



THE BUILDER

C O N G R E G A T I O N B E T H E L

SIVAN-TAMMUZ 5770 / MAY-JUNE 2010



FROM THE RABBI

MARKING PERSONAL AND COMMUNAL MILESTONES: GRADUATIONS AND INSTALLATION

During the weeks after Passover, Jews count the Omer. Literally "a sheaf," the Omer once marked the seven weeks between the wheat harvest and the barley harvest. The Torah,

in turn, connects two national-historical events: The Exodus from Egypt (Passover) and the revelation of the Torah at Mt. Sinai (Shavuot). We number each day, counting upwards from the second evening of Passover. One of the many explanations for the counting of the Omer is that it is an invitation to ask: "Where are you headed?" The Exodus from Egypt was not merely a departure from – it was the beginning of a journey towards... Each step along the way, Judaism teaches, is worthy of recognition and acknowledgement. (This year, we have put up an Omer calendar at each entrance to Beth El.)

In the wider community of which we are a part, this is also the season of transitions, when we celebrate accomplishments and look forward to new journeys and new stages. At Beth El, we will be marking and celebrating graduations, accomplishments, transitions and new directions forward at a variety of forums during the coming two months. I hope that you will join us in celebration as we acknowledge the harvests we have gathered in and look forward to counting upward in the months and years ahead.

Confirmation

Friday, May 7 - Catered Dinner 6:30 pm / Service 8:00 pm
In Reform synagogues, Confirmation represents the completion of a significant period of study after the bar/bat mitzvah year and

"confirms" young people's commitment to and engagement with Jewish teaching and the Jewish people. There are eight students in this year's Confirmation class and they will lead the service and each speak about "This I believe..." This year's confirmation class members are: Alex Preneta, Eli Wallach, Isaac Sanstad, Lily Friedman, Sophie Siegel, Victoria Miller, Jake Drummond and Eli Sharf. The Confirmation service will be preceded by a catered Shabbat dinner; please visit www.bethelberkeley.org to sign up. Advance reservations for dinner are required.

Shabbat Unplugged – Honoring our Seventh Grade

Friday, May 14 - Potluck Dinner 6:00 pm / Service 6:45 pm
We will recognize the 2010 Bat/Bar Mitzvah class as they step-up to Midrasha at our concluding raucous (in the best possible way!) and fun, kid-focused Shabbat Unplugged service. The entire congregation is invited and Religious School age families are especially encouraged to attend. The Story Teller, his young friend Chaya and Reb Yankel from Richmond (along perhaps with Rabbi Ezra from El Cerrito) will be there too!

East Bay Community-wide Shavuot

Tuesday, May 18 - 7:30 pm – through the night, EBJCC
Newly ordained Beth El Assistant Rabbi Reuben Zellman will lead the evening services at the East Bay's Tikkun (all night study) in honor of Shavuot at the JCC. Shavuot Yizkor services will take place on Thursday evening, May 20. See page 8.

(continued on page 11)

*2010 Annual Meeting
& Volunteer Recognition Day*

Sunday, May 2 • 11:00 am



Happy spring! Baseball season is here! Local strawberries are showing up at Monterey Market, we poor souls with allergies are sneezing like crazy, and we're counting the Omer (till Shavuot, of course)! And speaking of baseball, you'll be pleased to know that we're coming down the "home stretch" toward our annual fundraising goal of \$300,000. We've already raised more than \$200,000 thanks to the generosity of our congregation. In order to achieve our program and service goals and complete the campaign, we'll need to raise an additional \$100,000.

Many of us have participated in the program to name chairs in the sanctuary, and the opportunity to do so remains open. Chairs have been named in honor or in memory of someone, to commemorate a special effort by a person or group, to celebrate a special occasion such as a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, wedding or baby naming, in gratitude for a special mitzvah, and other tributes. For example, one of our chair naming donations came through the collection of funds from our Torah Study group, in honor of Bev Eigner and the mitzvah of the study of Torah. The adult b'nai mitzvah class of 2003 is raising money to dedicate a chair, and other b'nai mitzvah classes are planning to follow suit. (A list of naming opportunities can be found on page 10 of this Builder issue.) If you'd like to name a chair, contribute to a naming fund, or start a fund for a particular purpose, please contact me at president@bethelberkeley.org, or Executive Director Norm Frankel at norm@bethelberkeley.org.

Our campaign's success so far has allowed us to order our sanctuary seating, with installation anticipated this summer. With the acoustics improvements installed last fall, and the beautiful upholstered chairs to come, we will be able to fully enjoy the welcoming warmth of the sanctuary together in celebration, learning and prayer.

Our staff leadership has now experienced almost a full school year together, and what a team! The "high note" was struck when Reuben was brought on, lending just the right "tone" to the "composition" of our professional staff (...forgive me). Have you noticed how our landscaping has really taken hold? All the rains have significantly added to the natural setting and truly enhanced our sensory experience of the building's environment – the sounds of rushing waters in the creek, a full landscape along the creek banks, lots of vibrant color all over, and rich and varied natural smells of grasses and trees. Aaahhh... take a deep breath!

...And enjoy our synagogue, inside and out. Relish in the sensory delight of our blooming surroundings, experience the joy of music and song in our services, get that ruach this summer as Camp Kee Tov runs its 43rd season, participate in our programs and activities to share in the "big tent" that is our community, and just BE at Beth El. And please join me in the "home stretch" of our 5770 campaign.

Joanne Backman
President

Sing with the Beth El Chorus!

