply held belief that we are inextricably connected to each other by something rooted in love and goodness." For some, that something is God. For others it might be nature. But whatever it is called to you, it is the belief that we are not traveling through this messy world alone.

Empathy, on the other hand, is the ability to bring compassion to life, to transform a belief into action. To say to the homeless person on the street, I not only see you, I am going to feed you as well.

And joy? Well, who wants to live life without joy? No matter how bad it gets sometimes, joy is my lifeline.

I feel fortunate that we get to put those three words into action this month. On Shabbat morning, January 7<sup>th</sup>, we will have a morning minyan at 10:00 where we will study some texts about social action in the Jewish world. Texts that will remind us that a founding principle of Judaism is compassion for the needy, for the stranger, for the other. We will then turn that compassion into empathy, into action, as we make and serve food for the homeless at St Paul's church on Trinity. Our thanks to Julia

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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.

## CONTACT

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## STAFF

Rebecca Guterman, Rabbi  
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Stephen Richards, Cantor Emeritus  
Amanda Radman, Temple Administrator  
Keren Smith, Director of Education

## OFFICERS

Dan Lapporte, President  
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Julia Babka-Kurzrock, Vice President  
Judith Barrall, Secretary  
John Rubinfeld, Treasurer  
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## BE A CBT AMBASSADOR

Welcome and greet current and prospective members and introduce them to other congregants.

The job is an easy way to help: become a CBT ambassador: come to services 20 - 30 minutes early to meet prospective members and make them feel welcome. Help people with name tags. Have prospective members sign our guest sign-in sheet.

During oneg, introduce prospective members to other congregants and clergy and make them feel welcome. Tell them your CBT story and show them around.

Sign up at <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/409od4daea2fa3fe3-beacbt>



Sisterhood made 16 no-sew blankets for families at JFCS at their annual Chanukkah party in December.

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 10<sup>th</sup> of each month.

Please submit articles electronically to [office@tikvah.org](mailto:office@tikvah.org) (subject Tikvah Talk).

Congregation B'nai Tikvah can be accessed on-line at: <http://www.tikvah.org>.

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Dan Lapporte



B'nai Tikvah family –

Welcome to 2017!!

As I've written about previously, 2017 is B'nai Tikvah's 36<sup>th</sup> year, our double Chai. This is an amazing accomplishment with deep roots in our founding families and dynamic change as new members join us as others depart. We have a lot to be thankful for over the past 36 years, and a lot to look forward to. So what's been happening and what can you expect to see at B'nai Tikvah in 2017?

Our double Chai year will be filled with simchas – and maybe a little tsuris depending on your perspective. First a glimpse at some of the amazing things coming our way:

- We will welcome a new Torah thanks to a generous donation by a long time member;
- We'll have a double Chai gala where we'll look to close a budget deficit while enjoying a wonderful celebration with our community;
- We'll include some dynamic speakers on a variety of topics as part of our services and adult education programs; and
- We'll continue the critical work around social justice causes – both as individuals and as a community – through our forming justice community reaching beyond the walls of CBT.

Of course there are more, but that's enough to wet your whistle!

We'll also come together as a larger Jewish community navigating through the uncertain waters of national politics and a fractured country. No matter where you sit politically, the opportunity to engage in a safe community is vital. I have a deep personal hope that we'll all find comfort across our community since faith is a good salve for uncertainty.

We also need to take stock of B'nai Tikvah during this double Chai year. It will be a transformative and reflective time as we think about short and long term opportunities including:

- Our dynamic membership and how we all can find value in synagogue life;
- Reimagining what the Jewish community of the East Bay looks like through partnerships with other synagogues, the JCC and other organizations; and
- A capital campaign launching in March or April with a goal of paying down the mortgage on our facility. This vital work is being led by longtime members Sandy Gross and immediate past President Harry Wittenberg with the support of our full board of trustees.

Again, there are other opportunities for taking stock of our Shul, but who wants to be overwhelmed by all of that in a newsletter?

Let me reiterate all the amazing things that are in store for us as we enter our double Chai 36<sup>th</sup> year. I remain deeply privileged to serve as your president. As always, please feel free to e-mail me at [bnaitikvahpresident@gmail.com](mailto:bnaitikvahpresident@gmail.com) with questions.

# RELIGIOUS SCHOOL NEWS

By Keren Smith, Director of Education



## Strength Through Community

*"Hine' Ma Tov U'ma Naim Shevet Achim Gam Yachad"* -- Do you recognize these Hebrew words? It is a tune we often sing when we congregate as a community for Tfilah. These words come from Psalms 33:1, conveying a thought that is so close to my heart: "How wonderful it is to sit together as a unified community".

