



CONGREGATION  
B'NAI TIKVAH

# TIKVAH TALK

## REFLECTIONS...

By Rabbi Jennie Chabon



Dear friends,

It has been such a hard few weeks in our community, and by community I mean the global Jewish community. Such a hard few weeks. Hard, traumatic, terrifying, devastating. I have run out of words to describe the feeling of being a Jew right now. Add to that being a congregational rabbi? Like I said, I have run out of words. It reminds me of 9/11 and the terror that instantly swept through this country. I was in Manhattan on September 11th, in the basement of a JTS building in a Hebrew class, and I remember coming into the light of day and feeling so clearly that nothing would ever be the same again.

I was a cantorial student at the time. I didn't yet have a pulpit. I had no Rosh Hashanah sermons written that would now need to be thrown out so that I could come up with something to say, anything, that would help a traumatized community of people feel less terrified and hopeless on the heels of a terrorist attack. And that was an attack on America, not on Israel. But even then, even in Manhattan and not Israel, even when it was not my people who were the targets of the vicious attacks, even then I knew that what I needed in order to somehow make sense of that heinous act was to be surrounded by Jewish community in love and prayer. I did not go to shul hoping to hear my rabbi's moral take on the attacks. It was hard enough for me to unglue my own eyes from the tv in order to just get myself to shul. No, my soul did not need to hear him take a stand. My soul needed to know that I was not alone and that our ancient tradition, born of rupture and devastation, would be able to hold me through this too.

There is no right way for me to respond to the cruelty that was visited upon Israel three weeks ago. Of that I am certain. I truly do not believe that it would ease your souls for me to repeat what I wrote in an email a few weeks ago, that Hamas is a terrorist organization with a declared mission to destroy the state of Israel and all Jews along with it, and that it goes without saying that what Hamas did is unjustifiable, inhumane, and horrifying. I also don't think it will comfort you to hear me say that no one is showing their love for the Palestinian people by defending Hamas's atrocities. But there, I said it, and I don't feel any better. Rabbi Jill Zimmerman wrote in her recent opinion piece in the J Weekly that "rabbis are navigating diverse factions in their congregations, each one expecting allegiance to their point of view on what Israel or the United States should or shouldn't do. The community often demands a moral voice from their rabbis, even though community

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## EDUCATION

By Sue Bojdak, Director of Congregational Learning



### L'Dor vador/from Generation to Generation

One of my favorite moments in my students' b'nai mitzvah services is when we get to the end of the kedusha, the 3rd part of the Amidah, which we recite aloud and the young people chant "l'dor vador/from generation to generation" responsively with the congregation. Here they are, our newest Jewish "adult" claiming their place in our heritage and reminding all of us that our tradition, in this moment on this day, is, in fact, being carried from generation to generation. It always brings a smile to my lips and a tear to my eyes.

What I love about being a part of a synagogue is that it is a multi-generational community. As someone who has lived across the country from my family of origin for my entire adult life, synagogue is *the* place where I mix with my elders and those younger than me as a matter of course. When I was in my 20s, it was the place where people modeled adulting, family life, and community engagement for me. In my 30s, it was the place where I could parent alongside others while always having someone two steps ahead of me and find local "grandparents" to love my family. In my 40s, I started being able to look in both directions, noticing that I had what to give and what to gain not only from my elders but also from those coming up behind me. Now in my 50s with mostly grown children, I feel so blessed to be enlivened by other people's children and teens as well as continuing to benefit from the wisdom, experience and curiosity of those ahead of me on the journey.

While it is easy to slide into the places where we find our own age demographics and stay comfortably inside the spaces we know the best, sharing our experiences with other elders, empty-nesters, parents of teens, religious school parents, young families, it is so much more interesting when we push ourselves into the places where the ages and stages of life mingle. This fall we had people ages 3 to 90 building our CBT sukkah together and just over a week later the same age-diverse collective unrolled the Torah in its entirety as part of our celebration of Simchat Torah. At our outdoor Shabbatot (in the Park or Under the Oak), we have the littlest people dancing and the oldest appreciating the fresh air and a chair with a good back, all joyfully welcoming Shabbat together. How can we create more of that?

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# Congregation B'nai Tikvah

## MISSION STATEMENT

At Congregation B'nai Tikvah, we believe that a kind and vibrant Jewish community deepens and restores our sense of purpose and connection to the world. We are dedicated to learning, music-infused prayer, personal relationships and a commitment to social justice, and welcome all who are looking to explore the many innovative paths to meaning that Judaism has to offer.



## STAFF

Jennie Chabon, Rabbi Cantor  
Sue Bojdak, Director of Congregational Learning  
Kathy Jacobs, Office Specialist  
Tami Welch-Robinson, Office Specialist  
Jen Selman, Facilities Staff  
Samantha Youngman, Communications  
Lisa Zeiler, Music Specialist  
Raphael W. Asher, Rabbi Emeritus  
Stephen Richards, Cantor Emeritus

## WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS:

Rachelle Aiello & Joshua Sonnenfeld  
Mike Alpern & Suzanne Chang  
Rachel Torres & Samo Devenica  
Ariel Ben-Zeev  
Hannah Bronsky Peña  
Jennifer & Brian Croshal  
Pam Fenenbock  
Dorit Gonen Fridman

Susan Gelmis  
Erica & Rex Hoffman  
Geri Kahn  
Katherine & Ed Kunnes  
Hannah Sugarman &  
Matthew Bush  
Dawn Shifreen-Pomerantz  
Sue Proctor  
Jacquelyn & Gabriel Wright

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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## CONTACT

Office Hours:  
Monday -Thursday 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Friday: 10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
office@tikvah.org | (925) 933-5397  
www.tikvah.org

**Give Back Program**  
Shop for toys and raise money for  
**Congregation B'nai Tikvah Religious School**  
Shop in-store or online at [www.5littlemonkeys.com](http://www.5littlemonkeys.com)  
11/1-11/15/23 and use promo code  
**TIKVAH2023**  
For every purchase using this code, Five Little Monkeys will donate 15% of the pre-tax total to us!  
[www.5littlemonkeys.com](http://www.5littlemonkeys.com)

## Do you have any shopping to do? Help the religious school at Five Little Monkeys!

This promotion is valid for purchases made November 1-15, 2023 only. Take advantage of free delivery over \$50 within CA, free in-store pick-up, and free shipping on all deliveries outside of CA over \$100 !