2 Upcoming Opportunities: Celebratory Shabbat & High Holy Days

Join the chorus for one or both of these upcoming seasons! We'll be preparing celebratory and reflective music for Shabbat and the High Holy Days, from Jewish cultures around the world. We work hard to make beautiful music, and we have a lot of fun in a lively and supportive atmosphere. The chorus is always open to new singers--any member of Beth El who loves to sing is encouraged to join us! Musical background is not necessary. The commitment is one "season" at a time. You can sing with the chorus for one (or both!) sets of rehearsals and services, without committing to any other time of year.

In addition to sheet music, rehearsal CDs will be available to all singers who would find them useful in learning the music.

Celebratory Shabbat service, June 18 - 8:00 pm

This will be a Shabbat of much joy. We will be celebrating Reuben Zellman's ordination and formally installing him as our Assistant Rabbi and Music Director and honoring Rabbi Yoel Kahn on the receipt of his honorary Doctor of Divinity degree, on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of his rabbinate! Come sing for this special occasion:
Rehearsals: Wednesdays, May 26 - June 16, 7:00 - 8:45 pm
Shabbat Service: Friday June 18, 8:00 pm

High Holy Days

There's no better way to prepare your mind and spirit for the Days of Awe than through music, learning and community.
*Rehearsals: Wednesdays July 28 - September 8,
& September 15, 7:00-8:45 pm*

The Chorus will sing at selected services on Erev Rosh Hashanah (September 8th), Kol Nidre (September 17th), and Yom Kippur (September 18th)



Please contact Reuben Zellman,
Beth El's Rabbinic Intern,
at reuben@bethelberkeley.org or
call 510-848-3988 x228, to let him
know that you'll be singing with us,
or for any questions.



HONORING OUR VOLUNTEERS

You are invited to join us at Congregation Beth El's Annual Meeting Sunday May 2, at 11:00 am. The Annual Meeting is open to all members, and is an opportunity to conduct important congregational business and communicate information on the financial state of the congregation. The business portion of the meeting will begin at noon and will be brief.

The only item on the agenda to require a vote of our members will be the slate of candidates for the Board of Directors. You received notification of that slate already. The financial report will include a presentation of next year's annual budget as well as a review of our projected financial results for the current year. There will also be an update on the status of our financial obligations to our bank and others, and our fundraising plans for the coming years. There will be an opportunity to answer your questions on the fiscal state of the synagogue.

At this year's Annual Meeting we will also be honoring our many, many volunteers who contribute their time, energy and creativity to make our community a vital center for Jewish programs and learning. Volunteer participation at all levels, from congregational leadership, to committee involvement, through event planning, serving at the monthly homeless meal, or providing technical support to our IT and telecommunications system, are all integral to building and sustaining our community.

You will be receiving in the mail this month your annual membership renewal forms. Like the US census, we ask that you return these forms promptly. Erev Rosh Ha Shana is only a few months away (September 8) and we plan to mail High Holy Day tickets by mid August. That means we need your prompt return of your renewal form and dues pledge for the new fiscal year starting July 1. Tickets will only be mailed to members who have returned their forms and made their dues pledge. We felt that given the difficult economic climate that we should keep our standard dues at \$2650 for the new fiscal year. However we do ask you to seriously consider increasing your personal commitment this year. Many of our members have had to request significant dues modifications in recent years. The strains of a difficult economy, the burdens of medical needs and the high cost of medical insurance, the growing cost of college education, and many other factors have caused financial hardships to many congregants. Your financial generosity to Congregation Beth El is essential to ensuring that we fulfill one of our core values as a Jewish community- guaranteeing that our door is always open to all members of our community, no matter their financial circumstances. Your on-going support is vital to our ability to realize that commitment to an open and diverse community.

We are aware that many of our members would like to give more, but cannot at this time because their assets are invested in property, retirement funds, insurance policies, or other long

term investments. That is why we are preparing a Planned Giving Campaign to provide alternative ways to make significant contributions in the future and create a Jewish Legacy for generations to come. Even if you cannot significantly increase your dues commitment this year, you can do something significant to help build our future Jewish community here at Beth El.

Please contact me if you would like to make a donation, or to discuss options for a planned gift or bequest, or just to talk about how you can help make a difference in our Beth El community.

Norm Frankel
Executive Director

MEN'S CLUB DAY AT THE A'S

VS.

SUNDAY, MAY 23 • 1:05 PM
ALL TICKETS \$15.00
(FIRST LEVEL BLEACHER
CHAIR BACK SEATS)

DEADLINE TO ORDER
IS MAY 8.

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
PLEASE CONTACT:
BOB GOLDSTEIN AT
ANNAMBOB@PACBELL.NET
OR CALL 510-548-0720



BUILDING A WARM AND WELCOMING BETH EL COMMUNITY TOGETHER

The Hebrew term for synagogue is "*beit kneset*" or "house of gathering." Nowhere in this definition does it imply worship. Nor dues. Nor learning. The synagogue is defined by it being a place for people to gather and create community. That is the core of what we hope Beth El is for its members - a place to come to and be welcomed.

Feeling at home doesn't necessarily happen automatically; it takes an investment of energy and time. Luckily, there are some carved out opportunities for members to come and build community.

- **Shabbat Services** - The most accessible, the most affordable and the most predictable way for anyone to feel at home is to attend any of the multiple Shabbat services that Beth El offers. Perhaps it's the morning minyan on Saturday, perhaps it's Shabbat Unplugged on Friday night, or perhaps it's the main Shabbat Morning Service every week at 10:15. No matter which one you choose, you will find community, ritual, food and welcoming faces. Please join us!