These words ring very true for me as I have moved many times in my life, first to New Jersey from Israel, and then a number of times within the US, landing in sunny California almost four years ago. The most challenging part of moving, is not the physical move, which of course become more complicated the further the distance and the older one is. It is not the language barrier, which was extremely difficult to overcome as a junior in high school. It is not the cultural differences – adjusting to a slightly new way of seeing the world and fresh colloquialisms. It is not relearning your bearings in a new place, figuring out your favorite places to eat, shop, or your trusted pediatrician when your kids get sick. Rather the real challenge of moving is being uprooted from a community, and establishing new and real connections with people who are still strangers to you. It is only when you create these connections that you feel at home.

Congregation B'nai Tikvah has a reputation in the larger Jewish community of being a temple where you feel 'at home'. As a community, we are successful at making these connections and welcoming new families to our midst. It was no surprise that in the November's Vision Meeting for the religious school parents, this very sentiment was shared. In this meeting, which covered a lot of ground and was wonderful and very inspiring, a few parents shared their desire for more opportunities to connect more deeply and more personally to the community; not just on a classes or school level, but also throughout CBT and even the larger Jewish community.

I felt inspired by this meeting, and was so happy to see that this representative group of our parent community is so aligned with my own feelings about the importance of community building. To that end, our Education Committee, chaired by Holly Grossman, has also defined this value as one of the goals in our fundraising efforts for the year. The pay-to-play idea was designed to raise much-needed funds for the school while connecting our members to one another in organic ways, through fun parties and other special interest events.

Our first Pay-To-Play was a Challah Bake class right before Rosh Hashana, which Morah Hagit organized and delivered - a big thank you to Morah Hagit who goes above and beyond! This event was a big success, not only because it raised money for the religious school, but mostly because it was a fantastic evening for women in the religious school, congregation and some guests from the community, to have fun together. We have a few more Pay-To-Plays planned for the year, and would love to hear from you if you are willing to host or have an idea for an event.

On a class level this year we have a family session for each of

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# SISTERHOOD NEWS

By Rayna Ravitz, President

Welcome to 2017. We have many opportunities for interesting things to do together.

I hope you will all join us for activities that interest you.

We have hired a teacher for a Painting Party. You will paint a lovely picture on canvas in one session that you can take home and display. **No artistic talent is required for this.** I have done a couple of paintings and I can assure you – you can do this! Sisterhood will supply the wine.

I am happy to remind you that there will be a Women's Seder, April 2, led by Cantor Chabon.

If you are not receiving emails from me with updates twice a month, please email your address to raynaravitz@gmail.com.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### January

- 11 (Wednesday): Mah Jongg at CBT, 7:00 pm  
RSVP to Beth Riseman: bethrise@sbcglobal.net
- 22 (Sunday): Book Sisters at Ellen's Duree's, 10:30 am  
"Japanese Lover" by Isabel Allende  
Discussion Leader: Ellen Duree  
Potluck Brunch  
RSVP to Ellen for the address: 937-2494  
ellenduree@sbcglobal.net
- 25 (Wednesday): Mah Jongg at CBT, 7:00 pm  
RSVP to Beth Riseman: bethrise@sbcglobal.net

### February

- 9 (Thursday): Sisterhood Painting Party at CBT, 7:00 pm  
In the style of Camille Pissarro  
RSVP with a check of \$40 to CBT by January 22
- 15 (Wednesday): Hike in Clayton, 9:30 am  
Group will meet at the Clayton Library parking lot (6125 Clayton Rd). We will walk the Cardinet Trail (flat, wide, dirt/gravel) for RT of 2.5mi. If the group wants, the walk can continue. Bring water/snacks.  
RSVP to Liz Roberts: lizard94517@pacbell.net, 212-5649. Will cancel if raining.
- 21 (Tuesday): Book Sisters at CBT, 6:30 pm  
"The Plot Against America" by Philip Roth  
Dinner catered by Morucci's, \$10  
Discussion Leader: Janet Brandess
- 22 (Wednesday): Mah Jongg at CBT, 7:00 pm  
RSVP to Beth Riseman: bethrise@sbcglobal.net