We offer free gift wrapping and a unique selection of the best educational toys, games and books for children.

members often disagree about what that stance should be." And that is most decidedly true here at CBT. Our beautiful community is made up of people of very differing opinions on so many things, especially Israel, and it would be not only unwise for me to give a sermon about my moral take on the war, but even more importantly, I don't believe that it would offer you what you need right now.

We, in the Jewish community, are feeling reactionary and terrified, reliving memories we did not even know we had within our cells. Though most of us in our community were not alive during the shoah; though none of us can remember the destruction of the Temple by the Romans in 70 CE or by the Babylonians in 500 BCE, we actually do remember, somewhere deep inside us, and it is from that place that we are reacting with fear and anger and by lashing out against one another and projecting those fears onto our leaders. If only someone could say something definitive to make us feel better! Something powerful enough to take away some of this pain! Well someone did, a long time ago, and that someone was our psalmists, and our ancient sages, the stewards of our tradition who knew millennia ago when we were going through yet another assault on our sacred tribe, that the answer is prayer, and God, and community. The answer is not to yell your convictions at your neighbor. There is no psalm in which the psalmist cries: I am right and you are wrong and now I feel better! No one feels better, not really, by trying to prove that their version of the truth is the only version of the truth. It's as Jonathan Freedland wrote in his recent article in *The Guardian*:

"This is where you wind up when you view this conflict in monochrome, as a clash of right vs. wrong. Because the late Israeli novelist and peace activist Amos Oz was never wiser than when he described the Israel/Palestine conflict as something infinitely more tragic: a clash of right vs. right. Two peoples with deep wounds, howling with grief, fated to share the same small piece of land. There are no winners – only never-ending loss."

I could yell *Am Yisrael Chai* at the top of my lungs and it would not make any of our pain go away. By the rivers of Babylon, we read in Psalm 137, there we sat, sat and wept, as we thought of Zion. When we were exiled, when the Temple was destroyed, when we thought that not only Jerusalem was gone, but God and Judaism along with it, what did we do? We cried and prayed, we invited God in, and we were held by our community.

You do not know what your neighbor believes about Israel or Palestine, about Jews or Gazans. And it does not matter. We do not belong to this community so we can make declarative statements. We are here to hold one another. Our hearts can do it. We can hold the pain of our friends who do not see the world as we do. We really can. That is what sacred community is for. So please, turn down the volume in your heads and open up the space in your heart. We are not alone in this madness, and this is long from over. We need one another now. And the only way we make it through is together.

## President's Message

By Board President Lori Siegel



Before I became President, I met with Past Presidents Judith Barrall and David Ratner individually. They both shared that each President's term is shaped by something beyond our control. I had no idea what I would face as I started my two-year term and now we all know.

On Friday, October 6th, I officially started my dual role as President and supporting the office team until we hire an Executive Director. We had a wonderful celebration with community for Simchat Torah, and then on Shabbat, we awoke to a nightmare.

As I sit here trying to come up with words to say to you, my beloved CBT community, in this time of grief, pain, anxiety, and confusion, I am at a loss. There is so much to say, but words do not feel adequate. As Jews, we consider each member of the tribe extended family – B'nai Israel – the children of Israel. So we cannot help but feel the pain and loss of our Israeli family members. With everything we have, we pray for the protection and safe return of the 220 hostages. And because of our Jewish values, we also pray for the innocent citizens of Gaza. For as Jews, we recognize the value of each human life and that each of us is *b'tzelem Elohim*. We pray for the day when the violence ends and we can work towards repairing and building bridges to peace.

I also see and feel our community's grief and fear. We are all trying to process the events in Israel in our own ways, however, at the same time we have been confronted with the ugly and painful rise in antisemitism across the country and in our own backyard. We are worried for the safety of our families. Some of us are scared to come to shul or other Jewish spaces for fear of violence.

But, my friends, this is when we must lean on each other all the more. Our strength, and the strength of the Jewish people, is in our community.

Being together in Jewish spaces repairs the hurt and calms the fear. It reminds us that for 3000 years, we have faced similar hate, but we are still here. Coming to services and community events in the past three weeks has helped me calm my mind and soul and reminded me of why we can't let the haters tear us apart.

We are a beautiful and strong community and we will get through this. So, if you are feeling alone or isolated or just need a place to process what has and is happening, lean on your CBT community. Come to services or a program, reach out to your CBT friends. We are stronger together!

I have heard from many of you that you want to come to services and events at CBT but are afraid to be in Jewish spaces for fear of antisemitic violence. We are continuing the work we started two years ago to stay on top of new ways to secure our community and provide the assurance to make us feel comfortable and to keep us

In August, Sisterhood's Booksisters met at Rayna's home for a potluck and lively discussion of What Could Be Saved. This book was full of family secrets, loss and betrayal and led to a spirited discussion. Our second book, Lessons in Chemistry was enjoyed by all.

The next Booksisters will meet on Sunday, November 12 at 2 p.m. at CBT. We are reading Good Daughters by Joyce Maynard. Join us!

- Sisterhood Mah Jong continues at CBT, on the second Thursday of the month, 1:00 to 3:30 p.m. Contact Judy Weil at 925-788-4766
- Booksisters now meet on Sunday afternoons.
- Contact Rayna to visit the gift shop

### Upcoming:

**Wise Aging:** Sisterhood is presenting the first of a four part workshop on issues in aging on November 6. This session focuses on resources for aging in place. The following sessions will be Wednesdays January 10, February 14 and March 13. Sessions are all on Zoom. Check your weekly email or use the QR code on page 8 to register.