- **Congregational Retreat** - This year from May 21-23, many Beth El members will be gathering at Walker Creek Ranch in Marin for the 3rd annual Retreat. This getaway is a fabulous way for members to get to know each other and to take time out for themselves. Nestled in the Marin foothills, this idyllic ranch setting helps us truly celebrate Shabbat by "hitting the pause button" on our everyday activities. Take a hike, go for a bike ride, join the knitting circle, play a board game, go for a swim, be challenged by the ropes course, or sleep. Whatever activities you choose to enjoy over the weekend, you will do so surrounded by the Beth El community. Registration is filling up...don't miss out on this annual community-building activity! Visit www.bethelberkeley.org for more information.

- **Beth El's Multi-Generational Israel Trip** - Summer 2011 - Its official! Beth El will be traveling to Israel next summer and we want you (and your parents/kids!) to join us! This unique opportunity to travel to Israel and see the country as a multi-generational group will be truly memorable. Our tour operator will be Keshet: The Center for Educational Tourism in Israel. They are experts in creating an experience that is engaging for all ages and employing both guides and youth counselors on the trip. This enables both the adults and kids to be engaged in parallel learning at sites, while enabling the group to travel and play together. The trip will begin in Israel on June 19 - July 1, 2011. We will be holding

Religious School Calendar

may 2010

Saturday, May 1

Open House for Chug Mishpacha
(Shabbat Family School) 9:30 - 11:45 am

Thursday, May 6

Last day of Midweek Religious School

Tuesday, May 11

Current 6th Grade Family Program
6:00 - 8:00 pm, including dinner

Friday, May 14

7th Grade Service and Shabbat Unplugged!
6:00 pm - dinner / 6:45 pm - service

Saturday, May 15

Last Day of Chug Mishpacha

May 21 - 23

Beth El Congregational Retreat (see page 11)

june 2010

Friday, June 4

Shabbat Service Honoring Marlene Getz

seats on a group flight, or you can use your frequent flyer miles and meet us there. Please look at our itinerary online at www.bethelberkeley.org and consider joining us for this unique community building event!

Of course, there are many more ways one can connect to others at Beth El. The diverse chavurot that are now forming, the classes that are offered, the social action opportunities...the open doors are endless. As the school year is winding down, I encourage you to commit to one of these ways to connect again to your Beth El community. We look forward to seeing you soon!

L'shalom,
Debra Massey
Director of Education



END OF THE YEAR FUN!

The last months of the school year are busy at Beth El Nursery School. The children celebrated Israel's birthday in April. We made and ate Israeli foods in preparation for the birthday on April 20. Of course we had birthday cakes and sang happy birthday to Israel in Hebrew and English. Now we will prepare for the holiday of Shavuot with yet another compelling story, some very concrete symbols and commandments, and yummy cheese blintzes.

As we approach the end of our school year, we also have a few more special events. We are planning our first Yom Mishpacha for Friday, May 14. Each child will invite a special relative or friend to spend time together at school. Our annual Nursery School Family BBQ Picnic for current families is Sunday, May 16. Finally our Bet Class Graduation and Nursery School Good-bye Party are on our last day, Wednesday, June 18. Then our summer sessions begin the very next Monday, June 21. We look forward to a fun filled summer at Club BENS.

I want to express my very special thanks and appreciation to our fantastic teachers. Brook, Dana, Elaine, Hannah, Jodi, Marlene, Nicole, Nurit, Stacey, Wendy and our music and yoga specialists, Melita and Javanne, are all wonderfully talented and dedicated professionals.

Thank you also to Juliette Fershtman and Dana Zell our Nursery School Committee co-chairs. Their many hours of hard work and support were greatly appreciated. Juliette graduates this year with her daughter Siena, and Dana will return as a committee co-chair next year. Thanks to all of our committee members who have served the Nursery School with their strong commitment of time and energy. And of course, thank you to all of our parents for their support, trust and commitment. It does indeed take a village.

Todah rabah to everyone! Beth El Nursery School is truly very special.

Barbara Kanter
Nursery School Director

END OF YEAR SHABBAT UNPLUGGED HONORING OUR 7TH GRADE CLASS

Friday, May 14th

Come and join us for our last Shabbat Unplugged Service of the year and honor our 7th grade class! Josh Miller will be songleading, and there will be special appearances by Rav Yankel and Chaya. We will mark our 7th graders moving on to Midrasha as we celebrate Shabbat together.

We will enjoy a potluck dinner together at 6:00 pm, then our service will begin at 6:45 pm, followed by a special festive Oneg. Everyone is encouraged to come and celebrate the learning we shared this year.

Veggie/Dairy potluck by the first letter of your LAST NAME. Please bring a dish to

serve 12-15 people:

A-K: Main Dish

L-Z: Side dish, Salad or Fruit

BETH EL YOUTH AND FAMILY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Registration is Now Open!!!

This year, our religious school registration will all be online!

Visit www.bethelberkeley.org to download
our NEW BROCHURE and register online!

Early Bird Prices run now through July 1st, 2010. Don't miss out!



CAMP KEE TOV ENTERS THE SOCIAL NETWORKING GAME

A long, long time ago, when gas cost \$1.25 a gallon, guys still wore baggy jeans and the Bay Area had professional sports teams that were good, Facebook -- heard of it?! -- was only for young adults with an .edu at the end of their email address. Times change. And Camp Kee Tov is here to seize the moment!

Facebook, and other social networking sites, have become a great way to keep the Kee Tov buzz going year-round.

When I log on to the site and see "status" updates from Kee Tov staff and campers like, "*Going to Chal first session!*" or "*Had animal crackers for today. Not as good as the Kee Tov ones*" it registers how excited people are about Camp Kee Tov. And Facebook helps Kee Tovers of all ages keep that excitement and ruach going during the off-season.

