

"Honoring Tradition, Celebrating Diversity, and Building a Jewish Future"

THE BUILDER



"Let all who are hungry, come and eat!"

"Let all who are in need, celebrate the Passover!"

PESACH 5772 BEGINS ON FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 6.

PESACH SEDER

Saturday, April 7 • 6:00 – 9:00 pm

Join Rabbis Yoel Kahn and Reuben Zellman along with Beth El friends, old and new, for a festive Pesach celebration and delicious catered kosher-for-Pesach meal. We are never too old nor too young to learn and retell the story of liberation. Through song, ritual and discussion, we will retell the Pesach story, making connections to our own lives and our world.

Members: Adults \$54 - Young Adult (30 and under) \$36 - Children \$18

Guests: Adults \$72 - Young Adult (30 and under) \$36 - Children \$25 - College students w/ID \$18

Through the generosity of anonymous Beth El members, no one will be turned away because of inability to pay. Childcare is provided for children 5 and under.

Please register by Thursday, April 5 at www.bethelberkeley.org/pesach

FREEDOM FEST: LIBERATE YOUR PASSOVER EXPERIENCE

THE MOST ENGAGING AND FUN WAY TO PREPARE FOR PESACH!

Sunday, March 18 • 10:00 am - 1:00 pm at the JCC East Bay - 1414 Walnut Street

How do I add something new to my seder this year? What is the meaning of all the items on the seder plate? And how do I engage people of all ages in the seder? If these are some of the questions you are asking about Passover, make sure you attend this year's Freedom Fest!

Join us for different workshops and teachers from all over the East Bay! For more information, please contact Debra Massey at debra@bethelberkeley.org.

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FROM THE RABBI NEXT YEAR IN JERUSALEM!

For two thousand of years, Jews have declared: "Next year in Jerusalem!" Jerusalem –rebuilt, renewed and at peace - has long been the earthly symbol of our people's yearning for peace, for wholeness and for justice. The symbolism of Jerusalem continues; but in recent generations, we have also been able to say "Next year in Jerusalem!" and physically travel to the *altneuland* –the ancient and new Israel. It's not too early to plan ahead and I invite you to join me on a fun, exciting and life-changing journey to Jerusalem and the Land of Israel in April 2013. Together with the wider East Bay Jewish community, we are planning a wonderful trip with a variety of itinerary themes—from "culture" to "green" to "high tech." Whether you are a first time traveler or have been many times, this trip is for you! Generous donors from the community and our congregation have promised to help make this trip accessible to everyone who wants to participate; please know that substantial subsidies will be available to those who need.

Why visit Israel? My colleague Rabbi Judy Shanks of Temple Isaiah in Lafayette recently wrote about the joy and meaningfulness of a pilgrimage to our homeland; her words resonate for me. "I can only tell you that my Jewish identity has been shaped and reshaped, changed and deepened by having my feet on the ground in the Land our people has called holy since our birth thousands of years ago. When I visit Israel, I let go of newspaper headlines and listen to Israelis tell me about their country – its history, its peoples, its achievements, its challenges. I listen with both new and ancient ears to hear the echoes of the rabbis old and the cadences of modern Israeli thinkers, poets, politicians, street rappers and everyone in-between... I ate street food and haute cuisine... I marvel at the history I can see and hear and touch; I walk in Abraham and Sarah's footsteps; through first century ruins, through every century of Jewish life displayed both in museums and outdoors." I learn about how much of what I already know is affirmed and how much more I didn't fully understand or appreciate. This trip will also have special features planned especially for us; we will meet Reform Jews creating a liberal Jewish alternative and learn about the challenges of social and religious diversity. We will have special opportunities to learn about the lives of the families of our Beth El members who come from or have moved to Israel, from the kibbutz to an Orthodox yeshiva in Jerusalem to Christian Arab families in Nazareth to Kee Tov alumni all over the place. Having discussed as a community what it means to listen deeply and engage in respectful dialogue, we will have ample opportunity to encounter and engage with a variety of Israelis—from all backgrounds and communities. For interfaith travelers, there will be options for visiting sacred sites and everyone will be encouraged to visit, meet and learn outside of their usual comfort zone.

Our rabbis taught: "Every Jew is responsible for the well-being of one another." Each one of us has now and will have a different connection to Israel, but I can assure you that all of our connections will be deepened through your participation in this trip. The friendships and the connections that the participants in our Beth El 2008 trip to Israel have endured—any of those travelers would be glad to share the significance and meaning of their trip. I encourage you to consider joining us on this one. More information will be forthcoming soon. If you would like to see a preliminary itinerary and its various tracks, please contact me. "L'shanah ha-ba'ah b'Yerushalayim! Next year in Jerusalem!"

Rabbi Yoel Kahn



Beth El Israel Trip 2008 - Independence Hall

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Member Spotlight

Dynamic Duo Says Beth El is Better than Ever

By Elisabeth Wechsler

"Mutual respect and a division of tasks," is how Jeff Leon describes the success of the legal partnership with his wife Debbie Leon. But it could also refer to their marriage and their approach to volunteering at Beth El. In the legal context, Debbie manages the office of Leon & Leon, while Jeff handles their business and real estate litigation practice. They have been in partnership together since 1993 after both had worked for large San Francisco law firms.

As for volunteering, Jeff says he fills in where Debbie is leading. Together, they have donated their professional skills and personal time to Beth El in a big way.

Debbie's first volunteer role at Beth El was on the Camp Kee Tov Committee in 1992. She became Chair of that committee in 1994 and was on the Board of Directors of Beth El and the Executive Committee from 1996 to around 2002. She was also the Chair of the Steering Committee for the new building project from 1996 to 2005. In that capacity, she provided leadership of the project by coordinating the work of the different project subcommittees: capital campaign, finance, permit-related issues and building design. "Each of these had its own structure. We had to figure out the best way to involve volunteers and coordinate them effectively," she said. One of their daughters described the end of that commitment as if "a sibling had gone off to college."

Shortly after the Steering Committee completed its work, Debbie served on the Rabbi Search Committee, which brought Rabbi Kahn to Beth El as Senior Rabbi in the summer of 2007. She described the search as a four-stage process: an hour phone interview with each of a large number of candidates and the full committee on a conference call; six to seven candidates selected from that group to spend a day with the committee; observing candidates lead services in their current synagogues; and inviting four candidates to spend an entire weekend at Beth El.



Debbie was Volunteer Coordinator for Beth El for about a year after the Rabbi Search Committee was finished and then created the Pantry Chug, which is now her main volunteer role. "I wanted to do programming where people interact, and it was clear from my experience as Volunteer Coordinator that there were a lot of food-related needs," she said. The Pantry Chug gets together to cook for Beth El events, providing food for various synagogue functions as well as the Yom Kippur break-the-fast.

She now sings with the Beth El Chorus as well, and performed with the Chorus at the recent Thanksgiving and Hanukkah concerts. She and Jeff both have worked on the Homeless Meal off and on for the last eight or nine years.

Jeff was called upon for legal advice during the acquisition of 1301 Oxford Street and again when issues arose during the design and construction of the building. He is looking forward to taking greater advantage of adult education opportunities at the synagogue, commenting on the "amazing collection of talent at Beth El, which manages to still be very low key."

Debbie is originally from Virginia and Jeff is from Ohio. Debbie and Jeff's main interests are travel and the theater. They lived in Berkeley from 1984 to 1992 and now live in Orinda. They have two daughters, Claire (26) and Jenny (21).

"It's a different kind of relationship when you live at some distance," Debbie said, recalling numerous times during the building project years when she made the trip from Orinda to Beth El three times in a day. "You're choosing somewhere to go that's not that easy. You wouldn't be doing that much work unless you really cared."



Anat Hoffman & Women of the Wall

A Tale of Two Cities: The Dual Personality of Jerusalem

Saturday, February 11 • 7:30 pm at Congregation Netivot Shalom

On December 1, 1988, 70 Jewish women prayed together aloud at the Western Wall for the first time in history, and shortly thereafter, Women of the Wall read from a Torah scroll at the Western Wall for the first time. Twenty-two years later, despite arrests, harassment and some legal setbacks, Women of the Wall are still reading Torah, singing and praying at the Wall every month. Anat Hoffman, a founder of Women of the Wall, Executive Director of the Israel Religious Action Center and a leading voice for civil rights and democracy in Israel, will be speaking at Netivot Shalom on February 11.

Beth El is proud to be a co-sponsor of these events and Anat's California tour.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

WE PLANT FOR OUR CHILDREN

The Beth El Capital campaign is coming and, boy, have I got an investment opportunity for you! But first, I want to address the many questions I have heard from members about Beth El's current financial situation.

Beth El membership continues slow-but-steady growth as we attract new members in all age groups - reflecting the quality and success of our programs. Our amazing Shabbaton this year attracted more than 250 people and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Our incredible staff has helped lead our youth programs to their best year ever. Over 800 campers attended Camp Kee Tov this past summer while our religious school has grown from 160 students to around 200 and our nursery school is near capacity. Our Shabbat programs (Minyan, Torah Study, Chug Mishpachah and the main Shabbat service) continue to bring nearly 200 people to Beth El each Saturday. Meanwhile, our popular adult education programs and family holiday celebrations consistently draw big crowds. Thanks to the prudent financial management by our staff and our fabulous volunteers, we have been able to do all of this while knocking several hundred thousand dollars off the building mortgage debt over the last few years. Yet, the mortgage continues to be our biggest financial worry.