### Sisterhood Hanukkah Party

**Tuesday, December 12th 6:30 p.m.**

On October 22, we held our annual meeting and luncheon in the social hall. We planned activities for the upcoming year. If you would like to join Sisterhood, Contact Mona Epstein and/or join us at an upcoming event!  
monaepstein@gmail.com

One easy opportunity for us to gather as the amazing intergenerational community that we are is at b'nai mitzvah services. Because we at CBT have a regular practice of once a month Shabbat morning prayer and not weekly, we don't have a core group of Shabbat morning service goers. The result is that our b'nai mitzvah are often mostly attended by the b'nai mitzvah family and their guests and not by members from across our whole community. It's a missed opportunity to lift up and learn from our youth and to support and embrace them and their families. This service has it all: Torah and haftarah, wisdom from our youth, a chance to throw (and gather) candy, and a time to gather in close and offer blessings as we are strengthened by and offer strength to the next generation. You will find our b'nai mitzvah come and go in waves. We might have four in a row (as we do this fall) and then none for two months (as we do this winter) and then every other week for a bit. It requires paying attention to the calendar and/or the weekly email to make sure you are there, but it is so worth it.

If you love Shabbat morning services, and/or hearing the voices of youth, and/or being in joyful mixed-age groups from age 1-100, b'nai mitzvah services are for you. And you are always welcome.





**Sisterhood Mahjong at CBT** on the 2nd Thursday of the month, 1:00- 3:30 pm. Contact Judy Weil at 925-788-4766



# Shop Hanukkah

at the Sisterhood




The Giftshop will be open during religious school on these dates:  
 November 5  
 November 12  
 December 3  
 December 10  
 December 17

**See page 13 for some of our new Hanukkah items**

## From our friends at St. Matthew

October 2023

Dear Rabbi Chabon and B'nai Tikvah,

In moments like these, when darkness and strife overshadow the world, we are reminded of the threads that bind us together in the fabric of humanity. I've been holding you, the entire Congregation B'nai Tikvah, and our siblings in Israel close in my heart and prayers during this tumultuous time.

We, at Saint Matthew Lutheran Church, feel a deep connection with you and your congregation. The stories, songs, and teachings we've shared over the years have made an indelible mark on our hearts. And now, more than ever, we stand in solidarity with you. We might come from different traditions, but our shared values and hopes for a peaceful world unite us.

I can't begin to imagine the weight of the pain and fear you are feeling, but I want you to know that you're not alone. Our church community is here to support you, whether through prayer, a shoulder to lean on, or any other means you might find comforting.

We hold that light persists, even in the darkest times. Our respective scriptures speak to the enduring strength and resilience of your people, who have faced countless trials throughout history. We believe that love, understanding, and unity will guide us through these trying times.

Rabbi Chabon, please let your congregation know that they are in our thoughts and prayers. If there's anything specific we can do to support you all during this time, don't hesitate to reach out.

Sending you love, hope, and the warmest embrace from our community to yours.

In peace and solidarity,

Pastor Rustin Comer

And the congregational leadership of Saint Matthew Lutheran Church.



## Not to miss at CBT

### Pages 8 and 9

Book Talk: November 5 and more

Wise Aging: Nov 6, Jan 10, Feb 14, & March 13

Israeli Films: November 12

America's Twists of Faith: Nov 13, 27, Dec 11

God and Gender Series: December 3, 10, & 17

Trivia Night January 7th

### Pages 10 and 11

Tikvah Kids and Teens

### Pages 12 and 13

Committees and Groups

Sisterhood Gift Shop

## President's Message Continued

(continued from page 3)

By Lori Siegel, President

safe at CBT.

I've been attending security trainings on how to protect our community today, tomorrow, and for the future, with the Secure Community Network, the official safety and security organization of the Jewish community in North America, the Anti-Defamation League, and the Security Jewish Community Federation. The Rabbi, Sue, the office team, and I continue our conversations about being diligent about the safety and security of our community and building. The Contra Costa County Sheriff's Department has been an amazing resource to us and continues to drive by often to check in on our CBT community during events, religious school, and Shabbat services.

I have been working closely with the Jewish Community Federation and their team to apply for another security grant. We have an updated security vulnerability assessment which has helped guide us to prioritize steps to further secure and strengthen our synagogue. We are requesting 250K in hopes that we will have funding to pay for new exterior doors, upgraded windows, electronic locks, a remote locking system, motion sensor lighting near our entrances, and security guard support.

Our Security Task Force is currently working on an evacuation plan for our community and have organized a security training on Thursday, November 16th at CBT. They are also supporting us with recommendations to tighten security protocols. More information will be shared soon.

I want to thank Susanne Revutsky for supporting our security initiative as our grant writer. I also want to thank Tami Welch-Robinson for assisting me in answering many questions about our building. In addition, I want to thank Julia Babka-Kurzrock and David Jacoby for co-chairing our Security Task Force.

I am 3 months into my presidency. I feel honored to be working in the office during the week. I have learned the rhythm and the pulse of our dedicated team. My admiration continues to increase daily towards our Rabbi, Sue, Tami, Kathy, Chanel, Samantha, and Jennifer for all they do for our entire community. They work hard each day to create a safe and engaging Jewish community for all of our members.

So during this very difficult time, please lean in to support each other, pray together, and build a stronger CBT community. Our synagogue is a place of refuge, a sanctuary where we can come together to find solace, strength, and hope. I have found being present and surrounded by my Jewish community heals my soul. I suggest that each of you take the opportunity to attend an upcoming program or service and be present. Take a deep breath, listen to the music, and just be in the moment with your Jewish community. This is what has gotten the Jewish community through the last 3000 years and will continue to do so for the next 3000.

May the one who brings peace bring peace down.

# SHABBAT SHALOM



## Family First Fridays

6:30 p.m.

11/3 7th grade Shabbat

12/1 3rd & 4th grade Shabbat

1/5/2024 Winter "Bake off" (more information to come)

The first Friday of the month is dedicated to the youngest members of our community and their families. Our Family First Shabbat, while designed for young families as a shorter service with music, dancing, and story time, is a wonderfully joyful Shabbat

for all ages to experience. This multi-generational Shabbat is sure to bring a smile to your face.



# SERVICES AT CBT

For the most up-to-date details, check your weekly email.