Kee Tov is doing its part, too. Our Facebook, "Have you got that ruach?!" campaign is rocking every Monday, Wednesday and Friday with updates to the Camper & Parent Facebook group (<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=161823078771>) with the following:

Mondays: Question of the Week, songs, trivia, etc.

Wednesdays: News items

Fridays: Fun with Camp Kee Tov photos

Of course, your contributions to the Facebook pages are highly encouraged! Its fun for all ages!

The more involved people are, the stronger the Kee Tov community gets -- even if that community is online.

With ruach,
Zach Landres-Schnur
Camp Kee Tov Director

CHAI LUNCH FORUMS

Second Thursday of each month
• 12:00 to 1:30 pm •

May 13

Emma Goldman Lives-Reflections on a Life of Social Justice, a discussion led by Candace Falk, Editor and Director of the Emma Goldman Papers

These monthly forums are open to the entire congregation and community. A light lunch will be provided for all attendees. If you would like to contribute to or sponsor a lunch please email Jonathan Simon at jsimon@law.berkeley.edu or call 510-292-7030.

*Honoring
Marlene Getz*

Friday, June 4th • 6:15 pm

For the past 32 years, Marlene has been an inspiration to our children. Having taught both in our religious school and our preschool, Marlene will be retiring this year. Her energy, passion and warmth that she has been sharing with the children for these years will be sorely missed. Please join the greater Beth El community as we will be honoring Marlene with a special Shabbat on Friday, June 4th at 6:15.

Please help us communicate this event to all of Marlene's past students by passing this information on to others. Thank You!

Find us on Facebook:

Marlene Getz's Retirement Celebration

B'NAI MITZVAH



The congregation is cordially invited to attend as our daughter, Esther Simon is called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on Saturday, May 1, 2010, at 10:15am. Kiddush will follow. Jonathan Simon & Christina Spaulding



The congregation is cordially invited to attend as our daughter, Alejandra Zeiger is called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on Saturday, May 8, 2010, at 10:15am. Kiddush will follow. Dan Zeiger & Josefina Coloma



The congregation is cordially invited to attend as my son, Samuel Bernstein is called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on Saturday, May 15, 2010, at 10:15am. Kiddush will follow. Cindy Bernstein



The congregation is cordially invited to attend as our daughter, Jessica Gorovitz is called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on Saturday, May 29, 2010, at 10:15am. Kiddush will follow. Eric & Jennifer Gorovitz



The congregation is cordially invited to attend as our daughter, Ruby Gizzi is called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on Saturday, June 5, 2010, at 10:15am. Kiddush will follow. Elio Gizzi & Valerie Gutwirth



The congregation is cordially invited to attend as our children, Haley & Noah Richards are called to the Torah as B'nai Mitzvah on Saturday, June 12, 2010, at 10:15am. Kiddush will follow. Mark Richards & Sarah Noonberg



The congregation is cordially invited to attend as our daughter, Anna Saldinger is called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on Saturday, June 19, 2010, at 10:15am. Kiddush will follow. Bruce Saldinger & Lynne Royer



The congregation is cordially invited to attend as our daughter, Rebecca Lieber is called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on Saturday, June 26, 2010, at 10:15am. Kiddush will follow. Robert Lieber & Cheryl Taubenfeld

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS:

Dale & Kerry Freeman

Daniel Fulop & Jillian Pesin-Fulop

Cal & Alisa Morrill

22nd Annual

Tikkun Leyl Shavuot

A community-wide celebration and night of study

Tuesday, May 18, 2010 6:30 p.m.
through dawn on **Wednesday, May 19**

Jewish Community Center of the East Bay, 1414 Walnut St., Berkeley

A unique community-wide celebration and night of Torah study, a spiritual journey bringing together Jews with varied perspectives and affiliations. Stay for an hour--or stay until dawn. We will be led in study by teachers from our diverse Jewish community. Celebrate Shavuot!

New this Year

Family Programming

This year family programming will be offered in the early evening. Children must be accompanied by at least one parent. No pre-registration will be required. Sessions include ages 2-5, grades K-2 and grades 3-6.

Childcare

Following Family programming there will be FREE childcare/sleeping room, (ages 2 and up) until the end of the Tikkun allowing parents to participate in the sessions without their children in tow. Parents must pre-register their children and provide bedding. Parents may not leave the JCC while their children are in childcare.

Morning Torah Services

In addition to the two morning services at the JCC where the 10 Commandments will be read from the Torah at dawn (One Orthodox Service and One Combined Egalitarian Service), there will be an opportunity to join with Wilderness Torah and hear the 10 Commandments read on the top of Mount Tamalpais.

Sponsoring Organizations: Aquarian Minyan, Be'chol Lashon, UC Berkeley Hillel, Berkeley Midrasha, Beit Midrash Ohr Hachaim, The Center for Jewish Mystical Studies, Chochmat Halev, Congregation Beth El, Congregation Beth Israel, Congregation Netivot Shalom, The East Bay Minyan, EchoJews of the Bay, Hazon, Jewish Community Center of the East Bay, Jewish Community High School of the Bay, Jewish Gateways, Jewish Mosaic, The Jewish Music Festival, Kehilla Community Synagogue, KlezCalifornia, Moische House, Nehirim, Nishmat Shalom, Or Zaruva, Progressive Jewish Alliance, Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies of the Graduate Theological Union (GTU), Shalom Bayit, Temple Beth Hillel, Wilderness Torah, Yeashore Community.

For more information, contact Robin Braverman 925.979.1998 or email tikkun@jfed.org.