Currently, our congregation is carrying \$9M in total mortgage debt. That represents \$7M of bank debt and \$2M in loans from some of our most generous congregants. Fortunately, our debt holders have been willing to work with us to help us meet those obligations. Most of the congregant lenders have allowed us to extend the loans until we have the resources to pay them off. Some have even forgiven the loans altogether. The bank holding our mortgage restructured our loan so that we are paying a very low interest rate. However, even with this generosity, we need to meet our commitments to pay what we owe in order to protect our future. The new terms of the bank loan require us to make a series of principle payments in addition to our regular mortgage payments over the coming years. We have a \$250,000 payment due this year, then \$425,000 payments due each year for the following 4 years, and finally 3 annual payments of \$200,000. At the end of that period we will need to refinance the remaining \$2.2M balance. We also have annual payments we must make towards our congregant loans. If we meet those goals, by 2020 we will have reduced the debt by nearly 70%, putting Beth El on solid financial footing.

The good news is that we have already started the capital campaign. After speaking with a small number of congregants, our initial five-year pledges add up to more than \$800,000! By the time you read this, we will have already made the first \$250,000 payment. So, raising the money to meet the payment schedule is certainly doable. But we are just getting started.

Just like 3,500 years ago when our ancestors, the ancient Israelites were building the Mishkan in the desert, we will need everyone to participate in order for this campaign to succeed. Every gift is important. The Torah tells us that in the desert, those who could afford it brought bulls to the Mishkan, others brought goats, others brought turtle doves while still others brought handfuls of grain. Yet, every gift was equally valuable and important. It was the fact that everyone was doing what they could that mattered.

In my work, I evaluate investment opportunities for our mergers and acquisitions group. When I look at a company, I ask: Is the company doing something we value? Does the company provide value that will last over time? Does the company have an effective management team? Does the company have a credible financial plan? And, is the company succeeding in its core mission?

When I look at Beth El, I see that the answer to all those questions is a resounding yes. Investing in Beth El is an opportunity to be part of building and ensuring the future of something wonderful. Your investment will ensure that Beth El continues to be a place where young parents can send their children for religious education and for the greatest Jewish camping experience available – a place where they will solidify their Jewish identity. It will ensure that Beth El thrives as a place where singles, intermarried couples, LGBT Jews, secular Jews and religious Jews can come together for Simchas, for mourning, for worship, for study and for companionship. It will ensure that there is a caring community in place to support community members in need. And it will help us serve the wider community through our social action programs. So when the volunteers for the capital campaign call, please listen to what they have to say and give as generously as you are able. As our tradition teaches: We plant for our children because our parents planted for us. So please join me in investing in our community's present and its future. Thank you!

Dan Magid
President, Board of Directors



february 2012

- 2/2 5th Grade Meeting for B'nei Mitzvah Date Selection, 6:00 pm
- 2/9 Tu B'Shevat Family Celebration, 5:30-6:30 pm
- 2/10 Shabbat Unplugged*, 5:30 pm Dinner / 6:15 pm Service
- 2/12 6th/7th Grade Family Mitzvah Corps - My New Red Shoes
- 2/12 Ruach (4th/5th) Tu B'Shevat Birthday Party
- 2/16 All-School Service, parents encouraged to come, 5:40 pm
- 2/19-24 NO CLASSES - PRESIDENTS' DAY VACATION



march 2012

- 3/1 5th Grade Home For Dinner Program, 5:30-7:30 pm
- 3/3 6th Grade Shabbat Service & Lunch, 10:15 am
- 3/8 Purim Family Celebration, 4:00-6:00 pm
- 3/10 Ruach (4th/5th) Purim Murder Mystery
- 3/15 Shalom Bayit 6th Grade Program
- 3/15 Education Committee Meeting, 8:00 pm - All are welcome!
- 3/16 Shabbat Unplugged*, 5:30 pm Dinner / 6:15 pm Service
- 3/18 Freedom Fest - ALL ARE EXPECTED TO COME!
- 3/18 6th/7th Grade Family Mitzvah Corps - Homeless Meal, 4:30 pm
- 3/22 All-School Service, parents encouraged to come, 5:40 pm
- 3/24 Supper and Schmooze Dinners
- 3/27 B'nei Mitzvah Speech Class (half of the class)



*Top: Our 6th graders lend a hand at Urban Adamah for the Mitzvah Corps
 Right: Students in our Kadima program enjoying time together
 Bottom: Having a good laugh at Chug Mishpachah*

april 2012

- 4/1-8 NO CLASSES - SPRING BREAK
- 4/14 Shabba-Tot Morning Services, 11:00 am
- 4/17 Yom Hashoah Speaker: 6th & 7th grade
- 4/19 All-School Service, parents encouraged to come, 5:40 pm
- 4/21 Open House for Chug Mishpachah
- 4/22 6th/7th Grade Family Mitzvah Corps - Graffiti Clean-up
- 4/24 5th Grade Home for Dinner Family Program, 6:00-8:30 pm
- 4/26 Yom Ha'atzmaut Celebration, Art Show & Picnic, 4:00-6:30 pm
- 4/27 Shabbat at Home - Meet at Beth El at 5:30 pm, then at homes

**What is a Shabbat Unplugged? A musical service, open to the whole community.*

Friday, April 27 • 5:30 pm at Beth El, then at people's homes

Volunteer to host other Beth El families for a Shabbat dinner, or sign up to be hosted! This is a great way to enjoy Shabbat with other Beth El members and to strengthen our community. We will start with a brief Kabbalat Shabbat service at Beth El at 5:30 pm, then head out to different homes. To sign up to host or be hosted, please email Debra Massey at debra@bethelberkeley.org.

SHABBAT AT HOME



Camp Kee Tov Summer 2012

Register today at www.campkeetov.org!

Session 1: June 25 - July 20, 2012

Session 2: July 30 - August 24, 2012

PURIM

Purim Carnival

Sunday, March 4 • 2:00-5:00 pm at the JCC East Bay - 1414 Walnut Street, Berkeley

Join the JCC East Bay for our community-wide Purim Carnival! We have over 500 people attend last year and it was a blast! Dress up in your favorite costume for the costume parade, play with groggers, make masks to wear all day, fun carnival games, instrument petting zoo, and win lots of cool prizes! Admission is an act of tzedakah, please bring canned food to donate. Tickets for activities and games for sale. Co-sponsors: Building Jewish Bridges, Congregation Beth El, JCC East Bay and Jewish Gateways.



Purim

Wednesday, March 7

6:30 pm - Megillah Reading (Hebrew)

7:30 pm - Megillah Reading (Multilingual)

We will celebrate Purim this year with Two Festive Megillah Readings on March 7. Come for one or both!

At 6:30 pm hear the Megillah in Hebrew from beginning to end. Snacks and libations will be served while the story is told. At 7:30 pm come to the Multi-Lingual reading: Listen to highlights from the Megillah in a multitude of languages. Rabbi Zellman will teach Purim songs; snacks, schnapps and juice will be sampled. To volunteer to read in a language of your choice (all languages encouraged), contact Ruth Ehrenkrantz at ruthehren@comcast.net. Childcare will be provided from 6:30-9:00 pm, although we encourage children to join us at both Megillah readings.

Thursday, March 8

4:00-4:30 pm Megillah Reading and Songs

4:30-6:00 pm Carnival and Games

5:00-6:00 pm Dinner available (for purchase)

Come one, come all! Its Purim and its time to dress up, be silly and celebrate! Join all your Beth El friends for a short family-friendly megillah reading, and then various Purim activities. We will have games, art projects, sh'lach manot, a bounce house, and more! Volunteers are needed to help make this event fun for everyone. For more information, contact Debra Massey at debra@bethelberkeley.org.

YOM HA'ATZMAUT CELEBRATION, ART SHOW AND PICNIC



Thursday, April 26 • 4:00-6:30 pm

Come celebrate Israel's birthday! Don't miss out on this fun and important event! We will be celebrating with music, dance, art and food. We will have our student's art work on display for all to see, and picnic together in celebration of Israel.

WE WANT TO GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE OUR AMAZING CREW OF MADMENSCH VOLUNTEERS WHO MADE OUR AMAZING BETH EL GALA.

The Gala could not have happened without the support and guidance of the gala committee and advisors including Sarah Bevis, Juliette Fershtman, Tami Linde, Susie Marcus, Robin McMahon, Lisa Meckler, Jonathan Miller, Paul Sugarman, Jason and Laura Turbow, Ellen Singer-Vine, Robin Wenrick and Dana Zell. And of course, thank you to Oded Hilu and Sacha Kopin of Jasmine Catering for the night's delicious meal. Thank you all!



GALA'S SUCCESS HELPS DRIVE YAFE PROGRAMS!

Pronounced a big success, Beth El's Gala event entertained more than 200 "mensches" in '60s attire at its annual cocktail party fundraiser. The theme, Mad Mensch, was based on the popular TV show about life in the advertising world 50 years ago and hoped to attract a broad group of congregants as well as couples with children who benefit from Youth and Family Education (YAFE) programs, the recipient of the event's revenues.

Co-chairs Dana Zell and Juliette Fershtman and their committee worked hard to make this a fun and lucrative event and, judging by reactions at the Gala, they more than achieved their goal.