### March

- 7 (Tuesday): Jewish International Film Festival
- 21 (Tuesday): Book Sisters at CBT, 6:30 pm  
"The Storyteller" by Jodi Picoult  
Potluck dinner  
Discussion Leader: Ruth Goldenberg  
RSVP: raynaravitz@gmail.com

## WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

Jennifer & Josh Burnam  
Helena & Jonah

Skye Coombs

Jasmine Forsberg

Shari Krell & Bonnie Kimmel  
Sydney & Benjamin

Aliza & David May  
Ella

Jenny Michaelson & Noah Goldstein  
Isaiah & Julian

Phil & Sally Paris

## SHALOM CONNECTION

### Mazel Tov to:

Debbie & Marc Usatin on the birth of their granddaughter, Josephine "Josie" Simone Usatin Marks

Katherine & Marc Berger on the birth of their grandson, Jason Lawrence Berger

Cathy and Tamarak Arebalo on the birth of their granddaughter, Hayden Catherine Martin

### Condolences to:

Jen Paul and family on the loss of her aunt, Sharon Gordon

Debbie Raphael, Kim Wies, and family on the loss of their mother, Susan Spivock

Maureen Appleby and family on the loss of her mother, Linda Martin

Have something to share? Please let us know! Email  
amanda@tikvah.org.

# SOCIAL ACTION

The mission of the Congregation B'nai Tikvah Social Action Committee is to choose and implement, participate in, or otherwise support projects and activities that will involve and engage, and foster bonds amongst the members (and other committees and groups that are part) of the B'nai Tikvah community, looking and focusing outward, in order to improve our world—locally, nationally, with respect to Israel, and globally—by focusing on such areas as support and advocacy for social justice, environmental issues, fair treatment of Reform Judaism in Israel, and other projects and activities honoring our commitment to Tikun Olam.

To implement this mission, the members of the social action committee participate in a wide variety of projects providing service to those in need and working toward social justice. The projects include the Interfaith Contra Costa County Food Security Task Force, Relay for Life American Cancer Society, blood drives, Monument Crisis Center, Contra Costa Interfaith Housing, collections for refugees in need of household items, clothing drives, marching in the Gay Pride Parade and many others.

The Committee meets on the third Sunday of each month. All members of the congregation are welcome.

Cantor Chabon sent an email to the congregation expressing her despair of the discrepancy between the wealth of our community and neighboring communities who have so much less. As a result of the recent election results and the sense of frustration and despair in our community Cantor Chabon led a meeting on November 13 in which members of the Committee as well as members of the congregation came together to express their desire to make B'nai Tikvah a force for social justice in the East Bay. As a result of that meeting several potential areas for action were explored.

On December 4 Cantor Chabon led a second meeting at which several congregants reported on opportunities where B'nai Tikvah could be able to make a social justice impact. Four areas of interest were identified; refugee and immigrant assistance, interfaith outreach, turning the synagogue green and women's health.

The aim is to formulate specific proposals to present to the Board in order to obtain approval to implement projects under the B'nai Tikvah name. The goal is to make sure that our congregation's commitment to Tikun Olam becomes one of the principles for which we are known.

In addition, the Social Action Committee will continue to help individual members in their social justice projects by spreading the word about what can be done to help.

Alison Negrin & David Ratner, Social Action Co-Chairs

# SHALOM, B'NAI TIKVAH

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Lisa. She'll show you the ropes, and neither coordinator nor volunteers are asked to get together for regular committee meetings. Mitzvot don't get much better than that!

And if you or someone you know are going through a time where you need company or practical assistance, please let us know – we'd be glad to connect you with Chesed. As simple as it sounds, the speaking of names and the act of being there assures our fellow community members that we care about them, and will not abandon them or let them fall.

In these ways, we will continue to evolve into a caring community in letter and in spirit; in word, and in deed.

## RELIGIOUS SCHOOL NEWS

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our grades, designed to create an opportunity for families to interact within a grade level, and also to give the parents a window into their child's experience in school. Morah Ellen, our 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, has taken community building to the next level. Her class has met for an after school picnic as well as gotten together for bowling – which is a wonderful way to build a community outside of our walls - Thank you Morah Ellen!

Third Thursday @ Tikvah is another program designed to strengthen community connections among kids in our school as well as invite kids from the community to share fun moments with us. If you have yet to send your 2<sup>nd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> grader to this program, I highly recommend you make room for it in your kids' very busy schedule – the program has proven very successful in delivering fun and a sense of belonging to all our children.