The Jewish Federation
 The Jewish Community Foundation
 OF THE EAST BAY

CJLL
 Center for
 Jewish Living
 and Learning

Together we are stronger

YOUTH GROUP NEWS!



Our youth groups continue to flourish as we finish the 5770 school year. Sababa celebrated Shabbat on the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk with services and a relaxing day at the beach. Ruach celebrated Yom Ha'atzmaut playing amid the wonderful event at Beth El. Thank you to everyone who made these activities fantastic! Our main upcoming events are the elections for next year's youth group boards and a fantastic end of year celebration.

Our youth group boards decide what events we will have each year. For instance this year the youth group boards chose to have a ski trip, a fundraiser for Nothing But Nets, BBQs, a trip to a Cal Basketball game, a Purim overnight, holiday celebrations and a trip to the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk.

Students in grades 5-7 will be able to run for positions and vote at the Sababa elections on May 14th; and students in grades 8-11 will be able to run for positions and vote in the BEY elections on May 16th. Positions available for each youth group include President, Programming Vice-President, Religious & Cultural Vice-President, Social Action Vice-President, Membership Vice-President, and Grade representatives. If you are interested in running for a youth group board position, then please contact Rebecca to nominate yourself and/or to find out more about the positions.

Thank you so much to our youth group boards this year for their hard work! We acknowledge, Milo Dubinsky, Lauren Hoffman, Simona Ruzer, Ben Kolligs, Aaron Magid, Shane Schiff, Olivia Levine-Gorelick, Jessica Gorovitz & Michelle Schiff for their vital contributions this year. Mazal tov on jobs well done!

Rebecca DePalma
Youth Group Advisor

YOUTH GROUP CALENDAR

Sababa Pizza Party & Election
Friday, May 14th @ 5:00 pm

BEY Pancake Brunch & Election
Sunday, May 16th @ 12:30 pm

Last Event of the Year!
All 4th - 12th graders are invited!

Sunday, June 6th @ 12:30 pm at:
Boomers! Laser Tag, Go Karts, Bumper Boats & More!
Drop off & Pick up at Beth El - Parent Drivers are needed to make this event a success.
Come celebrate a great year with us.
<http://www.boomersparks.com/site/livermore/>

From the Gift Shop



We have recently reconnected with one of our favorite vendors who represents a number of Israeli artists. It means that we have a new selection of Israeli crafts to tempt you! Among the beautiful, and sometimes unusual, designs that we are now featuring, you'll find:

- Modern besamim (spice boxes) by Agayev made of anodized aluminum with a laser-cut blessing.
- Sparkling tallit clips from Adaya, and others in beautifully designed sterling silver.
- A selection of Torah yads (pointers)... some very up-to-date in colorful anodized aluminum, others in various metals including sterling.
- Star of David, Hamsa, and little heart pendants meticulously beaded by Adaya.
- Delicate red leather bracelets trimmed with a multifiori charm.

Most of these items are perfect for B'nai Mitzvah gifts or for any other festive occasion. Our tallit selection keeps growing. A reminder that each B'nai Mitzvah student is eligible for a 15% discount on the purchase of a new tallit.

With Mothers' Day, June weddings, showers, and graduations coming very soon, we have stocked our displays with many appropriate gifts. We are open Monday through Friday during office hours. When a volunteer is not available, our knowledgeable office staff is always glad to help. You can also make an appointment for a time that is convenient for you with Odette by phoning: 526-4917. We will do our best to accommodate you, and we thank you for your loyal patronage!

Odette and Robinn

NEW BOOKS IN THE LIBRARY

Donations to the Plishner and Rabbi Vida Funds are the sole source of Library books. Here are some new books:

There were more than 50 kings of the Jews, in Israel and Judaea. How many can you name? *In Kings of the Jews: The Origins of the Jewish Nation*, Norman Gelb tells the stories of them all, telling the history of the two Jewish nations from the standpoint of the monarchs, from David to Herod. He does not omit the queens, one of whom was the real ruler in her time.

We are called the People of the Book, but until the invention of the printing press, very few Jews could own even one book. The first printed Hebrew book was in 1475, but not until the 18th century was there a flood of books, making possible a great flourishing of Jewish literacy and wide learning. This made Hasidism possible, since esoteric books became available to many Jews, and it made possible the Haskalah—the Jewish Enlightenment. This history is told in *The Book in the Jewish World 1700–1900*, by Zeev Gries, Professor of Jewish Thought at the Ben Gurion University, where we can learn, for instance, what literature was popular among our forebears.

In Haskalah and Hasidism in the Kingdom of Poland: A History of Conflict, Marcin Wodzinski tells the history of these two Jewish intellectual movements, one of modernity and one of religiosity, and of their intense conflict, followed by their integration, one of the most important debates in Jewish society in central and eastern Europe and one with considerable resonance still.

Czernowitz, the capital of the Bukovina, first in the Austrian empire, then in Romania, now in Ukraine, had for a long time a rich German-speaking Jewish culture, producing a great poet, Paul Celan, a major novelist, Aharon Appelfeld, and many other writers and artists, as well as a thriving Jewish life. The story of this now gone but remembered culture is told in *Ghosts of Home: the Afterlife of Czernowitz in Jewish Memory*, by Marianne Hirsch and Leo Spitzer (wife and husband, she a literature professor at Columbia, he a history professor at Dartmouth.)

A summary of the history of Jewish mysticism, its themes and background, and all the major works from antiquity to the present, is provided in the fairly short compass of *Jewish Mysticism: the Infinite Expression of Meaning*, by Rachel Elior, Cohen Professor of Jewish Philosophy and Jewish Mystical Thought at Hebrew University, a book “overflowing with interesting insights.”