## 2nd Fridays

6:30 p.m. 11/10 Community Led on Zoom

\*Dec 8, Hanukkah Celebration at CBT

Experience this warm space of community leadership on the 2nd Friday of each month where our members share their love of CBT through participation in the service a small treasure occurs. Our service on this evening is a true community shabbat, one that has been led by our lay leaders with the help of participating congregants. What started as a Ritual Committee meeting discussion on ways to engage the CBT community while expanding the service offerings to congregants has blossomed into a sweet evening where community gathers to welcome in Shabbat with prayers, poems and songs.

Thank you to our lay leaders who have taken up the challenge and made it their own. Under Rabbi Chabon's guidance, interested leaders are provided with a simple structure for the service and suggestions for readings and reflections while being encouraged to personalize the service with music or poetry that speaks to them.

\* See the Community Wide Hanukkah Celebration info on page 7



## Nishma 2nd Saturdays

Nishma will return Feb 10, 2024

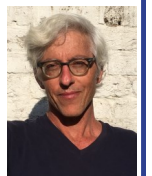


## 3rd Fridays

7:30 p.m.

11/17 Volunteer Shir Joy Shabbat

12/15 **Rabbi Asher Lecture:** Join us for a brief Kabbalat Shabbat service followed by The Transcendental Porcupine: From the Philosophical to the Psychological Sublime, a lecture by Guggenheim fellow and award-winning author George Prochnik. Prochnik's great-grandfather, James Jackson Putnam, was a prominent American psychologist who hosted Sigmund Freud when he introduced his psychotherapy to the American scene in 1909. At the time Freud was intrigued by the American porcupine as an apt symbol of the individual at once both desiring and repelling love. In turn, Putnam was intrigued by Freud's concept of sublimation but sought to add an ethical and communal dimension. Prochnik will unpack this episode in American spiritual history.



## 4th Fridays Community

Led Shabbat on Zoom 6:30 p.m.

12/22

## 5th Friday Kaddish Minyan

on Zoom 5:00 p.m.

11/24, 12/29

## Kaddish Minyan

5:00 p.m. on Zoom

11/24, 12/29

Join us for a short, thirty-minute virtual gathering in which we will connect, sing a few songs, and say kaddish. It will not be a formal Shabbat service but rather a way for people who need to say kaddish to do so, supported by community





## Community-Wide Hanukkah Celebration! Latkes & Lights Shir Joy Shabbat

December 8, 5:30 - 8:30p.m.

5:30p.m. Potluck Dinner, kids activities, and spirit competition

6:30p.m. Shir Joy with candle lighting and live music including the CBT Choir.

Bring your menorah with three candles.

Oneg with sufganiyot



Sign up for the potluck dairy dinner [here](#)



# ONGOING PROGRAMS

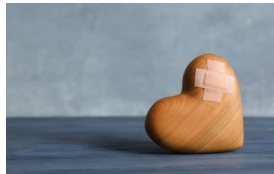
For the most up-to-date details, check your weekly email.

## Peer Grief Support Group

Bi-weekly Wednesdays on Zoom

Are you grieving the death of a spouse, or other significant person in your life? Grief is unique to each person, and journeying through it can be painful, lonely and confusing, but there are similarities in our grief experiences, and it can be comforting to share this journey with others who have experienced similar loss. Wherever you are on your grief journey, you don't have to travel alone.

Join Mitch Oshinsky, a trained peer grief support leader in this ongoing group. Anyone can start at any time. Contact Mitch if you would like to join or have any questions, at [moshins@pacbell.net](mailto:moshins@pacbell.net) or (925) 818-6092 (phone or text).



## Zoom Meditation Series with Gerri Levitas

4th\* Fridays at 1:00p.m. \*Nov and Dec are on the 3rd Friday



Join Gerri Levitas for this amazing meditation workshop series. Gerri is a professional hypnotherapist and is well-versed in guided meditation.

Through guided visualization, this workshop will help participants center, ground and access deep wisdom within their own heart.



[Fall Series](#)  
Register Here

### Choose one or all in the series:

November 17th: Making Each Moment Count\*

December 15th: Let there be Light: Open to Hanukkah\*



10am

Join Rabbi Chabon in the Social Hall right after T'filah for a short talk and a light breakfast. Each session

will highlight a different topic for a little bite of wisdom. Bites of Wisdom provides a great opportunity for you to meet new people, all while enjoying bagels & coffee and learning something new.

This program is **free and open to anyone** - please come join us and bring your friends.

Sunday, November 5

Sunday, January 21

Sunday, March 3



## Weekly Torah Meditation: "A Taste of Torah"

Tuesdays 10:00 a.m. Zoom to learn about the Torah portion of each week in a calming meditation. See the Monday email for a link. For more information contact Barbara Almy at [barbaraalmy@gmail.com](mailto:barbaraalmy@gmail.com).



Tuesdays 1:00 p.m. on Zoom

Join Rabbi Chabon and Sue Bojdak for a spiritual exploration and community discussion of sacred texts. See the weekly email for Zoom information and the text that will be discussed.

# Adult Education and more at CBT

## America's Twists of Faith: Four Episodes of Jewish Import in American Religious History.

With Rabbi Raphael Asher

7:30-9:00p.m.



October 16th, 30th, November 13th, 27th

"In their quest for religious liberty and cultural renewal, the Early Americans were conscious of their desire to be an exception to all the pitfalls of medieval, European, religious conflict. The New World might bypass the crusades, prejudices, and dogmatic frictions of the Old.

Through the prism of Jewish settlement and ideological influence, this course will examine the values

of the Founding Fathers, the mindset of waves of Jewish immigrants, the Civil War, and the modern yearning for innovative spiritual frontiers in determining the American religious landscape.

In our Jewish desire to be considered and consider ourselves in fresh ways, can we reconsider the gentile communities and their dynamics on this promising new land? Or will there be new theocracies, race wars, and more trails of tears?"

**December 15th, 7:30 p.m.** Join Rabbi Asher for a brief Kabbalat Service and his Lecture The Transcendental Porcupine. This lecture is a fitting conclusion to America's Twists of Faith. See page 6 for more information.

See the first session on YouTube here:



[Register Here](#)

## Wise Aging

A 4-part series from CBT Sisterhood Resources to live our later years with spirit, resilience, & wisdom.