With the Men's Club and Nursery School dads tending bar and live music by Freight and Salvage, a trio, things got off to a good start at 6:00 pm on January 21st. The Silent and Live Auctions were a big focal point, in between chatting and munching on hearty hors d'oeuvres. Reg Martin did a great job as auctioneer and more than \$6,000 was raised in that activity alone. The Silent Auction also had some competitive bidding too, and raised nearly \$7,000. Additional scholarship contributions came to \$8,400, and the raffle brought in \$5,600.

The grand total intake (including ticket fees) exceeded \$42,000.

CHECK OUT PHOTOS FROM THE GALA ONLINE!

Now you can see Shoey Sindel's fabulous photos from the Gala. Just visit www.shoeyssindel.com and go to the View/Order tab and click on the album. The password for this year and last year's albums is "gala".

Want one more chance to be a Mensch? Just order your photos online. The proceeds from the sale of Shoey's Gala photos will all go to support youth programs at Beth El.



SCRIBES OF BETH EL

By Rebecca DePalma - Youth Group Advisor

Our community is lucky to have some brilliant, young writers in our midst. Recently one of these wonderful teens walked into my office to speak about what is available for her to do at Congregation Beth El.

My natural response was, "What do you like to do?"

She said, "I love to write."

I said, "Me too. It's what I majored in at college."

And the Scribes of Beth El writing group was born. We utilize our writing to explore our Judaism and the world around us. So far we've had a couple of meetings, started a blog so we can communicate in between meetings and we are writing hard. So far we've written about body image, how society views us, being Jewish in a secular place, prophets, princesses and even a gummy bear. We are determined to compile a literary magazine of our work in May, and the Congregation has graciously offered us a column in each issue of the Builder when we are ready. Keep your eyes out for fantastic writing from our teens. It's coming soon.

This group is open to 9th - 12th graders and meets every other Wednesday from 4:30-5:30 pm. If you would like to share a poem, fiction or non-fiction piece, please bring one no longer than five pages. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions!

SCRIBES OF BETH EL CALENDAR

**Meets every other Wednesday
from 4:30-5:30 pm**

February 1 • February 15 • February 29

March 14 • March 28

April 11 • April 25

YOUTH GROUP CALENDAR

February 12

Ruach Tu B'Shevat Party • 1:00 – 3:00 pm

March 4

Sababa Ski & Snowboard Trip
to Boreal • 6:00 am – 8:00 pm

Register online at www.bethelberkeley.org!

March 10

Ruach Purim Mystery • 2:00 – 4:00 pm

April 28

Sababa Amusement Park
Shabbat • 8:00 am – 6:00 pm

**Please remember Ruach is for 4th-5th Graders
and Sababa is for 6th-8th graders.**

L'Taken Social Justice Seminar

**Religious Action Committee Conference for 9th - 12th graders
April 20-23 in Sacramento - Registration is due by February 24th!**

Are you passionate about an issue? Do you want the opportunity to give a speech to your state representative on this issue? This weekend conference is for you. The weekend starts broad with learning on a range of issues from separation of church & state to LGBT issues to climate change to international relations. Then students pick a particular topic and write a persuasive and passionate speech to give to their state Senators and Assembly Members on the Monday of the program. All learning is interactive giving students the opportunities to really understand public policy and Reform Jewish values.

Please contact Rebecca DePalma at rebecca@bethelberkeley.org or 510-848-2122 ext. 214 for more information.

Let's Go Israel!

Trip Dates: June 19 - July 18, 2012

Pre-trip Retreat Dates: Friday, May 18 - Sunday, May 20, 2012

Let's Go: Israel is a teen trip run by the Jewish Federation of the East Bay for teens specifically from the Greater Bay Area. Your teen will join us for this life-changing, four-week experience, as we travel all around Israel, creating memoirs around every turn. Upon return from Israel, qualified Camp Kee Tov applicants who have been hired as counselors will help bring more Israeli knowledge and culture into everyday programming. Now you don't have to choose between Israel and Kee Tov... you can do both! Make summer 2012 one your teen will never forget, and send them to Israel. Let's go! Visit www.letsgoisrael.org for more information!

Beth El's New Website Launched

By Elisabeth Wechsler

The newly revamped Beth El website is up and running. It is designed to make it easier for members and prospective members to find the information they need, and simpler for the staff to update, according to Steve Kurzman, the volunteer member who steered the process from its beginnings last Spring to the launch in December. Check out the URL (bethelberkeley.org).

Steve emphasized that there were a number of people involved at each stage of the process, especially Norm Frankel and Lenora O'Keith on the Beth El side with planning. At the earliest stage of design, several Congregants and staff gave their feedback to the mocked up proposal. Aaron Gobler and Lisa Cain did the implementation of the design through their development company, Page Point. And at least half a dozen Congregants tested the website before it was released publicly.

The content is similar to the old website, but it's arranged in an easier-to-use way, Steve said, adding that "the updated organization and navigation of the site, plus the visual design, resulted in an overall improvement—hopefully."

To make it more inviting and useful for non-members to find out about Beth El's services and events, this information is placed on the Home Page and is more readable and user friendly than before. The Beth El staff has been trained to update the website as changes need to be made or information added. (The old website was written in HTML language and was much more difficult for a non-programmer to update.)

The next step is to enhance the content, something Rabbi Kahn has demonstrated unique skills in doing. "You have to write tersely and Rabbi Kahn is a good web writer," Steve said.

What Steve has enjoyed about working on Beth El's website is "the problem-solving aspect of design—making it easier for people to get something done." He likes the fact that "with the new website you can see the information you need more easily now." It's really the challenge of intellectual problem-solving combined with the visual creativity that made the experience a good one for him.

Steve and his partner of 17 years, Kim Nies, enjoy doing things with their two daughters, Lila (9) and Audrey (6), such as museum adventures, learning Alef-Bet together and hiking on Shabbat afternoons. They live in Oakland and both love the East Bay. Steve grew up in San Francisco and always wanted to stay in the area. Kim came from Los Angeles to attend UC Berkeley and then wanted to stay also.

Steve started out as a graphics designer and then got a Ph.D. in cultural anthropology from UC Santa Cruz. He ultimately decided to return to design. His specialty is user experience design and his "day job" is with Lexis Nexis, an information company.

Kim is also a user experience designer and works free lance.

BETH EL NURSERY SCHOOL FALL 2012 ENROLLMENT

We had a wonderful Parent Information Evening in January for prospective Nursery School families. We are currently completing observation visits to the classrooms for those who have applied for the 2012-2013 school year. In the beginning of February we will re-enroll our current, returning children for next year and begin the enrollment process for our Gan Katan applicants. Then we will offer enrollments to our new applicants for the remaining spaces in our Alef and Bet classes. We continue to offer enrollment until all of the Nursery School spaces are filled.

Current Trends in End-of-Life Choices

Sunday, April 29 • 10:00 am–12:00 pm at Beth El
Join us for a panel discussion on current trends in end-of-life choice, including the following issues:

- What is the Reform Jewish perspective on end-of-life choice for the terminally ill?
- What is the current legal framework for end-of-life choice in California?
- How can I prepare myself now to ensure my wishes are met at the end of my life?
- What are the legal medical options for terminal patients who want to hasten death?

Panel members include:

Moderator: Stewart Florsheim
Co-chair of the Board of Directors
of *Compassion and Choices*, Northern California

Rabbi Yoel Kahn
Senior Rabbi, Congregation Beth El

Robert Brody, M.D.
Clinical Professor of Medicine and Family &
Community Medicine at UCSF

For more information, please call
Ruth Ehrenkrantz at 510-559-3277.

Refreshments will be served.

Sponsors: Adult Education Committee,
Social Action Committee and Men's Club

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!

By Odette Blachman & Robinn Magid

Chanukah Bazaar 2011 is now just a memory, but we cannot forget all the wonderful people who made it such a success! Thank you to all our loyal customers who shopped at the bazaar, at the Movie Night the evening before it, and throughout our holiday season. Considering the recession, we did really well!

Our latke makers who grated, chopped and fried under Marc Davis' watchful eye were: Paul and Jacob Antoniadis, Alex and Ruben Bergtraun, Joel Blumenfeld and Arthur Swislocki. Our deli lunch was planned and executed in gourmet fashion by Evie Groch and Barbara Segal with help from Ruth Spear and servers, Adele Amodeo and Caroline Lehman. Our ever reliable cashier was Jerry Weintraub. Contributing home baked cookies were Joanne Backman, Lauren Ganes, Sandy Bacskai, Robin Wenrick, Nancy Lewin and Merle Fajans. Our coffee barristas were none other than our president, Dan Magid, assisted by Jim Offel. Thank you all for providing good food and drink!

Some of the same volunteers doubled as "shleppers" to move the merchandise into the social hall and back. In addition, Susan Camel, Jacob Amme, Jim, Ron and Miriam Blachman, Marilyn Schneck, Emily Marthinsen, Nancy Turak, Brian and Wendy Lukas, Susan Carter and Claire Ungar shared the load. Thank you!

Our busy cashiers were: Bob Goldstein, Anna Mantell, Barbara Blachman, Stan Schiffman, Bonnie and Max Cooperstein, Jan Frankel, and Betty Seaton. Barbara Schmidt, Shelley Halperin and Miriam Schiffman assisted with jewelry sales. Thank you all for working so hard!