In *Maimonides: The Life and World of One of Civilization's Greatest Minds*, Joel Kraemer gives the social, cultural, historical and geographical context of the life of Maimonides, along with his biography and explanations of all his works in Torah, philosophy, medicine, mathematics, astronomy, logic and ethics. The book is “lively, lucid, and engaging.”

Yehuda Halevi, by Hillel Halkin, is another in the Schocken series, “Jewish Encounters.” Here is told the story of the great poet

and philosopher of the Golden Age of medieval Spanish Jewry, evoking the world of 11th and 12th century Andalusian Spain. There is much poetry in the book, much cultural history, and analysis of The Kuzari, Halevi's elucidation of Judaism in dialogue form, a classic of our literature and of our self-understanding.

A new journal called “*Jewish Review of Books*” is recommended. It has a special introductory rate of \$19.95 a year (4 issues). One can subscribe on line at www.jewishreviewofbooks.com. The first issue is in the library.

Scott Spear
Chair

SANCTUARY CHAIRS

The new chairs for our sanctuary have been ordered and we expect delivery in mid-June.

It is still possible for you to name a chair in honor of an important family event or in memory of a loved one. Your generous donation of \$5000 will enable us to continue to fulfill our mission.

We have also created a number of new opportunities for you to make a donation to help us honor members of our community. We are accepting donations towards the naming of sanctuary chairs in honor of several important events in our communal life including the following:

- Reuben Zellman: Honoring his ordination as a Reform Rabbi and installation as our Assistant Rabbi and Music Director
- Rabbi Kahn : Honoring his 25 years in the Reform Rabbinate
- Bev Eigner: Honoring her dedication to the weekly Beth El Torah Study
- Marlene Getz: Honoring her years of dedicated teaching the youth of Beth El
- Odette Blackman: On the occasion of her receiving the first annual Marian Magid Award for long term volunteer service to our community.

Please send your donation to the Beth El office. Your generous contribution will enable us to honor these individuals dedication and commitment to the Jewish community.



Congregation Beth El Shabbat Retreat

Friday, May 21 ~ Sunday, May 23, 2010
at Walker Creek Ranch in Petaluma

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- Study Opportunities *with Rabbi Yoel Kahn*
- Friday night & Saturday morning services and Havdallah *led by Rabbi Kahn*
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 - Plus much, much, more!

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From the Rabbi (continued from front page)

Midrasha Graduation

Sunday, May 23 - 11:00 am

Midrasha, our community-wide Jewish high school program, has its 42nd annual graduation ceremony on Sunday morning, May 23 at Beth El. A highlight of Midrasha graduation are the student speeches. We congratulate Rebecca Aptaker, Avi King and Yasmin Louis on their graduation.

Honoring Marlene Getz and All 2010 Graduates

Friday, June 4 - 6:15 pm

For more than thirty years, Marlene Getz has taught Nursery School and Religious School students at Beth El. All of her former students and their families are cordially invited to join us at Shabbat services on Friday, June 4, to thank and honor Marlene as she begins her well-earned retirement. At this service, we will also recognize all of our 2010 graduates – those graduating from college or attaining professional degrees, high school graduates and our middle school students who are entering high school. If there is someone in your family who should receive an invitation, please let us know.

Installation of Rabbi Reuben Zellman

Friday, June 18 - Service at 7:30 pm

Dessert and Champagne Oneg to follow.

On May 16 in Los Angeles, Rabbinic Intern Reuben Zellman will be ordained as a Rabbi. At Beth El, we will celebrate his ordination and formally install Rabbi Zellman as our Assistant Rabbi and Music Director at a festive Shabbat evening service on Friday, June 18th. (Editor's note: Rabbi Kahn is also receiving an honorary doctorate in May on the occasion of his twenty-fifth year in the rabbinate. We will recognize this milestone the same evening.) Beth El's chorus, along with Rabbi Michael Barenbaum, Rabbi Emeritus of Congregation Rodef Shalom in San Rafael, and Beth El member Rabbi Jim Brandt, CEO of the Jewish Federation of the East Bay, will participate in the service. A festive, champagne Oneg will follow.

L'shalom

Rabbi Yoel Kahn



TZEDAKAH

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Sofia Peltz

Skylar Powell

Sam Lombardi

Bowen Johnson

Lucas Drummond

Micah Flamm

Solomon Klein

Merav Dale

Jacob Sindel

Isabel Steckel

Magi Lipner-Suwitra

Bryn Lewin-Offel

Leah Bercovitch

Esther Simon

Alejandra Zeiger

Samuel Bernstein

Jessica Gorovitz

Ruby Gizzi

Haley Richards

Noah Richards

Rebecca Lieber

Anna Saldinger

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Joanne Backman & Harry Pollack *in honor of Solomon Klein being called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah*

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Odette Blachman *in memory of Rabbi Tamas Raj*

Odette Blachman *in honor of Bev Eigner*

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Carolyn & Curt Coleman *in honor of Bev Eigner*

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Leatrice Gutmann *in honor of Bev Eigner*

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Steven Joseph & Corey Hansen-Joseph *in honor of Bev Eigner*

Steven Joseph & Corey Hansen-Joseph *in memory of*

Rabbi Tamas Raj

Juliette Hassid *in memory of Sol Calef*

Juliette Hassid *in memory of Marguerite Mizrahi*

Estelle Katz *in memory of Robert Katz*

Julie & Patrick Kennedy *in honor of Bev Eigner*

Julie & Patrick Kennedy *in honor of Odette Blachman*

Dante & Jennifer Lombardi *in honor of their son Samuel Lombardi*

being called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah

Dante & Jennifer Lombardi *in honor of Jacob Sindel being called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah*