Starting in January we will offer Tikvah Tots, a free weekly story time & activity program for parents and toddlers on Tuesday morning. This program, which will introduce Jewish themed stories in both English and Hebrew, along with K'tan tan, our monthly Sunday parent and me program, are both designed to inspire community connections for young families.

I invite you in this coming year of 2017 to deepen your connections with our community in new ways – perhaps it is being more involved with our social action committee, or taking a class in adult education – or maybe it is showing up for our Family Service. Here's to a great 2017 of deepening connections.

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# CONTRIBUTIONS

## GENERAL FUND

In memory of Esther Appleberg  
*Idelle Lipman*

In honor of Zachary Treger Roberson's  
Bar Mitzvah  
*RoseAnn and Sam Treger*

In memory of Eda Leibson  
*Ellin and Craig Sadur*

In honor of my daughter, Alison Negrin  
*Shirley Negrin*

L'Shana Tovah and in appreciation of the  
use of our facility,  
*The Wednesday Bridge Club*

In honor of Deborah and Marc Usatin's  
new grandson, Xaiver Stefan Zaiko  
*Stuart Zangwill*

In memory of Doris Levine  
*Vicki and John Anderle*

In memory of Joan Drittenbas  
*Laura and Bruce Presnick*

In memory of Reba Rabiner  
*Karen Lapin*

In memory of Sidney Schwartz  
*Cindy Turner and Brian Schwartz*

In memory of Janet Deutch  
*Marcia and Harvey Maslin*

In memory of Ivy Noceto's father, Paul  
Rogen  
*Rayna and Richard Ravitz*

In memory of Dorothy Polay Bushell  
*Yonina and Barry Bushell*

In memory of Ann Christian  
*Joni Vineberg*

In memory of Sidney Schwartz  
*Cindy Turner and Brian Schwartz*

In memory of Hilda Stone  
*Sharon and Hugh Tama*

In memory of Susan Spivock  
*Sharon and Ron Brown*

In memory of Marjorie Shuer  
*Mery and Jerome Chaney*

In memory of Etta Resler and David  
Resler  
*Nancy and Arthur Solomon*

In memory of Eva Tsukerman  
*Geniya Levikova and Carlos Trujillo*

In appreciation of CBT  
*Laura and Bruce Presnick*

## RABBI GUTTERMAN'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In appreciation of the beautiful High  
Holyday Services  
*Robin and Larry Gordon*

In appreciation of Rabbi Gutterman's  
assistance during my father, Paul  
Rogen's, passing  
*Ivy Noceto and Larry Simon*

In memory of Lawrence Shaw  
*Idelle Lipman*

In memory of Fritzi Gewing  
*Anna and Walter Gewing*

## CANTOR CHABON'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In appreciation of the beautiful High  
Holyday Services  
*Robin and Larry Gordon*

In memory of Frank Lerner  
In memory of Bessie Lerner  
*Nessa and Bob Wilk*

In memory of Anthony Aaron Micco  
*Faith Micco*

## CANTOR'S MUSIC FUND

In memory of Stanley Gilman  
In memory of Charlotte Gilman  
*Carol Reif and Jeff Gilman*

In memory of Gerald Kowitz  
*Leslie Kowitz and Eric Roswall*

In memory of Anca Iova Negoescu  
In honor of Deborah and Marc Usatin's  
new grandson, Xaiver Stefan Zaiko  
In honor of Carol and Allen Teitelman's  
new granddaughter, Lindy Joy Frese  
*Cookie Svingos*

In memory of Belle Lerner  
In memory of Jack Lerner  
In memory of Milton Wilk  
*Nessa and Bob Wilk*

In memory of Herman Roth  
*Sharon and Ron Brown*

In memory of Sydney Rapoport  
*Cookie Svingos*

## JAMES COHEN SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In memory of Goldie Cohen  
In memory of Regina Deutsch  
In memory of George Maisels  
In memory of Robert Zeimer  
*Sally Cohen*

## CANTOR STEPHEN RICHARDS CHOIR FUND

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

In memory of Sidney Solomon  
*Cantor Stephen and Marjorie Richards*

In memory of Louis Becker  
In memory of Arthur Becker  
*Susan and John Klein*

## ABRAHAM NIVER SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In memory of Bernard Marcus  
*Patricia and Lorry Marcus*

In memory of Ida Shiela Salusky  
*Monica Salusky and John Sutherland*

## SOCIAL ACTION FUND

In memory of John Sutherland  
*Monica Salusky and John Sutherland*

## HELP THE MORTGAGE FUND

In memory of Anca Negouscu  
*Mary Ann and Harry Wittenberg*  
*Judy and Walt Blum*