A special thank you to Lori Perlstadt for publicity, and to Judy and Daniella Vared who shlepped from Walnut Creek to add their artistic touch to the displays. As usual, we relied upon Andy Ganes for backroom accounting. Thank you for all your invaluable help!

Some of the same dedicated volunteers tended the shop the week following the bazaar. They were: Barbara Segal, Nancy Turak, Claire Ungar, Miriam Schiffman and Merle Fajans. Our amazing office staff, Lenora and Juliet, assisted us in every way. Norm Frankel, executive director, worked hard behind the scenes, and our dedicated custodians expertly arranged all the props for the event. We think it was the easiest "set up and take down" in our 16 years of co-chairing the bazaar.

A big thank you to all you wonderful people! We may have this drill "down to a science," but we couldn't have done it without you!

CONGREGATION BETH EL WOULD LIKE TO GIVE A BIG THANK YOU TO ODETTE & ROBINN FOR ALL THAT YOU DO AND FOR MAKING THIS YEAR'S CHANUKAH BAZAAR A HUGE SUCCESS!

FROM THE PANTRY CHUG

The Book of Esther says Purim is "an occasion for sending gifts to one another and presents to the poor." (9:22). It is traditional to give Mishloach Manot, packages of hamentaschen and other little gifts.

Ruth Spear's favorite Hamentaschen Dough

(This is not the Sisterhood recipe, but give this alternative a try – it is tender and citrusy)

1 cup sugar	1 cup oil
3 eggs, beaten	the peel of one orange, grated
1/4 cup fresh orange juice	1/2 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons baking powder	4 cups flour

Cream sugar and oil, mix in orange juice and grated peel. Add salt, baking powder and flour. Mix all ingredients. Refrigerate dough for at least 1 to 2 hours. Roll out on a well-floured board. The dough will be soft and sticky. Cut into circles about 3 inches in diameter with a cookie cutter, a clean, empty can or a glass. Put one scant teaspoon of filling in the center of each circle, fold up the edges to form a triangle shape and crimp the edges with your fingers. Bake at 350° for 20 - 25 minutes. This recipe makes enough dough for one can of Solo brand filling. In my family prune and poppy seed fillings are traditional. I mix some lemon juice in with the canned prune filling. The recipe can be multiplied without any problems.

Robinn Magid's Caramel-Pecan Filling for Hamentaschen

3/4 cup sugar	1/4 cup water
2 cups chopped pecans	7 tablespoons butter or margarine
1/2 cup warm milk	1/4 cup honey

In a heavy saucepan, bring sugar and water to a boil. Boil until golden in color. Remove from heat. Add pecans, butter and milk. Return to heat, stirring constantly. Simmer for 10 minutes, or until thick. Remove from heat and stir in honey. Refrigerate until set. This will keep well in refrigerator for at least one week. Makes about 3 cups.



HAMENTASCHEN

makes 12-16

Save the Date!

BETH EL SHABBATON 5772

September 7-9, 2012 at Camp Newman

Watch for early bird registration and sign-ups via the e-update and website!



ANNUAL CAMPAIGN 5772 – THANK YOU!

We want to gratefully acknowledge our members who have already generously contributed to our annual appeal. On behalf of our congregational leadership, we want to thank each of you for your participation in and support for Beth El - for your involvement, for your ideas and energy, and for your commitment to the future of our synagogue. Our entire community appreciates your ongoing generosity.

Your gift to our 5772 Annual Fund enables us to provide the diversity and quality of programs we cherish, and will ensure that Beth El remains welcoming to all who wish to join us, even in the toughest of economic times.

Please join us in the mitzvah of tzedakah through your financial contribution and together we will meet our goals.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
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| Arthur & Carol Goldman | Nancy Lewin-Offel & Jim Offel | |

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!*

SUSAN AMDUR

Susan Amdur, now retired, has been a member since she was about 6 years old. "I remember asking my parents, 'I want to go to Sunday school.' Yes, I actually requested to attend!" she told *The Builder*. Susan lives in San Francisco, but has a house in Berkeley and is there frequently. Her mom used to live in the house on Hopkins Street.



JOSH & LINDSAY BURELL

The Burells moved to Berkeley from Seattle in April. Lindsay is from San Francisco originally, but had been away for 12 years. Josh and their four children (Violet 14, Madeleine 3, Mischa 2, and Efraim 7 months) are new to the Bay Area. What drew them to Beth

El was the sense of community and the openness of the congregation, as well as the desire to expose the kids to Jewish culture and tradition. "Our main interests include cooking and eating, music, family and the amazing friends that we have already made here in Berkeley," Lindsay said. Josh works as a regional manager for Urban Outfitters. Lindsay stays at home for now. The Burells look forward to getting more involved at Beth El and plan to join the Chug Mispachah next year (when at least two of their three babies will be old enough to benefit from it). They attend the Monday playgroup and love all of the Tot Services.



MARLENE GETZ & BOB GILDEN

Marlene Getz and Bob Gilden are both retired and live in Alameda. Marlene taught Nursery School and Hebrew School at Beth El for more than 30 years and Bob was a clinical psychologist for the Alameda county mental health department for three decades. Bob hails from Chicago and Marlene from Long Island. Almost three years ago Rabbi Kahn officiated at their Beth El wedding. Since their marriage, they

have traveled to Mexico and Europe and spent three months camping across country in their pop-up trailer. Together they also enjoy hiking, biking, gardening, photography, cooking and spending time with their children and granddaughters. Marlene enjoys continuing her connection with children at Beth El by telling stories at the Bet Class Shabbat. She will also work as a volunteer for the library and has signed up to be on the Beth El YAFE Education committee. If she has time, she would also like to sing in the Beth El chorus. Bob enjoys attending the weekly Shabbat Torah study group.

JIM GILBERT & SUSAN ORBUCH

Jim, Susan and their sons Benjamin and Aaron moved to Berkeley from Irvine, CA in August, where they were members of a Reconstructionist congregation. Although Jim and Susan both trained as urban planners and worked in that field for a number of years, they shifted to careers in technology about 10 years ago. Jim currently publishes a website called Curating Los Angeles (www.CuratingLA.com), which explores the people, places and culture of the greater LA region. Susan has held a variety of positions at Trend Micro, a cloud-era content security and threat management provider, and currently heads up corporate marketing. Since moving to Berkeley, Benjamin (11) and Aaron (9), started religious school at Beth El and are both enjoying the program. The Gilbert-Orbuch family loves to travel, explore cities, spend time outdoors, and play a variety of board games. They also are serious train hobbyists and look forward to getting back into that hobby as they settle into life in Berkeley.



KATHRYN LEVENSON

Kathryn Levenson moved to the Berkeley area from Cambridge, MA, in 1990 and went through a Conservative conversion a year later. She and her children, Max and Emily, joined Beth El earlier this year, and the children have enjoyed Camp Kee Tov and Hebrew School. Max had his Bar Mitzvah here two years ago, and Emily's Bat Mitzvah will be in about two years. Kathryn works for the Social Security Administration in Richmond. Before that, she taught science for 13 years and spent about 15 years before

that working in adventure travel and ecotourism. Kathryn's plans include finishing her second Masters in Library and Information Sciences combined with a Teachers Credential as a Library Media Specialist. Her first Masters was in Archaeology and she's teaching her second class on Egyptology for Emily's class at Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School. Kathryn also teaches sea kayaking for Cal Adventures and is helping to plan a kayaking trip for the King 6th graders. She has served as a volunteer for the Contra Costa Sheriff for over 10 years in Emergency Communications and Search and Rescue. This year Kathryn is the parent coordinator for Max's rugby team and one of the co-chairs for the Bay Area Harvard Interview Committee. She has been a Harvard interviewer every year since 1990. "It is a great opportunity to meet the best students in the area," she says.



JEFF SEIDMAN & ELISABETH WECHSLER

Jeff and Elisabeth joined Beth El in June. Although Berkeley residents for 14 years, they hadn't found the "right shul" before. Jeff is a software engineer and plays guitar in his spare time. He recently joined the Beth El Database Committee. Elisabeth is the new volunteer editor for *The Builder*. Together they attend Shabbat Torah study and she is active in the Homeless Meal, Pantry Chug, and the Marketing Communications Committee. Jeff is an avid

Cal football and professional baseball fan. They have no children but love their dog, Reggie. Their dreams include travel, wine and good food.

LOOK FOR MORE OF OUR NEW MEMBER BIO'S IN OUR NEXT ISSUE! WELCOME TO:

MICKEY ESTES & ORAWAN TECHACHOOCHORD

DANIELLA FORNEY

SCOTT & CHANISA HOMER

Laurie ISENBERG & MARTIN LAPLACA

BEA LIEBERMAN

DAVID & LEEAT LOUVTON

ABBY & PETER PLETCHER

ANNE & FRED ROSENTHAL

REBEKAH STERN & SEAN HOLCOMBE

FRANKLIN ZIMRING & MICHAL CRAWFORD-ZIMRING

B'NEI MITZVAH



The congregation is cordially invited to attend as our son, **Levi Bolton** is called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on Saturday, February 25, 2012 at 10:15am. Kiddush will follow.
Woody Bolton & Judy Wolff-Bolton



The congregation is cordially invited to attend as my daughter, **Nahla Sturm** is called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on Saturday, March 17, 2012 at 10:15am. Kiddush will follow.
Ilona Sturm



The congregation is cordially invited to attend as our son, **John Lombardi** is called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on Saturday, February 4, 2012 at 10:15am. Kiddush will follow.
Dante & Jennifer Lombardi



The congregation is cordially invited to attend as our son, **Isaac David Pyle** is called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on Saturday, March 10, 2012 at 10:15am. Kiddush will follow.
Walter Pyle & Frances Kaminer



The congregation is cordially invited to attend as our daughter, **Dylan Kurzer-Ogul** is called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on Saturday, March 24, 2012 at 10:15am. Kiddush will follow.
Michael Ogul & Amy Kurzer

OPEN LETTER TO BETH EL

(This letter is in to response to Stephen Rothman's article in the Winter 2011 issue.)