November 6, 7:00-8:30 pm on Zoom



Join Jewish Family & Community Services (JFCS) Older Adult Services staff members, Dee Mednick and Anne Aronov to learn about transitioning planning, long-term planning, and home care support. Q&A plus time to talk in small groups.



[Register HERE](#)

Future sessions are Wednesdays:

January 10, February 14, and March 13 at 7:00 pm



## God and Gender

10:00a.m.

December 3, 10, & 17 at CBT

Does God have a gender? What happens when we gender God? How does imagining God as gendered inform or even transform our experiences of ourselves and the divine? Join congregant anthropologist and CIIS Religion & Philosophy professor Anna Corwin to explore gender, Jewish understandings of God's gender and how our gender framing changes our experience of the divine. We will explore evolving conceptions of God's gender through Jewish history until today.



[Register HERE](#)

## And the Answer is:

Sunday January 7, 2024

**Congregation B'nai Tikvah's 21st Team Trivia Night is just over three months away!**

Due to scheduling conflicts and the holidays, we needed to move our annual trivia night into January for this one time.

We've got some exciting and amusing questions planned for this year, all new and many topical.

There will be hors d'oeuvres and snacks, wine, beer, soft drinks, and bottled water, dessert and coffee.

We will also need volunteers, so please let us know if someone can help out on the night.

**Doors Open @ 6:15 p.m. Play starts @ 7:00 p.m.**

**100 fun, brain-challenging questions**

**Entry fee \$250\* per team; teams of 8 players**

**\*Early registration special: \$225 if you register and pay before November 15th.**



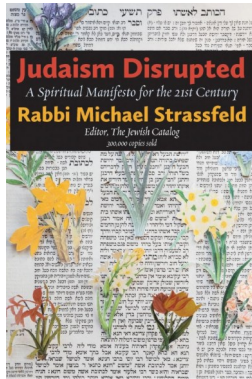
[Sign up Today!](#)



# With our Community Partners

To sign up, use these QR codes or signup on our calendar and in the Monday emails

**Book Talk:** November 5 at 1:00 pm, Michael Strassfeld, a major leader of the Havurah movement and one of the authors of the bestselling *The Jewish Catalog*, will explore his newest book *Judaism Disrupted: A Spiritual Manifesto for the 21st Century*. This event is happening in-person at Congregation B'nai Shalom in Walnut Creek. Register with the QR code below.



Not sure how to use a QR code?

They are very helpful for getting information to people without reproducing the information.



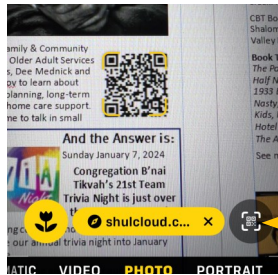
QR stands for Quick Response. To use one, like all of the QR codes you see in this Tikvah Talk, use your cell phone or tablet camera. Once you open the camera, point it at the QR code.

CBT Book Talks are in partnership with the CCJCC, B'nai Shalom & The Jewish Book Council through Diablo Valley Hadassah

**Book Talk** upcoming events:

- The Possibilities: A Novel*, Nov 7, 1 pm on Zoom
- Half Notes from Berlin: A Coming of Age Story Set in 1933 Berlin*, Nov 9, 7 pm on Zoom
- Nasty, Brutish and Short: Adventures in Philosophy with Kids*, Nov 19, 10 am on Zoom
- Hotel Cuba: A Novel*, Nov 30, 3 pm on Zoom
- The Autumn Ghost*, Dec 19, 3 pm on Zoom

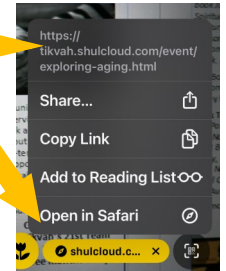
See more at [underonetent.org/all-events](http://underonetent.org/all-events)



The camera will place a yellow line around the QR code, you may have to hold it still for a moment. The new iPhone update shows it like this; touch the grey round square

When you touch that, you will get something like this. At the bottom of that list you can see "open in Safari"

Touch that and your phone will be redirected to the information you are seeking. Other phones may display this differently. If you need help figuring it out, call us in the office.



925-933-5397

see page 13 for an example of an Android phone link.



## Three Israeli Shorts at CBT:

Sunday, November 12, 4-6 pm.

Come view and discuss **three Israeli short films**: *Across the Line*, *Lost Paradise*, and *Dear God*, each of which involves an unexpected encounter, as we explore the complex narratives of contemporary Israel. In partnership with the East Bay Jewish Film Festival. For more information and to register use this QR code.

**Across the Line:** 2017, 29 minutes, Hebrew with English subtitles

Hananel, a young observant Jew, is hurrying home for Shabbat. An unexpected encounter with Mundir, a Palestinian hitchhiker, leads Hananel on a series of mix-ups that eventually teach him a lesson in communication, friendship and love.

**Lost Paradise:** 2007, 10 minutes

*And they were both naked, the man and the woman, and were not ashamed.* --Book of Genesis 2:25

A modern Adam and Eve story that explores what happens during intimacy --and what gets lost after it ends.

**Dear God:** 2014, 13 minutes

A romantic view of Jerusalem is portrayed in this short film. Aaron is one of the men who guards the Western Wall. One day, a beautiful woman puts a note in one of the wall's many cracks. When Aaron decides to fulfill her deepest wish, he learns that love is all about communication.



[Sign up here](#)

# K'tan Tan

K'tan Tan is for children ages 0-5 and their parents/caretakers. Together we explore Judaism through music, stories, crafts, and fun. Each session meets on Sundays from 10:00 – 11:30 am and is organized around a Jewish theme.

**K'tan Tan Dates for 2023-2024**

- October 1, 2023: Sukkot
- November 5, 2023: Tzedakah
- December 3, 2023: Hanukkah
- January 21, 2024: Tu B'Shevat
- February 4, 2024: B'Tzelem Elohim/In the Image of God
- March 3, 2024: Shabbat
- April 14, 2024: Passover
- May 5, 2024: PJ Havdallah in the Morning!