In memory of Daniel Bristow  
*Gloria Kemna*

In memory of Mary and Henry Spack  
*Barbara S. Spack*

## JOSEPH ASHER MEMORIAL LECTURE FUND

In memory of Fae Asher  
*Kelly and Aaron Kaplan*  
*Pam and Albert Palitz*

## TREE OF LIFE

In memory of Florence Fink  
*Michael Fine*

## WARM WINTER NIGHTS

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7

10:00 AM

Join us for morning minyan where we will study text about social action in the Jewish world with Cantor Chabon: "Texts that will remind us that a founding principle of Judaism is compassion for the needy, for the stranger, for the other."

We will then turn that compassion into empathy, into action, as we make and serve food for the homeless at St Paul's church on Trinity."

For more information and to sign up go to:  
[www.signupgenius.com/go/409od4daeeaa2fa3fe3-warm](http://www.signupgenius.com/go/409od4daeeaa2fa3fe3-warm)



## PHILOSOPHY CIRCLE MINI COURSE: READINGS FROM HALEVI, MAIMONIDES, BUBER, AND HESCHEL

On four very different nights we will dip into the wellspring of the Jewish philosophical library in this mini survey course for Lehrhaus Philosophy Circle.

HaLevi and Maimonides created foundational thought on Jewish identity at the dusk of the Golden Age of Spain. Buber and Heschel addressed modernity at the sunset of European Jewry and the dawn of Israel and America. This class will meet at Congregation B'nai Shalom for the first two sessions, and at Congregation B'nai Tikvah for the last two sessions.

**Date & time:** Thursdays, February 2, 9, 16, 23  
7:00 - 8:30 pm

**Tuition:** \$85 for the public, \$50 for members

**Cosponsors:** Congregation B'nai Shalom,  
Congregation B'nai Tikvah & Temple Isaiah

For more information and to register go to:  
[www.lehrhaus.org](http://www.lehrhaus.org)

## Save money on your electric bills with solar AND raise money for CBT!

Did you know Congregation B'nai Tikvah just installed 20 kilowatts of SunPower® solar on the roof? We're now generating clean, renewable energy and saving money on the temple's electric bills every day.

As a member of Congregation B'nai Tikvah, you can benefit from going solar too. Not only can you save money on your own electric bills, but you're eligible for a **special \$1,500 mail-in rebate** on the purchase or lease of a SunPower home solar system.

Plus, an anonymous benefactor will donate **\$518 to the temple** for every member who goes solar as a way to say thank you for helping change the way our world is powered.

How do I get started?

- 1 Request a free solar evaluation.
- 2 Receive a customized proposal.
- 3 Receive rebate after installation.

Visit [solar.sunpower.com/asp-tikvah](http://solar.sunpower.com/asp-tikvah) to schedule your free home solar consultation.

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# CONTRA COSTA MIDRASHA

By Devra C. Aarons, CCM Director

Contra Costa Midrasha invites all our community partners to SAVE the DATE on Saturday, February 25, 2017 for our annual GALA! This year our theme, "Peace, Love and Midrasha" will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the summer of love with great 60's music, costumes and décor. Join us at the San Ramon Community Center that evening for a fun evening of dinner, dancing and celebrating Contra Costa Midrasha and the work we do for teens and their families. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit: [www.ccmidrasha.com/gala](http://www.ccmidrasha.com/gala).

This holiday season at Contra Costa Midrasha has been a month (and more) of mitzvot and community collaboration:

CCM's Annual Day of Service on Veteran's Day focused this year on honoring the veterans living at Reutlinger. 20 teens attended to hear the stories of our elders, present certificates of service and sing the theme songs from our Armed services. We ended the day by making "tie" blankets to send to people currently in active duty.

Teen Philanthropy Board spent part of their December meeting planting trees at the Walnut Creek Open Space.

Our annual "adopt a family" with Shalom Bayit campaign showed an inspiring show of support from everyone – teens and families – bringing presents and gift cards. In all we brought three bags of gifts to Shalom Bayit.

On December 23rd, 18 teens and parents boxed and sorted food for hungry families at the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano Counties.

It's always a pleasure to watch our teens give back and do the work of tikkun olam (repairing the world) in partnership with their Midrasha community.