Dear Beth El,

I am writing to express my thanks to the Congregation, and especially to Rabbi Kahn, Norm Frankel and Wilma Rader, who were so instrumental in bringing the JCRC's "Year of Civil Discourse Project Reconnections" training to us this past year.

The focus of the training was to be able to discuss the Mideast conflict constructively and without the divisiveness that has split our community so painfully over the years.

My experience of the Civil Discourse training was profoundly positive. I not only got to know and respect the process of dialogue as opposed to debate, but also to know and respect everyone who participated, including, of course, our gifted teacher JCRC Rachel Eryn Kalish.

It was difficult for me at first to speak my heart about Israel and the conflict -- in fact, it was downright scary. I have been involved in heated disputes on that subject, some bitter enough to leave wounds. But Rachel Eryn created an atmosphere of safety, where each of the participants was encouraged to express ourselves as fully as we could, in large groups and small, with the understanding that the purpose of speaking was to be heard. Not necessarily agreed with, but heard. Very strong opinions were encouraged, from any and all perspectives, but we were trained

from the beginning to avoid attacks and name calling, including the assumptions and language of "left wing" "right wing," and "centrist" positions.

We used well-tested (but new to many of us) methods of compassionate listening, including mirroring (telling a person what we heard of both their feelings and values), what to do when triggered (if something is too upsetting for us to hear and prevent our listening), and "I statements." Best of all, we were conscious of the need to treat each other as "B'tselem Elohim," created in the divine image.

We came together month after month to practice these techniques while discussing our thoughts and feelings about something we all felt passionate about, but in different ways. The results were that we grew closer together and learned to trust each other and the processes we were applying, and yes, to hear each other. For me, the spiritual as well as psychological and social benefits of this were, and are, powerful.

Many of us are continuing the communication and the learning by participating in the newly revived Israel Committee at Beth El, formed as a direct result of our group confidence, trust, and skills. I feel the whole community will benefit as we go forward engaging in civil discourse on Israel and perhaps other areas of communal concern.

Sincerely,
Laurie Swiadon



ARJMAND ADULT EDUCATION FUND

Beverly & Richard Eigner
Leah Emdy
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Davis-Turak family *in memory of Romi Turak*
Harry & Marilyn Margulius *in memory of Clara Margulius*

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Nancy Turak & Marc Davis *in memory of Elaine Dodd-Huen*

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Laura Taub & David Kline
Sharon Caplow Todd
Fran Alexander *in memory of William & Dora Connolly*
Adele Amodeo *in memory of Irene Flander*
Backman-Pollack family *in celebration of Danny Scher's 60th birthday*
Backman-Pollack family *in celebration of Jennifer Schnider & Charlie Rockman's new baby girl, Lilith*
Backman-Pollack family *in memory of Hannah Scher*
Backman-Pollack family *in memory of Rabbi Avi Levine*
Backman-Pollack family *in memory of Bernard Sarnat*
Backman-Pollack family *in memory of Shirley Bernstein*
Peggy & Steve Bergh *in memory of Alan Buder*
Odette Blachman *in honor of Frances Alexander's birthday*
Angela Bothelo *in memory of Eva Kuttner*
Arlene Bradley *in honor of Max Cooperstein being called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah*
Janet & Micah Broude *in memory of Alan Buder*
Judy Chess *in honor of Beth Zeitman being called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah*
Susan Coan *in memory of Alan Buder*
Max & Bonnie Cooperstein *wishing Arthur Goldman a speedy recovery*
Max & Bonnie Cooperstein *in memory of Sarah Baker*
Allan & Nancy Dameshek *in memory of Alan Buder*
Michael Gansky *in honor of Max Cooperstein being called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah*
Nurit & David Garner *in memory of Johnny Garner*
Juliette Hassid *in memory of Sami Hassid*

Joan Hecht *in memory of Alan Buder*
Mark & Esther Hudes *in memory of Tauba Hudes*
Steven Joseph & Corey & Hansen-Joseph *in memory of Evelyn Postone*
Amy Joy *in memory of Hannah Schur*
Batyta Kalis *in honor of Mike Klayman's birthday*
Debbie & Jeff Leon *in memory of Alan Buder*
Debbie & Jeff Leon *in memory of Elaine Dodd-Heun*
Desmid Lyon *in memory of Maggie Sontag*
Margaret Molina-Hinkley *in memory of Rosemarie Turak*
Lenny & Holly Neimark *in memory of Leah Statman*
Miriam Rabinovitz *in honor of Jan Frankel's birthday*
Miriam Rabinovitz *in honor of Beth Zeitman being called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah*
Miriam Rabinovitz *in memory of Rose Rabinovitz*
Steven & Katherine Resnik *in memory of Selma Resnik*
Minnie Ruth *in memory of Rose Rutchke*
Stan & Miriam Schiffman *in appreciation of the donate button*
Paul & Susan Sugarman *in memory of Fanny Zacks*
Paul & Susan Sugarman *in memory of Elaine Dodd-Heun*
Paul & Susan Sugarman *in memory of Louis & Natalie Sugarman*
Claire Unger & George Lavender *in memory of Rabbi Avi Levine*
James Walker *in honor of Max Cooperstein being called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah*
John & Nilou Yadegar *in memory of Rabbi Avi Levine*
John & Nilou Yadegar *in memory of Jahangir Yadegar*
Karen & Joel Zeldin *in memory of Fae Dash*

HOMELESS MEAL PROGRAM

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Amy & David Tick
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Barbara Fierer & Bob Brandfon *in memory of Osna Fierer*
Vivian & Sandy Golden *in memory of Vernon Heyman*
Kathie & Ken Goode *in honor of Barry & Erica Goode*
Steve & Kate Goode *in honor of Barry & Erica Goode*
Jean Henderson *in memory of Robert & Marilyn Hemmings*
Jean Henderson *in memory of Joan Blacker*
Anna Mantell & Bob Goldstein *in memory of Warren Hellman*
Linda Marchena *in honor of Mike Klayman*
Herbert & Sondra Napell *in memory of Pauline Matkowsky*
Herbert & Sondra Napell *in memory of Kate Napell*
Miriam Rabinovitz *in honor of Jim & Marcia Emery*
Miriam Rabinovitz *in honor of Beth, Ethan & Emily Zeitman*
Miriam Rabinovitz *in honor of Phyllis Zisman*
Miriam Rabinovitz *in honor of Lloyd Morgan*

Miriam Rabinovitz *in honor of Rachel Eryn Kalish*
 Shonkoff Family *in honor of Ruth Spear for her commitment to such important work*
 David & Judith Tabb *in memory of I. Gerald Silverman*
 Nancy Turak & Marc Davis *in honor of Aaron Sanstad being called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah*
 Claire Unger & George Lavender *in honor of all the volunteers*
 Linda & Robert Walker *in memory of Elaine Dodd-Heun*
 Jerry Weintraub *in memory of Fannie Zacks*
 Jerry Weintraub *in memory of Cathryn Schrader*
 John & Nilou Yadegar *in memory of Rabbi Avi Levine*
 John & Nilou Yadegar *in memory of Jahangir Yadegar*
 Phyllis Zisman *in memory of Sheila Rose Amsterdam*

MARIAN MAGID FUND

Dan & Robinn Magid *in honor of Steve Kurzman in his work on our new website*

MITZVAH FUND

Bruce & Susan Carter *in honor of Ruth Ehrenkrantz*
 John & Nilou Yadegar *in memory of Rabbi Avi Levine*
 John & Nilou Yadegar *in memory of Jahangir Yadegar*

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 Nancy Gordon & Ken Kirsch *in honor of Danny Scher's 60th birthday*
 Claire Unger & George Lavender *in honor of Rabbi Reuben Zellman*
 Linda Walker *in memory of Fannie Zacks*

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Ann Manheimer & Arthur Swislocki *in memory of Pasquale Marinello*
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 Linda Walker *in memory of Fannie Zacks*
 John & Nilou Yadegar *in memory of Rabbi Avi Levine*
 John & Nilou Yadegar *in memory of Jahangir Yadegar*

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Ruth & Scott Spear *in memory of Willi Friedman*
 Ruth & Scott Spear *in memory of Fannie Zacks*

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Nancy Turak & Marc Davis *in honor of Adin Krebs-Oppenheimer being called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah*

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 Paul Steckel & Marlene Morris
 Paul & Susan Sugarman
 Jed Waldman
 Robin & Edward Wenrick
 Pearl Wolffs

YOUTH GROUPS

Nancy Turak & Marc Davis *in honor of Jaime Falcone-Juengert being called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah*

A SPECIAL THANK YOU!

To all of the many congregants who wrote beautiful letters, shared special memories and made donations in honor of Avi.