Renee Lubin *in honor of Bev Eigner*

Marlene & Robert Mann *in honor of Bev Eigner*

Gary & Lois Marcus *in memory of Selma Marcus*

Gary & Lois Marcus *in memory of Sally White*

Marilyn & Harry Margulius *in honor of Solomon Klein being called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah*

Marilyn & Harry Margulius *in honor of Bev Eigner's special contributions to Torah Study*

David & Donna Mendelsohn *in honor of Bev Eigner*

Marv Pearlstein *in memory of Robert Litman*

Stan & Faye Samuels *in honor of Bev Eigner*

Mo Morris & Peter Steckel *in honor of Jacob Sindel being called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah*

Isabel & Herb Stusser *in honor of Bev Eigner*

Marilyn & William Sugar *in honor of Bev Eigner*

Jerry Weintraub *in memory of Jahangir Yadegar*

Jerry Weintraub *in honor of Bev Eigner*

Karen & Joel Zeldin *in honor of Bev Eigner*

Phyllis Zisman *in memory of Rabbi Tamas Raj*

HOMELESS MEAL PROGRAM

Clarke & Maria Daniels

Neil Gozan & Gale Antokal *in honor of the yahrzeit of Pheobe Gozan*

Tenzin Lhamo *in memory of Sylvia Simon*

Linda Kay Marchena *in honor of Mike Klayman*

Anna Mantell & Bob Goldstein *in honor of Jerry Weintraub*

Miriam Rabinovitz *in honor of Phyllis Zisman being called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah*

Miriam Rabinovitz *in memory of Sidney Klein*

Thom & Betty Seaton *in honor of Bev Eigner*

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TORAH STUDY

Joshua & Beryl Bar-Lev in honor of Bev Eigner
 Stu & Judy Berman in honor of Bev Eigner
 Diane & Ed Bernbaum in honor of Bev Eigner
 Vivian Clayton in honor of Bev Eigner
 Alfred & Anita Cotton in honor of Bev Eigner
 Stephen & Wilma Rader in honor of Bev Eigner
 Katherine & Alan Sanstad in honor of Bev Eigner
 Ruth & Scott Spear in honor of Bev Eigner
 Laurie Swiadon in honor of Bev Eigner

Yizkor on Shavuot

Thursday evening, May 20

Yizkor Circle - 6:15 pm • Yizkor Service - 7:00 pm

Havdalah - 7:30 pm

At each of our major festivals, we remember our loved ones who have died, through the ritual of the Yizkor memorial service. Whether your loss is recent or more distant, you are invited to join with others in our community to commemorate your loss and honor the memory of those we have lost. The Yizkor service is preceded by a Yizkor circle, a facilitated discussion about loss, grief, love and memory. We will close the Yizkor service with the beautiful Havdalah ceremony that ends Shavuot. All are welcome.

Rabbi Liaison Committee

The members of the Rabbi Liaison Committee are Emily Marthinsen, long-time Congregation member, 510-528-1972; Larry Miller, Religious School parent, 510-558-3138; Abby Rezneck, Nursery School parent, 650-533-5349; and Mark Aaronson, long-time Congregation member, 510-655-5211.

We meet regularly with Rabbi Kahn for candid and confidential discussions. If you have concerns you would rather not raise directly with him, please feel free to telephone one of us. We will convey your concerns anonymously if that is your preference.

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GRADUATION

It's coming. My favorite day of the Midrasha year...graduation. No, it's not my favorite day because it marks the end of the school year and I can finally sleep a little later or have guests for brunch on Sundays. It my favorite because when I hear each graduate speak about what Midrasha and their 18 years of

Jewish education have meant to them, I am overwhelmed with pride and have absolutely not a worry in the world about "Jewish continuity." All the early mornings, late nights, long work days, and worry about program details all go out the window and I realize that I have chosen the right profession and the right job. If you'd like to be similarly filled with nachas (You don't have to be the school director or be related to Midrasha in any way to take pride in these kids. Just living in our community will do!), please join us for graduation. It is Sunday, May 23 at 10:45 a.m. in the Congregation Beth El sanctuary, 1301 Oxford Street in Berkeley. The graduation epitomizes the pluralistic nature of our Midrasha community. We have 17 graduates. They come from 6 different synagogues, 3 different denominations and include unaffiliated students as well. We are truly a community school.

Mazel tov to the following students and their families: Rebecca Aptaker, Geoffrey Class, Stefan Feurst, Sara Geliebter, Alida Jekabson, David Joseph-Goteiner, Rachel Kane, Theresa Kaplan, Ariel Karwat, Avi King, Yasmin Louie, Jordan Marshak, Emily Pascal, Ziva Sholin, Nils Skudra, Samantha Strimling and Abby Wurtele.

See you on May 23th at 10:45 at graduation.