Our Better Together program also had a spectacular December. The teens shared a weekend retreat in Berkeley in early December at StoryCenter, learning how to build mini documentaries and tell stories visually. Highlights of the weekend were watching completed videos by the teens about their families, sharing Havdalah with CCM alum Aaron Glass and making food together all weekend. The next weekend we took some of our shared learning back to Reutlinger and did our first story-circle, hearing the stories of our elder partners. This first step will lead us to the creation of mini films about these elders. More information to follow about the Film Festival we are planning to showcase those films.

Midrasha continues its 2016-17 year! CCM has ongoing enrollment – teens are invited to come check out whenever they like. Join in – to inspire and do good work in the community, to be heard, to relax and to grow their own Jewish identity. To enroll today, make a donation, or find out more about CCM's programs, visit our website at [www.ccmidrasha.com](http://www.ccmidrasha.com). Or contact the office via phone at 925/944-4701 or e-mail at [contracostamidrasha@gmail.com](mailto:contracostamidrasha@gmail.com). See you on a Wednesday night this year!



## NOTES ON NEW MEMBERS



Cathy and Tamarak Arebalo moved to Clayton, CA from the mountains of Colorado in December 2015. Cathy accepted a promotion as CFO of a federal agency in San Francisco, which started their new adventure, along with two Labrador retrievers and three cats. After settling in their new home, they made a list of synagogues in the area to visit, with Congregation B'nai Tikvah being first. They never did visit other synagogues after finding such a warm and welcoming membership and Rabbi; they knew they had found their new spiritual home. They became members in early 2016 and have made friends through the Havurah that they joined.

They have 4 children and 6 grandchildren living in the Midwest. When not at work, Cathy stays busy with her newest hobby: woodturning. Tamarak works as a domestic engineer and has varied hobbies such as baking, reading and teaching herself to play the ukulele. When they disappear for weeks at a time, they are usually out on an adventure in their RV they call the DragonWagon, exploring the National parks and surrounding areas while hiking and enjoying nature photography together.

### LUNCH AND LEARN

Lunch and Learn is back! Starting January 10th and resuming on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month. Bring your lunch and join Cantor Chabon.

## REFLECTIONS...

*continued from page 1*

Babka and our young adults group for organizing this event.

Then, on January 14<sup>th</sup>, we will have the distinct pleasure of welcoming Marina Pacowski back to CBT for an evening of jazz. Marina is an unbelievable jazz and classical pianist and singer who blew everyone away last year when she came to perform for us. The show sold out last year, so get your tickets soon! It promises to be a very joyful evening of music.

I wish us all a new year of renewed commitment to the values that are most important to us as individuals and as Jews. There is so much work to be done, so much love needed to counter the hatred and fear that are bubbling up in our world. Let us join together in compassion, in empathy and in joy to heal our broken world.

## TRIVIA NIGHT SUCCESS

CBT's 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Team Trivia Challenge was our biggest and best ever. More than 120 players on a record-breaking 16 teams tackled 100 fun and challenging questions while enjoying hors d'oeuvres, snacks, beer, wine and dessert.

The final results were close. The winning team correctly answered 92 questions and the next two teams tied for second at 87 correct. Thanks to all who attended for your support.

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

For those who couldn't make it, try your hand at this question, which stumped six of our 16 teams: "If you have one bill of each denomination of U.S. paper currency containing the image of a president who is also on Mt. Rushmore, how much money would you have?" If you'd like the answer, email us at [theCBTTriviaGuys@gmail.com](mailto:theCBTTriviaGuys@gmail.com).

**Save the date for next year's Trivia Night- November 4, 2017!**

The CBT Trivia Guys – David, Mike & Rocco



**TIKVAH L'ATID**  
HOPE FOR THE FUTURE



Judy & Walter Blum

We grew up coincidentally at the same synagogue, both children of Holocaust Survivors. We certainly were taught never to take our Judaism and right to observe for granted, but the synagogue was only viewed as a place to worship - not as a place to create community. Growing up we both had the little blue boxes at home and donations were made to various organizations, but no single organization stood out.

When we joined Congregation B'nai Tikvah, we never expected it to have the impact on our lives that it has had for us and our children - it has become a true extension of our family. Creating this legacy is allowing us to give back to our community by helping to ensure that B'nai Tikvah continues to thrive and be there for future generations

If you are someone who cares about the future of our community, and would consider leaving a small percentage of your estate to CBT to help ensure that future, please contact Lisa Wenger ([lisa.wenger@thomsonreuters.com](mailto:lisa.wenger@thomsonreuters.com)) or Sandy Gross ([sandyfgross@gmail.com](mailto:sandyfgross@gmail.com)).