I cannot tell you how deeply moved I am by the outpouring of love, affection and respect that you have all shown for him.

My family, Yael, Tal, Tamar and I thank you for your kindness and your generosity.

Linda Levine

Finding a Key to Her Practice

By Elisabeth Wechsler



Where do you find a locksmith getting her Bat Mitzvah? At Beth El, of course, on Saturday, January 21.

Julie Pledger was one of four bar/bat mitzvah candidates that morning (the others were Max Cooperstein, Lisa Feldman and Beth Zeitman). For her *d'rash* she discussed the Patrilineal Descent Resolution passed by the Union for Reform

Judaism in 1983. (This ruling established that a child is born Jewish from either a Jewish mother or a Jewish father, expanding the long-established rule that a child was born Jewish only from a Jewish mother.)

To prepare for Parashat Vaera (the Plagues), Julie and her group took Rabbi Zellman's trope class, and then divided up sections of the parashat.

In the meantime besides running Velocity Lock & Key in El Cerrito with her husband, Eddie, Julie is chair of the Youth and Family Education Committee and heads the Shabbaton Committee, plus helps raise their two boys, Kai (8) and Quin (4).

The Pledgers have been members of Beth El about 4 ½ years, arriving about the same time as Rabbi Kahn. Quin is enrolled in pre-school at Beth El and Kai has been attending Camp Kee Tov since kindergarten. Kai is also in religious school. As a family they attend Chug Mischpachah on Shabbat mornings. Julie is also involved in helping to match new Beth El families with ones of longer standing (called the Ambassador Program).

"The education is at an amazing level at Beth El, with even more going on after one's bar/bar mitzvah," Julie said, attributing this to the arrival of Debra Sagan Massey, the Director of Education at Beth El. "Before we had her wonderful ideas and suggestions for programs, the committee had to work a lot harder!"

As head of the Shabbaton committee, Julie is interested in getting some additional members involved who have more of an "empty nester" perspective "to ensure that the Shabbaton addresses their preferences for that weekend as well as for families with kids." This year the Shabbaton will be September 7-9 at Camp Newman.

So how did Julie become a locksmith? After growing up in the Berkeley area near a corner locksmith shop, Julie had been fascinated by mechanical things. When she was 20 she wondered how to get into the field of locksmithing and enrolled at Golden Gate School of Lock Technology. Then she apprenticed for two years in Alameda and at a shop in Berkeley for eight years. She met her husband there and together they "learned locksmithing mostly on the job."

Being a Research Assistant and Listening

By Elisabeth Wechsler

"A bar or bat mitzvah is a family event and the Morei Derech (guide) program inserts a member of the Congregation into the process to make it more of a Congregational or community event," said Scott Spear, a Beth El volunteer who has informally mentored five students in the past.

The program is now more formalized but still matches volunteers with bar/bat mitzvah candidates to help them through the preparation process.

"One of the most important aspects to helping a candidate is to be a research assistant. There's a lot to draw upon to prepare for the bar/bat mitzvah and that's what I do mostly," Scott explained. Also, if the candidate has anxieties "just being there helps them get over it."

"The whole family is anxious and having a member of the Congregation involved helps the whole family," he said. In the past, Scott said that some of the kids had small problems with the process. "Some are stuck and just need to hear something that made him or her laugh that solved the problem."

Scott is a semi-retired criminal defense attorney and runs a program for young adults on probation. "I don't get paid for it," he said, but added that he is always there (in court) when progress reports are given.

What originally led him to take on the job of mentoring, he said, was that "each candidate is a unique human being with his or her own take on things. I like to see them thinking and talking."

His most recent student was Eli Lee, whom he described as a "fabulous kid," and who had his Bar Mitzvah at Beth El on December 3.

The rabbi helps the candidates on what the *d'rash* is based by asking for questions each bar or bat mitzvah candidate has about their parashat. "Sometimes my role is just to remind the students to complete their questions for the rabbi. Other times, they may just need a few words of encouragement."

"It's mostly just a matter of listening," Scott said, summing up the experience.

TORAH STUDY

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

February 4, 2012

Parshat Beshalach - Exodus 13:17-17:16
Led by Neil Levy

February 11, 2012

Parashat Yitro - Exodus 18:1-20:23
Led by Rabbi Yoel Kahn

February 18, 2012

Parashat Mishpatim - Exodus 21:1-24:18
Led by Alisa Einwohner

February 25, 2012

Parashat Terumah - Exodus 25:1-27:19
Led by Stu Berman

March 3, 2012

Parashat Tetzaveh - Exodus 27:20-30:10
Led by David Kesler

March 10, 2012

Parashat Ki Tisa - Exodus 30:11-34:35
Led by Laurie Juengert

March 17, 2012

Parashat Vayakhel-Pekudei - Exodus 35:1-40:38
Led by Florence Lewis

March 24, 2012

Parashat Vayikra - Leviticus 1:1-5:26
Led by Jerry Weintraub

March 31, 2012

Parashat Tzav - Leviticus 6:1-8:36
Led by Rabbi Yoel Khan

April 7, 2012

Pesach - 1st day
Exodus 12:21-12:51/ Numbers 28:16-28:25
Led by Scott Spear

April 14, 2012

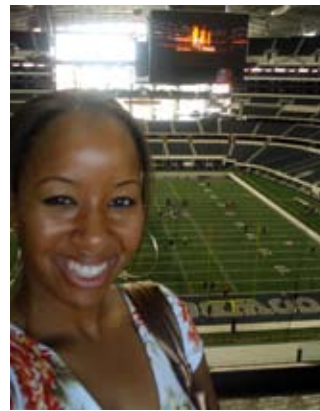
Pesach - Last day - Song of Songs
Led by Sara Sarasohn

April 21, 2012

Parashat Shmini - Leviticus 9:1-11:47
Led by Rabbi Reuben Zellman

April 28, 2012

Parashat Tazria-Metzora - Leviticus 12:1-15:33
Led by Bruce Linton



Cowboys Stadium -
October 2011

IT'S BEEN A BLAST!!!

As some of you know, I have decided to move to Dallas, TX. I'm super excited for the changes to come, but very sad to be leaving Beth El. (My last day is February 14.) I truly do love it here and have met some of the most amazing people. Some of you have been asking, "Why Dallas?" The truth is, I've lived in California my entire life and I just want to do something different

before I hit the big 3-0 in October! (I'm getting old, I know!) I've always loved the state of Texas and am a huge Cowboys fan, so Dallas seemed like the natural choice for me to start the next phase of my life. While I am super excited to never have to miss another Cowboys game on TV, go line dancing on a weekly basis and eat awesome BBQ, I'm definitely going to miss you all and seeing your smiling faces walk through the door.

Someone once said to me, "People come into your life for a reason, a season or a lifetime." I truly believe I have made lifetime friends here and hopefully can keep in touch with as many of you as possible. Feel free to shoot me an email, add me on Facebook or if you're ever in Big D, give me a call! Thanks for all the laughs and good times during the past 4½ years.

Lenora O'Keith

Administrative & Communications Coordinator

lenora.okeith@gmail.com - facebook.com/lenora

THE 10TH ANNUAL

Supper & Schmooze DINNERS

(formerly called *Lichvod Hatzibur Dinners*)

Saturday, March 24 • 6:00 pm

We're looking forward to a great congregational turnout this year!

Come join us for a wonderful intimate home-cooked meal at the homes of our fellow congregants after enjoying appetizers and music with Isaac Zones at Beth El!

This is a great way to get out for an evening and get to know a small grouping of your fellow Beth El'ers and in the process draw our community together.

This event starts at Beth El with Havdalah and appetizers, then off to the various homes for supper...and schmooze!

Childcare will be available at Beth El during the dinner.



WHAT TEENS LIKE MOST

Diane Bernbaum - Director

Have you ever wanted to get inside the head of a teenager? We have. The Midrasha in Berkeley Board asked me to do a survey of the students to find out what kind of classes they liked the most. Then I gave the results of the survey to the faculty and asked them to keep

those thoughts in mind while designing their classes for the spring semester. So..... what did they come up with?

Far and above any other subject was "food / cooking." (I know, no surprise here.) So Anna Martin designed "Top (Jewish) chef." Each week they will learn about a variety of cooking techniques, ingredients and dishes from around the Jewish world. In a similar class in the fall Anna introduced the seven Biblical species: pomegranate, dates, olives, wheat, barley, grapes and figs, and asked the class to come up with dishes based only on those ingredients. Boy were they yummy.

The second most asked-for category was art. Next semester's classes will include three art classes with Erica Fink: In one she will look at various stories in the Tanach as well as the work of a variety of Jewish artists and then use the techniques employed by those artists to illustrate the Biblical stories. In a second she will use both the meditative and functional qualities of clay to explore tactile facets of Judaism, from, sculpting heads of Jewish figures to perhaps making a set of Shabbat dinnerware. In a third class Erica will make Jewish sacred objects, everything from painted silk challah covers to students' own decorations to make Jewish holiday experiences more festive. Day Schildkret will continue his Project Runway: Jew-Edition from last semester. Lest you have an incredulous look on your face right now after reading that title, you might like to know that last semester's challenges were 1) to

make clothing based on the idea of "tshuvah/return" for Rosh Hashanah, "shelter" for Sukkot and students then designed a "tallit for the year 2112". And Anna Martin's "The Jewish art of Amulet Making" will combine art with a historic study and text study as well.