Diane Bernbaum
Director



TORAH STUDY

Meets Shabbat Morning (Saturday)
in the Beit Midrash at 9:15am

May 1, 2010

Parshat Emor
Leviticus 21:1-24:23
Led by Sara Kupor

May 8, 2010

Parashat Behar-Bechukotai
Leviticus 25:1-27:34
Led by Rabbi Yoel Kahn

May 15, 2010

Parashat Bamidbar
Numbers 1:1-4:20
Led by Barbara Cohn

May 22, 2010

Parashat Nasso
Numbers 4:21-7:89
Led by Lisa Feldman

May 29, 2010

Shavuot - Ruth
Numbers 8:1-12:16
Led by Bill Schnechner

June 5, 2010

Parashat Sh'lach
Numbers 13:1-15:41
Led by Rose Falanga & Cy Silver

June 12, 2010

Parashat Korach
Numbers 16:1-18:32
Led by Sue Reinhold

June 19, 2010

Parashat Chukat
Numbers 19:1-22:1
Led by Bob Goldstein

June 26, 2010

Parashat Balak
Numbers 22:2-25:9
Led by Rabbi Yoel Kahn

It is a Jewish tradition to give *Tzedakah* to commemorate life cycle events and other occasions. Are you celebrating a birthday, engagement, anniversary, baby naming, Bat/Bar Mitzvah or a recovery from illness? These are just a few ideas of appropriate times to commemorate with a donation to Beth El. These tax-deductible donations are greatly appreciated and are a vital financial supplement to support the wonderful variety of programs and activities that we offer at Congregation Beth El. Thank you for your support.

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May 2010/ Iyar - Sivan 5770

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
NS - Nursery School RS - Religious School						1 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service Bat Mitzvah - Esther Simon
2 11:00a Annual Meeting & Volunteer Recognition Day	3 9:30a Baby Playgroup	4 7:00p Board Meeting	5 7:00p NS Parent Workshop 7:00p Lehrhaus/ Reinventing Ritual 7:00p Lehrhaus/Int. Modern Hebrew 8:25p Lehrhaus/Adv. Modern Hebrew	6 7:00p Talmud Class	7 6:30p Confirmation Dinner 8:00p Confirmation Service	8 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service Bat Mitzvah - Alejandra Zeiger
9 MOTHER'S DAY	10 9:30a Baby Playgroup	11 7:00p Nursery School Committee 7:30p Ritual Committee	12	13 12:00p Chai Group Luncheon 7:00p Talmud Class	14 5:00p Sababa Pizza Party & Elections 6:00p Shabbat Unplugged Dinner 6:15p Shabbat Evening Service 6:45p Shabbat Unplugged Service	15 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service Bar Mitzvah - Samuel Bernstein
16 12:30p BEY - Pancake Brunch & Elections 2:00p Homeless Meal - Medical Clinic 5:00p Homeless Meal	17 9:30a Baby Playgroup 7:30p Seymour Fromer Memorial	18 EREV SHAVUOT 6:30p Tikkun Leyl Shavuot 8:00p Religious School Committee	19 SHAVUOT Offices & Schools Closed	20 6:15p Yizkor Circle 6:45p Yizkor Service 7:00p Conv. Yiddish 7:00p Talmud Class	21 Congregational Retreat 6:15p Shabbat Evening Service	22 Congregational Retreat 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service
23 Congregational Retreat 9:30a Midrasha Graduation / 30	24 9:30a Baby Playgroup / 31 MEMORIAL DAY Offices & Schools Closed	25	26 7:00p Chorus Rehearsal	27 7:00p Talmud Class	28 6:15p Shabbat Evening Service	29 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service Bat Mitzvah - Jessica Gorovitz

Congregation Beth El

1301 Oxford St • Berkeley, CA 94709-1424

Main Phone Number (510) 848-3988 *** Fax (510) 848-2707

Religious School Office Direct Line (510) 848-2122

Nursery School Office Direct Line (510) 848-9428

Camp Kee Tov Office Direct Line (510) 848-2372

Midrasha Direct Line (510) 843-4667

Clergy & Staff	Ext.	Direct Line	Email Address
Rabbi Yoel H. Kahn	215		rabbikahn@bethelberkeley.org
Norm Frankel, Executive Director	212		norm@bethelberkeley.org
Debra Sagan Massey, Director of Education	213	848-2122	debra@bethelberkeley.org
Barbara Kanter, Nursery School Director	219	848-9428	barbara@bethelberkeley.org
Zach Landres-Schnur, Camp Kee Tov Director	217	848-2372	zach@bethelberkeley.org
Suzanne Alexander, Accounting	210		suzanne@bethelberkeley.org
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Stephanie Pollick, Kee Tov Admin. Coordinator	223	848-2372	stephanie@bethelberkeley.org
Charlie Radin, Admin. Coordinator	225		charlie@bethelberkeley.org
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June 2010/ Sivan - Tammuz 5770

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
NS - Nursery School RS - Religious School		1 7:00p Board Meeting	2 7:00p Chorus Rehearsal	3 5:30p Camp Kee Tov - CIT Training 7:00p Talmud Class	4 6:15p Shabbat Evening Service Honoring Marlene Getz and all our Graduates	5 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service Bat Mitzvah - Ruby Gizzi
6 12:30p Youth Group Event at Boomers! (4th - 12th Grade)	7	8 7:00p Nursery School Committee 7:30p Ritual Committee	9 7:00p Chorus Rehearsal	10 7:00p Talmud Class	11 6:15p Shabbat Evening Service	12 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service B'nai Mitzvah - Haley & Noah Richards
13	14	15	16 LAST DAY OF NURSERY SCHOOL 7:00p Chorus Rehearsal	17 7:00p Conv. Yiddish	18 7:30p Shabbat Evening Service Honoring Rabbi Reuben Zellman & Rabbi Yoel Kahn	19 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service Bat Mitzvah - Anna Saldinger
20 FATHER'S DAY 2:00p Homeless Meal - Medical Clinic 5:00p Homeless Meal	21	22 6:30p Board & Program Council		24	25 6:15p Shabbat Evening Service	26 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service Bat Mitzvah - Rebecca Lieber
27 3:00p Camp Kee Tov Orientation - Session I	28 FIRST DAY OF CAMP KEE TOV - Session I	29	30			

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