In Honor of *Star Trek's* 50th Anniversary!

## Most Everything I Learned About Life I Learned from Star Trek

Tuesday, January 24

7:30 pm

At Congregation B'nai Tikvah

To mark the 50th anniversary of *Star Trek* on American television, EBIJFF Director, Riva Gambert, will use film clips from the original and *Next Generation* series, as well as *Star Trek* movies to explore such topics as Biblical prophecy, good vs. evil, and the power of memory.

Admission: \$7; \$3 for students

Presented by Congregation B'nai Tikvah and the East Bay International Jewish Film Festival. For more information: [www.underonetent.org](http://www.underonetent.org) or call the CBT office.



# JANUARY 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 No School	2 (Office closed)	3 Religious School 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah	4 10:00am Open Bridge 7:00pm Men's Night Out- Off site	5	6 10:00am - 11:30am Gan Gani 5:30pm Tot Shabbat 6:00pm Roasted Chicken Dinner 6:30pm Family Shabbat Service	7 Parashat Vayigash 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan
8 Religious School 10:30am Walking in the Valley Class	9 6:00pm Executive Board Meeting 7:00pm - 9:00pm Education Committee Meeting 7:30pm Ritual Committee Meeting	10 Religious School 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah	11 10:00am Open Bridge 7:00pm Mahjong 7:15pm Midrasha	12	13 6:30pm Shabbat Service	14 Parashat Vayechi 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan 7:30pm An Evening of Jazz with Marina Pakowski, Cantor Chabon & Harry Wittenberg!
15 No School 9:30am - 10:30am Social Action Committee Meeting 11:00am - 12:00pm Mussar Meeting	16 (Office closed) MLK Day	17 Religious School 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah	18 10:00am Open Bridge 7:15pm Midrasha	19 4:00pm - 6:00pm 3rd Thursday @ Tikvah	20 7:30pm Shir Joy with speaker from CCIH	21 Parashat Shemot 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan
22 Religious School 10:00am - 11:30am K'tan Tan 10:30am Book Sisters at Ellen Duree's Home	23 5:30pm - 6:30pm Executive Board 6:30pm General Board Meeting	24 Religious School 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 7:00pm Star Trek Event	25 10:00am Open Bridge 7:00pm Mahjong 7:15pm Midrasha	26	27 7:30pm Shabbat Service	28 Parashat Vaera 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 6:00pm - 9:00pm BTTY Event
29 Religious School 10:00am - 11:30am Gan Gani	30	31 Religious School 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah				

Check the website and weekly emails for most up to date calendar information.

## 25th Asher Memorial Lecture



Join us for a special Shabbat morning service on February 4 at 10:00 am.

Our Rabbi Emeritus Raphael Asher will speak on "Hamilton, Ethan Allen, and Baruch Spinoza: Refreshing Heresies of the Founding Fathers."

We look forward to seeing Hamilton fans and the rest of the congregation!

Kiddush to follow.

# FEBRUARY 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 10:00am Open Bridge 7:15pm Midrasha	2 7:00pm Philosophy survey course- at Bnai Shalom	3 5:30pm Tot Shabbat 6:00pm Chinese Food Dinner 6:30pm Family Shabbat Service	4 Parashat Bo 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan
5 Religious School 10:00am - 11:30am Gan Gani	6	7 Religious School 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah	8 10:00am Open Bridge 7:00pm Mahjong 7:15pm Midrasha	9 6:30pm Sisterhood Painting Party 7:00pm Philosophy survey course- at Bnai Shalom	10 6:30pm Shabbat Service - 4th Grade Service	11 Parashat Beshalach Tu B'Shvat 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan - Shir Joy! & Tu B'Shevat Oneg 6:00pm - 9:00pm BTYY Event
12 Religious School- Day of Learning	13 6:00pm Executive Board Meeting 7:00pm - 9:00pm Education Committee Meeting 7:30pm Ritual Committee Meeting	14 Religious School 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah	15 10:00am Open Bridge 7:15pm Midrasha	16 4:00pm - 6:00pm 3rd Thursday @ Tikvah 7:00pm Philosophy survey course- at Bnai Tikvah	17 7:30pm Shir Joy	18 Parashat Yitro 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study 10:00am Morning Minyan
19 No School 9:30am - 10:30am Social Action Committee Meeting 11:00am - 12:00pm Mussar Meeting	20 (Office closed) Presidents Day	21 Religious School 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah 6:30pm Book Sisters 7:30pm Walking in the Valley Class	22 10:00am Open Bridge 7:00pm Mahjong 7:15pm Midrasha	23 7:00pm Philosophy survey course- at Bnai Tikvah	24 7:30pm Shabbat Service - Joined by Revered Deb Lee	25 Parashat Mishpatim Shabbat Shekalim 9:00am Lay Led Torah Study
26 Religious School 10:00am - 11:30am K'tan Tan	27 5:30pm - 6:30pm Executive Board 6:30pm General Board Meeting	28 Religious School 10:00am - 11:00am Jewish Meditation - A Taste of Torah				

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Please call in advance

Check the website and weekly emails for most up to date calendar information.