[Register HERE](#)



## Bringing 2nd—7th graders together to have FUN!

**Games, Crafts, Gaga, Dinner, and More!**

It's like an afternoon of camp! Mesibaba offers five uniquely themed programs on Thursday afternoons throughout the year from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. at Congregation B'nai Tikvah in Walnut Creek. Mesibaba is open to all 2<sup>nd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> graders in the Jewish community and is focused on friendships and fun. We play, create, eat, and connect. Sign up for one session or commit to a whole year's worth of Mesibaba joy.

### The fun started on Thursday, October 26th with Jewish Chef



**Sign up today for upcoming dates:**  
**December 14: Light It Up**  
**January 25: Puppet Playhouse**  
**March 14: Minute to Win it**  
**May 16: Summer Fun**

[Sign up for the fun with this QR Code!](#)



# Contra Costa Midrasha

By Devra C. Aarons, CCM Director

## Contra Costa Midrasha's Winter Update

Midrasha has worked hard this October to be a space of solace, reflection and learning as we all grapple with the war in Israel. We've made it a tradition to say a prayer at break. Our educators are creating space each week for teens to share what's happening at their schools (antisemitism is unfortunately on the rise) and to learn about the war. We were honored to welcome three shinshinim (young Israeli volunteers) to teach at Midrasha this month and to share about their family's experiences right now. Teens have written letters of support to our past shinshinim and to IDF soldiers. CCM educators continue balancing being a space for teens to relax and be together, while also making time to reflect on current events in Israel and here in the U.S.

Parents of pre-teens and teens, mark your calendars for two engaging opportunities to learn about the growing and ever-changing teen brain! Through a grant from "Scientists in Synagogues" Contra Costa Midrasha will host two events this year: December 20th and April 14th for community learning about teen brain development with the scientists who study it and the educators who teach our teens. Mark your calendars for these events - all are welcome!

**CCM's Tikkun Olam** (Repair the World) programs have launched, with this exciting news to share:

**Better Together**, our intergenerational teen-elder engagement project includes 24 teens and 17 elders from all over our community.

**Hamsa Fund**, CCM's teen philanthropy Board, held its retreat in October, crafting a mission to support formerly incarcerated youth to reintegrate into society.

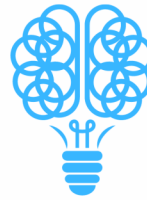
**Impact Builder**, a Better to Serve program aims to repair the world through direct service. Teens voted to work with Tiny Village Spirit in Richmond this year, helping build a community of tiny homes for homeless youth in Contra Costa County.

While these programs have begun, there is still room for others to join!

Wednesday nights are hopping with broad enrollment! We've launched our 2023-24 year! Teens entering grades 8-12 are still welcome to check it out on any Wednesday night - the doors are always open!

Finally, our Gala date has changed - mark your calendar for March 2nd!

Please spread the love about Contra Costa Midrasha! Let the teens in your life know about Midrasha and our myriad of programs. Schedule a time to talk with our Director, Devra Aarons at [devra.aarons@ccmidrasha.com](mailto:devra.aarons@ccmidrasha.com) or check out our website at [ccmidrasha.com](http://ccmidrasha.com). There's something for every teen!



CCM'S NEWEST INITIATIVE!

## THE TEEN BRAIN

...A SERIES OF WORKSHOPS FOR PARENTS, TEENS & EDUCATORS IN 2023-24

SAVE THE DATE FOR THESE PARENT WORKSHOPS:  
DEC. 20, 2023  
APRIL 14, 2024

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# Tikvah Committees and Groups לקוות



## KESHET CLUB

Calling all lovers of fun and games! Save the date for Keshet's annual end of the year potluck.



On December 10, bring a dairy dish to share, a present or two for the White Elephant exchange (\$15 limit), and any board games you enjoy playing. We will meet at 6:30 pm in the CBT social hall for fun, food, and friendship. LGBTQ+ and allies are all welcome. We hope to see you there!

## HARRY WITTENBERG SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE



## ICARE December Food Packing Event - Volunteers Needed! Dec 9 - 13

CBT is once again partnering with the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa to co-sponsor a major December event.

We invite you to work side-by-side with your new interfaith friends, packing and delivering food boxes to local public schools. The schools then distribute the food boxes to select families of children attending their school.

This project supports the non-profit "Food for Thought," which was organized by local residents at the request of the West Contra Costa Unified School District. School officials noticed that students from low-income families often struggled when they returned to school after the winter break because they were undernourished.

Volunteer responsibilities include:

- Packing food kits
- Loading food boxes in trucks/vans
- Bringing trucks and supplying drivers/helpers (who will deliver food baskets to schools)

Much of the work does not involve heavy lifting and is ideal for seniors and for families. The specific tasks are noted on the website. An amazing 3000 boxes of food are usually prepared over the multi-day period.

Go to the following for details on dates, locations and shift times and to sign up:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409084EA5AB28ABFF2-food6#/>



[Sign up HERE](#)

## CBT CHOIR



Hanukkah Choir practice dates:  
7:30 p.m. at CBT  
Tuesday, Nov 27  
Thursday, Nov 30  
Tuesday, Dec 4  
Thursday, Dec 7

## NEED SOME HELP? — CALL CHESED



Loosely translated from Hebrew, Chesed means "loving-kindness," and that is what CBT's Chesed committee is all about. Consisting of a large group of dedicated volunteers, Chesed exists to serve CBT families who may need a little extra help from time to time. It might be a ride to a doctor's appointment, a little yardwork or minor home repairs, drop-off of meals during illness or injury, or a ride to a CBT service or event. Whatever it is, we are happy to help if we can.

If you think we might be of service to you or someone else in CBT, please call the Temple Office as our point of contact. If you are interested in joining us—we always welcome more members to pitch in—please contact Judith Barrall, Chesed's coordinator,

[Explore our Committees and Groups on our website](#)

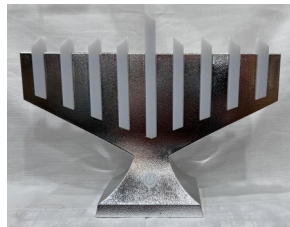


# Tikvah Gift Shop לקוּת

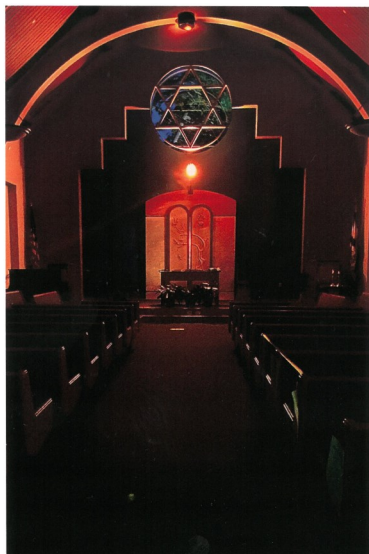


## Shop Hanukkah

Look at what is new in the Gift shop!