Next on the list of most-asked for classes were teen issues and relationships, so Beth Midanik-Blum will continue her popular class in "Relationships." Students see what Judaism says about such topics as dating, marriage, interfaith relationships, abortion and the ethics of relationships, both sexual and not. And Noemi Hollander will teach "The Jewish Body" helping teens form their self-image and a respectful relationship with their physical and sexual selves. They will discuss things such as clothing, sexuality and the prohibition against tattoos, all the time using the Tanach as a guide.

The next request in topics was for music, so Ilan Persing is teaching how to incorporate Jewish themes into songwriting. Since science fiction and fantasy were high on the list as well as video-watching, Sacha Kopin is teaching an old favorite, "Theology Through Film," where she takes Hollywood films and uses them as a springboard to discuss God. And because "physical movement" was also a request, Sacha will also teach Israeli dance and Ilan Persing will do a class on Jewish improv. Students let us know that they like their Hebrew, Talmud and meditation classes so of course those will continue too.

We always get a fair number of new students to enroll at Midrasha starting in January. If you know anyone who would love these new elective classes, send them in our direction. Details can be found on our website: www.midrasha.org.

YOM HASHOAH

Community Yom HaShoah Observance

Wednesday April, 18 • 7:00 pm

Congregation Beth El will host the Berkeley Jewish community's annual commemoration of Yom Ha-Shoah, Holocaust Memorial Day. The somber program will include song, reflection, testimonials and prayer. Our guest speaker this year will be Yaa'kov Harari, a Holocaust survivor, long-time Berkeley resident and member of Congregation Beth Israel. The Beth El Men's Club has arranged for Mr Harari to speak at Beth El and tell his story as part of our commemoration of the Holocaust. *Our annual service is jointly organized Congregations Beth El, Netivot Shalom and Beth Israel and is co-sponsored by the Jewish Community Federation of the East Bay.*

The Courage to Remember Exhibit

Monday, April 16 to Monday, April 30

Congregation Beth El will host the Simon Wiesenthal Center's Museum of Tolerance traveling exhibit, **The Courage to Remember**, this April. The exhibit will be on display in the Beth El Gallery and Social Hall from April 16 to April 30, and will be a feature of the community-wide Yom Ha Shoah service at Beth El on the evening of April 18. This powerful 40-panel visual narrative created by The Wiesenthal Center, is a powerful and comprehensive educational tool which can be used as the centerpiece for special events, and as a visual curriculum for educators.

February 2012 / Shevat-Adar 5772

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
NS - Nursery School YAFE - Youth and Family Education			1 4:30p Scribes of Beth El 6:00p Finance Committee 6:30p Lehrhaus/ Beg. Modern Hebrew 7:30p Midrasha Board Meeting 7:45p Lehrhaus/ Int. Modern Hebrew	2 6:00p 5th Grade B'nei Mitzvah Date Selection Meeting 7:00p Israel Committee 7:30p Ritual Committee	3 5:30 NS Potluck Dinner 6:00p Chorus Rehearsals 6:15p NS Shabbat 7:00p Liberation & Song Shabbat Dinner 8:00p Liberation & Song Shabbat Service	4 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service Bar Mitzvah - John Lombardi 3:30p Tu B'Shevat Program 6:00p Family Music Program
5 10:30a Teen Visioning Task Force	6	7 EREV TU B'SHEVAT 7:00p Seder on the Farm at Urban Adamah	8 TU B'SHEVAT 6:30p Tu B'Shevat Seder 6:30p Lehrhaus/ Beg. Modern Hebrew 7:45p Lehrhaus/ Int. Modern Hebrew	9 12:00p Lunch & Learn Series 5:30p Tu B'Shevat Family Celebration 7:00p Youth Committee	10 5:30p Shabbat Unplugged Dinner 6:15p Shabbat Unplugged Service	11 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service
12 10:00a Roots & Branches 1:00p Ruach Tu B'Shevat Party 6th/7th Grade Mitzvah Corps	13	14 7:00p Adult Edu. Committee 7:30p Executive Committee	15 NS CLOSED 4:30p Scribes of Beth El 6:30p Lehrhaus/ Beg. Modern Hebrew 7:30p Ma Tovv Campaign 7:45p Lehrhaus/ Int. Modern Hebrew	16 6:00p Sababa Meeting 7:00p Adult Edu. - Jewish Book Group	17 6:15p Yismechu: Shabbat Evening Chanting Service	18 CHUG MISHPACHAH CLOSED 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service
19 2:00p Homeless Meal Medical Clinic 5:00p Homeless Meal	20 PRESIDENT'S DAY Offices & Schools CLOSED	21 KADIMA CLOSED 7:00p Program Council	22 NO PARENT/CHILD HEBREW 6:30p Lehrhaus/ Beg. Modern Hebrew 7:45p Lehrhaus/ Int. Modern Hebrew	23 KADIMA CLOSED	24 6:15p Shabbat Evening Service	25 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service Bar Mitzvah - Levi Bolton
26 9:00a Pantry Chug 10:00a Roots & Branches	27	28 7:00p Board Meeting	29 4:30p Scribes of Beth El 6:30p Lehrhaus/ Beg. Modern Hebrew 7:30p Ma Tovv Campaign 7:30p Midrasha Board Meeting 7:45p Lehrhaus/ Int. Modern Hebrew			

Donations to the Aaron Plishner and Rabbi George Vida Funds make it possible to buy new children's and adult's books. Here are some recently added adult books:

The Szyk Haggadah was created by the artist Arthur Szyk in the mid-1930's, offering the Jews of Europe a vision of hope in a dark time. Eleanor Roosevelt called him a "one-man army" against fascism. This beautiful book's text is translated with commentary by Rabbi Byron Sherwin, noted scholar, and Rabbi Irvin Ungar of the Bay Area.

Last Folio: Textures of Jewish Life in Slovakia, by Yuri Doje and Katya Kransova, is a photographic and literary revealing of the remnants of Jewish life in Slovakia. The many photos are stunning, of ruined synagogues, books, tefillin, Torah scrolls, mikvahs, and Holocaust survivors.

Jewish Art: A Modern History, by Samantha Baskind and Larry Silver, is called by Sander Gilman "a readable survey, a concise overview, and a theoretical critique," offering a history of the social and personal conditions which generated art reflecting on Jewishness. Well illustrated.

The Numbers volume of *Miqra'ot Gedolot*, or "The Commentators Bible," translated by Michael Carasik, has joined the Exodus and Leviticus volumes in the Torah Study section. (The Genesis and Deuteronomy volumes are still being translated.) Here, on each page, two or three verses of Torah are surrounded by the

comments of the great medieval commentators. This work was a *vade mecum* for eastern European rabbis 500 years ago.

In *Physician of the Soul, Healer of the Cosmos: Isaac Luria and His Kabbalistic Fellowship*, Lawrence Fine tells the history of the creator of Lurianic Kabbalah and his fellow mystics in 16th century Safed. Luria, who died in 1572, greatly reformulated Kabbalah, and he and his fellows (one of whom, Shlomo Alkabetz, wrote "Lecha Dodi") had a profound effect upon Judaism. Luria was and is called "The Lion," which, in Hebrew, is on a sign over his tomb in Safed.

Another rabbi also called "The Lion" was Leon Modena, whose history is recounted by Yaacob Dweck in *The Scandal of Kabbalah: Leon Modena, Jewish Mysticism, Early Modern Venice*. Rabbi Modena in 1639, in a book titled "Ari Nohem" (The Roaring Lion) launched an attack upon Kabbalah, especially that of Luria, in a Jewish society saturated with Kabbalah. Modena's attack upon Kabbalah was based on a critical attitude toward sacred texts and their origins, a skepticism about received wisdom and doctrine, an acute awareness of the difference between the Jewish past and the present, and upon Maimonidean rationalism.

Portrait of American Jews: The last Half of the 20th Century, by Samuel Heilman, a renowned sociologist who studies his own people, was his Stroum Lectures at the University of Washington. The book is part of an ongoing stock taking on what it means and has meant to be an American Jew.

From Camp to Enriched Volunteer

By Elisabeth Wechsler



Talk about busy. Everyone must know Lisa Feldman because she seems to be almost everywhere at once.

As Recording Secretary for the Beth El board, she brings her expertise in strategic planning and finance from her professional work as Executive Director of the Career Management group at Haas School of Business. Lisa manages 22 people at Haas, and this is her 10th school year there.

Her group coordinates services for current Masters of Business Administration (MBA) students, MBA alumni, and employers.

One of her first assignments at Beth El was being selected for the Strategic Planning Committee, which released its report last Fall. Certainly, her experience at Haas prepared her. "That's a large part of what I do at Haas and what I've done in my career," she said.

She loves both jobs, especially working on membership and finance at Beth El. "The first time I was at Beth El I fell in love with it," Lisa said of a High Holidays visit in 2006. Years later, she returned for another Rosh Hashanah service and heard Rabbi Kahn speak. "There was something in his voice that was so welcoming and inclusive, and Beth El seemed to be a place where I could belong."

Her background included a lot of UC Berkeley Hillel experience (even after getting her MBA from Haas) and a childhood Reform synagogue in the Cleveland area, where her experience was "dry." Camp Wise, a Jewish overnight camp outside of Cleveland, made up for that, she said. "It was a sense of community and history that I didn't get from my temple."