CBTikvah & cbtyoungadults



Congregation B'nai Tikvah



@congregationbnaitikvah



@cbtikvah

# Tikvah Tots

## Weekly Parent & Child Playgroup

AGES  
0-3

TIME  
Tuesdays, 9:30 – 11:00 am  
9:30 – 10:00: Story Time  
10:00 – 11:00: Open Play

2017 DATES  
Every Tuesday starting Jan 10.  
First Tuesday of the month is  
Sipurim (Hebrew Stories).

COST  
CBT MEMBERS      NON-MEMBERS  
free                      free

# K'Tan Tan

## Monthly Parent & Child Program

AGES  
0-5

TIME  
Sundays, 10:00 – 11:30 am

2017 DATES  
January 22      Tu B'Shevat  
February 26      Purim  
March 19      Passover  
April 23      Havdallah

COST  
CBT MEMBERS      NON-MEMBERS  
free                      free

# Gan Gani

## Monthly PreK Program

AGES  
kids entering Kindergarten Fall 2017 (4-5)

TIME  
Sundays, 10:00 – 11:30 am

2017 DATES  
January 8      Havdallah  
February 5      Tu B'Shevat  
March 5      Purim  
April 2      Passover  
May 7      Shavuot

COST  
CBT MEMBERS      NON-MEMBERS  
\$80 annual      \$100 annual  
\$12 drop in      \$15 drop in

# Tot Shabbat

## Monthly Preschool Shabbat Service & Dinner

TIME  
Fridays  
5:30 pm      Tot Shabbat Service  
6:00 pm      Dinner  
6:30 pm      Family Service

DATES  
First Friday of every month

COST  
CBT MEMBERS      NON-MEMBERS  
free except dinner      free except dinner



CONGREGATION  
B'NAI TIKVAH

For more information on any of our preschool programs, please email  
[schooldirector@tikvah.org](mailto:schooldirector@tikvah.org).

25 Hilcroft Way, Walnut Creek  
925.933.5397

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## THANK YOU!

Thank you to Irene & Art Korn and the CBT Giftshop for donating our new AED machine. This AED defibrillator can and will save lives. It's final home will be in the up-stairs foyer, but for now, look for the sign on the door where it is located.

Shopping at the Gift Shop benefits your congregation!



**EAST BAY CHILDREN'S BOOK PROJECT**  
 Every Child Needs a Book

The bin is in our lobby.

Bring in gently used books for all age children.

[www.eastbaychildrensbookproject.org](http://www.eastbaychildrensbookproject.org)



Have YOU visited the Tzedakah box in our Lobby?

All donations received through March will be sent to

**Contra Costa Interfaith Housing**

This organizations was selected by our Social Action Committee.

[www.ccjds.org](http://www.ccjds.org)

**K-8th Grade Open House**  
 Sunday, December 4  
 3:30-5:00pm

**Check Us Out Day**  
 Friday, November 11  
 1st - 7th grade students are invited to visit our classrooms

**Middle School Open House**  
 Thursday, January 19, 2017  
 6:00-8:00pm

*Private tours by appointment, call our admissions office.*

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A Community Jewish Day School  
 Kindergarten-8th Grade  
 955 Risa Road, Lafayette, CA  
 925.284.8288  
 admissions@ccjds.org

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For membership information, please contact the Temple Office.



## **A TRIO OF MUSICAL MAGIC**

Date: Saturday, January 14

Time: 7:30 PM

Location: Congregation B'nai Tikvah

Cost: \$25 (includes refreshments)



Back by Popular Demand! You won't want to miss the outstanding performance by French Jewish concert pianist, jazz vocalist and actress Marina Pacowski. Our stellar evening also features our own Cantor Jennie Chabon and Harry Wittenberg on bass.

Limited number of tickets still available on

[www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2710809](http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2710809)