The Giftshop will be open during religious school on these dates: November 5, November 12, December 3, December 10, and December 17



### “Sanctuary at Midnight”

This beautiful card is available in the CBT gift shop for purchase. The original photo, see the full size original in the CBT office, was taken by CBT security guard David Oberhoffer.

A portion of your purchase will go to the Rodef Security Fund.

Contact Rayna Ravitz or Kathy Jacobs [Kathy@tikvah.org](mailto:Kathy@tikvah.org) to purchase.

Sanctuary at Midnight,  
Congregation B'Nai Tikvah

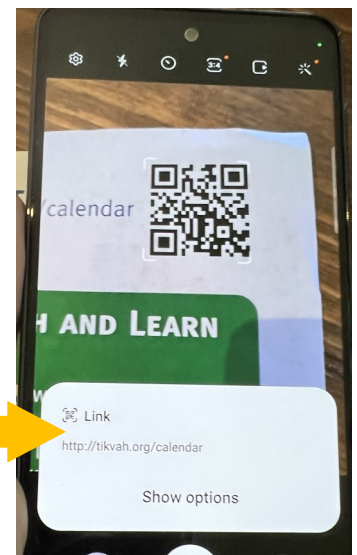


### NOT SURE HOW TO USE A QR CODE?

This is an Android example of using the camera to link to the information in a QR code.

Point your camera at the QR code and then touch the bubble that opens up to get to the information.

For more on QR codes, see page 9



# In Gratitude to our Community

## **GENERAL FUND**

In Memory of Aaron Greenfield  
*Steven Greenfield*

In Memory of Max Weiner  
*Jeffrey & Shirley Weiner*

In Memory of Jack Rankin

In Memory of Norman Lerner

In Memory of Belle Lerner  
*Nessa Wilk*

In Memory of Barbara Kadden

In Memory of Fred Kadden

In Memory of Benjamin Hertzberg  
*Paul Kadden*

In Memory of Rhonda Charney  
*Arthur & Nancy Solomon*

In Memory of Beatrice Begun  
*Jay Begun*

In Memory of Betty Siegel Golden

In Memory of Joe Sbranti  
*Matthew & Kristine Cordova*

In Memory of Brian Schwartz  
*Cindy Turner*

In Memory of Anna Gewing

In Memory of Lisa Gewing  
*Walter Gewing*

In Memory of Hilda Stone  
*Hugh & Sharon Tama*

In Memory of Rose Kahane

In Memory of Joseph Oestreicher  
*Ken & Nancy Oestreicher*

In Memory of Agnes Rosa Jacobson  
*Irene Jacobson & Rick Shinozaki*

In Memory of Don Arenfeld  
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In Memory of Jeremy Abbo  
*Gisela Halbasch*

In Memory of Victor Leventhal  
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In Memory of Joshua Steinhorn  
*Judy Weil & Sanford Weitzner*

In Memory of Bob Brooks  
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In Memory of John Sutherland  
*John Sutherland & Monica Salusky*

In Appreciation of Rayna & Richard Ravitz  
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*Anton Serikov*

In Memory of Harry & Sylvia Schwartz  
*Joan Schwartz*

In Memory of Kay Bernstein Tucker  
*Dale Tucker*

In Memory of Harry Rabiner

In Memory of Richard Katz  
*Karen Lapin & John Kobzina*

In Honor of Yael Stratton  
*M & P Stratton*

In Memory of Holly Hunt  
*Arthur & Nancy Solomon*

In Memory of Hilda De Lowe  
*Larry & Judit De Lowe*

In Memory of Florence Miller  
*John & Susan Rubinfeld*

In Memory of Stephen Slavet  
*Andrea Slavet*

In Memory of Jerome Bertes

In Memory of Geraldine Berres  
Memory of Marni Levine  
*Brian & Kimberly Zagon*

## **RABBI CHABON DISCRETIONARY FUND**

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*Gloria Kemna*

In Memory of Theodore Goldstein  
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In Memory of Dick Schwartz  
*Kathryn S. Oster*

In Honor of the Office Staff  
*Zaffy Welch*

In Honor of Rabbi Jennie Chabon  
*Judy Weil & Sanford Weitzner*

In Memory of Richard Schwartz  
*William and Susan Schwartz*  
*Barbara Hall and Susan King*

In Memory of Ben Brown  
*Ron & Sharon Brown*

In Memory of Minnie Feldman  
*Judy & Josh Zuckert*

In Appreciation of Rabbi Chabon  
*22-23 Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class*

In Memory of Robert Wilk  
*Nessa Wilk*

## **RABBI/CANTOR'S MUSIC FUND**

In Memory of Esther Rapoport  
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In Memory of Esther Appleberg  
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In Memory of Stanley Gilman

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*Joan Weinstein*  
*Marc & Katherine Berger*  
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*Robin Gordon*  
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*Idelle Lipman*

In Memory of Joe Burton  
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In Memory of Tom Rankin  
*Nessa Wilk*

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In Memory of Sadie Teitelman  
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*Judy & Walter Blum*