Lisa's other involvement at Beth El includes the Ritual Committee, the Morei Derech program (mentoring a Bar or Bat Mitzvah student), leading three Torah Study sessions so far, and most recently her own Bat Mitzvah (held on January 21st as part of the Adult B'nai Mitzvah program). She has also taken leadership of the Mitzvah corps, the group on call to provide meals, companionship, or rides for members in need. Lisa particularly enjoys attending Shabbat Morning services and signs up for every class given by Rabbi Kahn or Rabbi Zellman "because there is so much to learn in every service and in every season."

In the Morei Derech program, (see related article on page 16) Lisa was matched with Michelle Schiff (whose Bat Mitzvah was held on May 26). "I got to know Michelle very well. We talked through the issues that she wanted to elevate in her d'rash on Parashat B'Har, which is about the Sabbatical and Jubilee years. Because Michelle is an artistic person we made posters out of six of her drawings, which highlighted ways in which she felt we should take care of the planet and showed them during the service."

March 2011 / Adar-Nisan 5772

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
NS - Nursery School YAFE - Youth and Family Education				1 5:30p 5th Grade Home for Dinner 6:00p Sababa Ski Trip Information Meeting 7:00p Israel Committee 7:30p Ritual Committee	2 8:00p Men's Club Shabbat	3 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service 10:15a 6th Grade Shabbat Service
4 6:30a Sababa Ski Trip 2:00p Purim Carnival at the JCC	5	6 7:30p Shabbaton Committee	7 EREV PURIM	8 PURIM 12:00p Lunch & Learn Series 4:00p Purim Family Celebration 6:00p Marketing Committee	9 6:15p Shabbat Evening Service	10 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service Bar Mitzvah - Isaac David Pyle 1:00p Ruach Purim Mystery 1:00p Nov/Dec/Jan 2012 B'nei Mitzvah Initial Family Meeting
11 10:00a Roots & Branches 3:30p Ma Tovv Campaign	12	13 7:00p Nursery School Committee 7:00p Adult Edu. Committee 7:30p Executive Committee	14 4:30p Scribes of Beth El 6:30p Lehrhaus/ Beg. Modern Hebrew 7:45p Lehrhaus/ Int. Modern Hebrew	15 6:00p Sababa Meeting 7:00p Adult Edu. - Jewish Book Group 8:00p YAFE Education Committee	16 6:15p Yismechu: Shabbat Evening Chanting Service 7:15p Shema at Beth El - Listening Campaign Report	17 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service Bat Mitzvah - Nahla Sturm
18 10:00a Freedom Fest at the JCC 10:00a Roots & Branches 2:00p Homeless Meal Medical Clinic 5:00p Homeless Meal	19	20 6:00p Madrichim Training 7:00p Program Council	21 6:30p Lehrhaus/ Beg. Modern Hebrew 7:30p Ma Tovv Campaign 7:45p Lehrhaus/ Int. Modern Hebrew	22	23 5:30p Shabbat Unplugged Dinner 6:15p Shabbat Unplugged Service	24 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service Bat Mitzvah - Dylan Kurzer-Ogul 6:00p Supper & Schmooze
25 10:00a Roots & Branches	26	27 7:00p Board Meeting	28 4:30p Scribes of Beth El 6:30p Lehrhaus/ Beg. Modern Hebrew 7:30p Midrasha Board Meeting 7:45p Lehrhaus/ Int. Modern Hebrew	29	30 6:15p Shabbat Evening Service	31 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service

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 recovery from an 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.

CONGREGATION BETH EL Fund Contributions

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Advertise in the Builder!

Email builder@bethelberkeley.org
for more information.

**Would you like to Submit an Article
on a Topic of Interest to The Builder?**

The next deadline is Monday, April 2.
For more information, please contact
Elisabeth Wechsler, editor (builder@bethelberkeley.org).
Please keep word count to 500.

April 2012 / Nisan-Iyar 5772

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:00a Roots & Branches	2	3 KADIMA CLOSED	4 NO PARENT/CHILD HEBREW 6:30p Lehrhaus/ Beg. Modern Hebrew 7:45p Lehrhaus/ Int. Modern Hebrew	5 KADIMA CLOSED 7:00p Israel Committee 7:30p Ritual Committee	6 EREV PESACH NS CLOSED Office Early Closing	7 1st DAY OF PESACH CHUG MISHPACHAH CLOSED 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service 6:00p 2nd Night Community Seder
8 2nd DAY OF PESACH 4:30p Lehrhaus/ Int. Prayerbook Hebrew 6:00p Lehrhaus/ Adv. Biblical Hebrew	9 3rd DAY OF PESACH	10 4th DAY OF PESACH 7:00p Nursery School Committee 7:00p Adult Edu. Committee 7:30p Executive Committee	11 5th DAY OF PESACH 4:30p Scribes of Beth El 6:30p Lehrhaus/ Beg. Modern Hebrew 7:45p Lehrhaus/ Int. Modern Hebrew	12 6th DAY OF PESACH 12:00p Lunch & Learn Series	13 7th DAY OF PESACH Offices & Schools CLOSED	14 LAST DAY OF PESACH 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service 11:00a Shabba-Tot Service
15 2:00p Homeless Meal Medical Clinic 4:30p Lehrhaus/ Int. Prayerbook Hebrew 5:00p Homeless Meal 6:00p Lehrhaus/ Adv. Biblical Hebrew 7:00p Adult Edu. - Jewish Joke Night	16	17 7:00p Men's Club Speaker - Yom Hashoah 7:00p Program Council	18 EREV YOM HASHOAH 6:30p Lehrhaus/ Beg. Modern Hebrew 7:00p Yom HaShoah Program 7:45p Lehrhaus/ Int. Modern Hebrew	19 YOM HASHOAH 7:00p Adult Edu. - Jewish Book Group	20 6:15p Yismechu: Shabbat Evening Chanting Service April 20-23 High School L'Taken Social Justice Seminar (see p. 8)	21 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 9:30a YAFE Open House (for Prospective Families) 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service
22 4:30p Lehrhaus/ Int. Prayerbook Hebrew 6:00p Lehrhaus/ Adv. Biblical Hebrew 7:00p Adult Edu. - Amos Oz Film & Discussion	23	24 5:30p 5th Grade Home for Dinner 7:00p Board Meeting	25 EREV YOM HAATZMAUT 4:30p Scribes of Beth El 6:30p Lehrhaus/ Beg. Modern Hebrew 7:45p Lehrhaus/ Int. Modern Hebrew	26 YOM HAATZMAUT 4:00p Yom Ha'atzmaut Celebration	27 5:30p Shabbat at Home 6:15p Shabbat Evening Service	28 8:30a Early Minyan 9:15a Torah Study 10:15a Shabbat Morning Service
29 4:00p Aviva Zornberg Lecture 4:30p Lehrhaus/ Int. Prayerbook Hebrew 6:00p Lehrhaus/ Adv. Biblical Hebrew	30					NS - Nursery School YAFE - Youth and Family Education



CONGREGATION BETH EL

1301 Oxford Street

Berkeley, CA 94709-1424

CELEBRATE TU B'SHEVAT AT BETH EL!

On Tu B'Shevat we celebrate a New Year for the Trees, rejoicing in the fruit of the tree and the fruit of the vine, celebrating the gifts of the natural world which delight our senses and give life to our bodies.

TU B'SHEVAT INTER-GENERATIONAL CELEBRATION

Saturday, February 4 • 3:30-5:30 pm

followed by a vegetarian potluck dinner and Jonathan Bayer Concert at 6:00 pm!

Come get ready for the birthday of the trees! Tu B'Shevat celebrates Judaism's connection to nature, and at Beth El we will offer several activities for adults and children. Learn from Beth El members how to make pickles, candied citrus peel and more. RSVP to debra@bethelberkeley.org to ensure supplies/seating. This program will occur during our Shabbat Family School, so all families from Chug Mishpachah will be participating in this celebration.

TU B'SHEVAT SEDER ON THE FARM

Tuesday, February 7 • 7:00-9:15 pm at Urban Adamah Farm - 1050 Parker Street in Berkeley

Join Beth El and Urban Adamah for a Tu B'Shevat Seder on the Farm through stories, songs, blessings and great local food! Register at: www.urbanadamah.org/tubshvat/

TU B'SHEVAT SEDER DINNER

Wednesday, February 8 • 6:30 pm

Join Rabbis Kahn and Zellman for a celebration of fruit, transformation, growth and spirit—in ourselves and in our world—at a Tu B'Shevat seder. Our seder will include readings about trees and fruit from a range of Jewish literature.

Tu B'Shevat marks the beginning of spring in the Land of Israel. Sustaining rains are at the peak of their power and the world responds, brimming with buds of fragrant life. For Jews outside of Israel, Tu B'Shevat is a celebration of the renewal of vision and awareness, a celebration of connections and connectedness—to our own inner-selves, to the social world of human beings, and to the natural world and its Source. **RSVP by February 3 at www.bethelberkeley.org.** Dinner is \$18/adult; \$10/child. Free childcare is available by reservation.

TU B'SHEVAT CARNIVAL IN THE SOCIAL HALL

Thursday, February 9 • 5:30-6:30 pm

Come learn about the holiday of Tu B'Shevat in an activity for parents and kids. Together, we will experience activities that help us better understand the connection between Judaism and the earth.

No need to sign up...everyone is welcome!