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*Lorry & Patricia Marcus*

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*Joan Weinstein*

In Memory of Sandy McReynolds  
*Diane Leventhal*

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*Lorraine & Gerald Zeiler*

In Memory of Holly Hunt  
*Judy & Walter Blum*

## **YOUTH GROUP FUND**

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Joel & Susan Friedman

**SPECIAL EDUCATION FUND**

*In Memory of Geri Brooks  
Stephen Brooks*

**TORAH FUND**

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# Congregation B'nai Tikvah      November 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>5 (21 Cheshvan)</b> Religious School 9:30am K'tan Tan 10:00am Bites of Wisdom 10:00am CBT Youth Band .11:00am Book Talk: <b>Judai</b> . 1:00pm	<b>6 (22 Cheshvan)</b> Wise Aging 7:00pm	<b>7 (23 Cheshvan)</b> A Taste of Torah 10:00am Book Talk 1:00pm Lunch & Learn 1:00pm Religious School 4:00pm	<b>8 (24 Cheshvan)</b> Peer Grief Support group. 6:00pm	<b>9 (25 Cheshvan)</b> Sisterhood Mah Jong. 1:00pm	<b>10 (26 Cheshvan)</b> Community Led Shabbat. 6:30pm	<b>11 (27 Cheshvan) Chayei Sarah</b> <b>Veterans Day</b> Sydney Kimmel Krell Bat Mitzvah. 10:00am
<b>12 (28 Cheshvan)</b> Religious School 9:30am Family Day // <b>Ti</b> . 9:30am Junior Board 12:30pm Book Sisters 2:00pm Three Israeli Sh. 4:00pm	<b>13 (29 Cheshvan)</b> America's Twists of Faith. 7:30pm	<b>14 (1 Kislev)</b> A Taste of Torah Meditation 10:00am Lunch & Learn 1:00pm Religious School 4:00pm	<b>15 (2 Kislev)</b>	<b>16 (3 Kislev)</b> Active Shooter Training 7:00pm	<b>17 (4 Kislev)</b> Meditation with Gerri Levitas. 1:00pm Shir Joy Shabbat. 7:30pm	<b>18 (5 Kislev) <b>Tot'sgot</b></b>
<b>19 (6 Kislev)</b> No Religious School Book Talk: Nast. 10:00am	<b>20 (7 Kislev)</b> <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	<b>21 (8 Kislev)</b> No Religious School No Lunch & Learn <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> A Taste of Torah Meditation 10:00am	<b>22 (9 Kislev)</b> <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> Peer Grief Support Group. 6:00pm	<b>23 (10 Kislev)</b> <b>Thanksgiving Day</b> <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	<b>24 (11 Kislev)</b> <b>Thanksgiving Friday</b> <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> Kaddish Minyan. 5:00pm	<b>25 (12 Kislev) Vayetzrei</b>
<b>26 (13 Kislev)</b> No Religious School	<b>27 (14 Kislev)</b> 5th Grade B'nai Mitzvah Dates Due America's Twists of Faith. 7:30pm Choir Practice 7:30pm	<b>28 (15 Kislev)</b> A Taste of Torah 10:00am Lunch & Learn 1:00pm Religious School 4:00pm	<b>29 (16 Kislev)</b>	<b>30 (17 Kislev)</b> Choir Practice 7:30pm		







# Congregation B'nai Tikvah December 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3 (20 Kislev) Religious School 9:30am K'tan Tan 10:00am God & Gender 10:00am CBT Youth Band 12:00pm	4 (21 Kislev) Choir Practice 7:30pm	5 (22 Kislev) A Taste of Torah 10:00am Lunch & Learn 1:00pm Religious School 4:00pm	6 (23 Kislev) Peer Grief Support Group 6:00pm	7 (24 Kislev) Erev Hanukkah Choir Practice 7:30pm	8 (25 Kislev) Hanukkah day 1 Community Wide Hanukkah Celebration 5:30pm	9 (26 Kislev) Vayaishev Hanukkah day 2
10 (27 Kislev) Hanukkah day 3 Religious School 9:30am God & Gender 10:00am Junior Board 12:30pm Keshet Hanukkah 6:30pm	11 (28 Kislev) Hanukkah day 4	12 (29 Kislev) Hanukkah day 5 A Taste of Torah 10:00am Lunch & Learn 1:00pm Religious School 4:00pm Sisterhood Hanukkah 6:30pm	13 (1 Tevet) Hanukkah day 6	14 (2 Tevet) Hanukkah day 7 Sisterhood Mah J. 1:00pm Mesibaba 4:00pm	15 (3 Tevet) Hanukkah day 8 Meditation with Gerri Levitas 1:00pm Asher Lecture Shabbat with Guest Speaker 7:30pm	16 (4 Tevet) Mikeitz
17 (5 Tevet) Religious School 9:30am God & Gender 10:00am CBT Youth Band 12:00pm 6/7 Grade Youth 2:00pm Book Sisters 3:30pm	18 (6 Tevet)	19 (7 Tevet) A Taste of Torah 10:00am Lunch & Learn 1:00pm Religious School 4:00pm	20 (8 Tevet) Peer Grief Support Group 6:00pm	21 (9 Tevet)	22 (10 Tevet) Fast of Tevet Community Led Shabbat 6:30pm	23 (11 Tevet) Vayigash
24 (12 Tevet) No Religious School	25 (13 Tevet) OFFICE CLOSED	26 (14 Tevet) No Religious School No Lunch & Learn A Taste of Torah 10:00am	27 (15 Tevet)	28 (16 Tevet)	29 (17 Tevet) Kaddish Minyan 5:00pm	30 (18 Tevet) Vasugh
31 (19 Tevet) No Religious School	January 1, 2024 OFFICE CLOSED					



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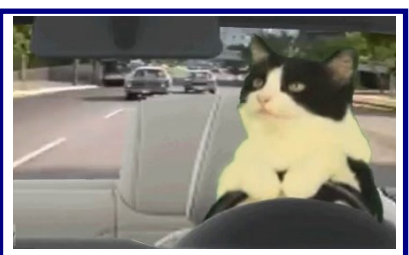



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 925-212-6188  
 or Kathy Jacobs  
[Office@tikvah.org](mailto:Office@tikvah.org) to schedule an appointment

Well, I'm running down the road  
 tryin' to loosen my load  
 I've got seven lizards on my mind....  
 ...Make It easy, make it easy  
 Don't close your door while you  
 chat in the parking lot, it drives me  
 crazy  
 Let me in while you still can  
 Don't even try to understand  
 I want to ride in your back seat,  
 make it easy!  
 ~Goofball—I want to drive your car  
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**We publish our newsletter 6 times a year.**

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