



BETH CHAIM CONGREGATION
Celebrating Spiritual Community Since 1978

THE STAR

VOLUME 44 | ISSUE 4 | JULY/AUGUST 2022 | TAMUZ/AV/ELUL 5782



Tisha b'Av

from Tragedy to Love

Tu b'Av

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NOTE: The STAR is currently only available in digital format.

The Digital Color Edition of The Star is available online. To view/download The Star and enjoy the benefits of hyperlinks, go to the Beth Chaim website: <https://www.bethchaim.com/news/beth-chaim-star>.

You can also find the link to the Digital Color edition on our Members Only Facebook page and in the weekly Happenings.

On the Cover:

Images of our Beth Chaim stained glass windows above the sanctuary doors to the patio.
The Hebrew letters for *Ahava* – Love. Designed by artist member **Jessica Kolis**.

Follow us on Social Media:



STAFF

ADMINISTRATIVE

MAIN

NUMBER: 925-736-7146

Rabbi | Rabbi Dan Goldblatt | rabbidan@bethchaim.com

Principal of Religious School | Shelby Margolin |

educator@bethchaim.com

Religious School Admin | Alex Lofrese |

schooladmin@bethchaim.com

Office Admin | Heidi Benson Stagg |

admin@bethchaim.com

Bookkeeper | Neela Arumugham |

bookkeeper@bethchaim.com

EDITORIAL

Director of Marketing & Communications | Rae Corr |

raecorr@sbcglobal.net

Editor-in-Chief | Deborah Wechsler |

debwex52@yahoo.com

Copy Editor | Heidi Benson Stagg |

admin@bethchaim.com

Advertising | Neela Arumugham |

bookkeeper@bethchaim.com

Happenings | Heidi Benson Stagg |

admin@bethchaim.com

Our Mission

At Beth Chaim Congregation, we are reimagining how we experience and celebrate Judaism, and how we are a source of belonging that enriches and uplifts the lives of our members. Our approachable, flexible worship, grounded in tradition yet modernized, embraces spirituality and soulful Jewish practice.

- We welcome with warmth all who seek a connection to Jewish life regardless of their religious beliefs and experiences. We **embrace Jews of all backgrounds** as well as those new to Judaism **and interfaith relationships** and meet our congregants wherever they are on their **Jewish journey**.
- We are your Jewish **community** in the East Bay. We celebrate your simchas, and we are there with chesed in your times of need. We are your people, your community, a place to belong.
- Our **Sisterhood, Brotherhood, youth opportunities, and events** for all can fill your Jewish soul.
- **We learn.** Our Tree of Life preschool, Beit Midrash, B'Nei Mitzvah program and adult education opportunities provide lifelong enrichment of your Jewish experience.

We are a **tranquil place of togetherness** and Jewish spirituality in the beautiful Danville hills.

Are you, or someone you know, being abused?

If you need help, please contact:

SHALOM BAYIT HELP HOTLINE AND CONTACT INFORMATION

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Toll-Free within the Bay Area

(510) 845-7233 (SAFE) outside the Bay Area

(650) 574-7233 (SAFE) Peninsula office

For questions or support, contact:

Shalom Bayit

(510) 845-8874

communities@shalom-bayit.org



COMING SOON! Events not to miss in July & August

Mark your calendar for these upcoming events. **Check the weekly Happenings and [Beth Chaim website](#) for details, to RSVP, and for updates or changes.** Also visit our website for a full listing of [Worship Services](#).

Date	Event	Day	Time	Where
JULY 7	Sisterhood Monthly Walking Group	Thursday	9:30 AM	Lunardi's Parking Lot
JULY 13	Sisterhood Ladies Who Lunch	Wednesday	12:00 PM	Piatti's
JULY 16	Brotherhood Bocce Ball Night	Saturday	7:00 PM	Sycamore Valley Park
JULY 19	Brotherhood Lunch	Tuesday	12:00 PM	Fat Maddie's, Blackhawk
JULY 19	Sisterhood Book Club	Tuesday	7:00 PM	
AUG 2	Sisterhood Rosh Chodesh Av Gathering	Tuesday	7:00 PM	BCC
AUG 4	Sisterhood Monthly Walking Group	Thursday	9:30 AM	Lunardi's Parking Lot
AUG 6	Arielle Benaroya Bat Mitzvah	Saturday	10:00 AM	BCC
AUG 13	Graham Hertz Bar Mitzvah	Saturday	10:00 AM	BCC
AUG 16	Sisterhood Book Club	Tuesday	7:00 PM	
AUG 19	Brotherhood Summer Getaway through August 21	Friday - Sunday		Placerville

ONGOING WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Brotherhood Hiking Group	Wednesdays	8:30 AM	
Mah Jongg	Fridays	1:00 PM	Virtual
Torah Study			Resuming October

Looking for more activities? [CCJCC Under One Tent](#) offers a calendar of offerings in the East Bay area. Click on the image for details.



The ever-popular Beth Chaim Brotherhood Dessert and Bocce Ball Night is back!

Beth Chaim members and their spouses, partners/significant others are welcome.

Saturday, July 16, from 7:00 - 10:00 pm. Sycamore Valley Park Bocce Courts – across Holbrook from Beth Chaim
BYOB (no hard liquor). Bocce is an Italian game, so wine always helps. Adults over 21 only.

Brotherhood will provide dessert and bottled water. No glass drinking vessels, please. Cups will be provided.



EDITOR'S NOTE

By Deborah Wechsler, editor, Beth Chaim Star Newsletter

This edition of the Star exemplifies our goal to commemorate and communicate what our members have done and are doing to bring us together as a community. We include articles about our successful fundraiser and community engagement "Welcome Home!" celebration as well as articles about our Beit Midrash and other social activities.

The Jewish months of Tamuz, Av and Elul do not host many holidays, and are often considered a rest and preparation time before the High Holy Days. The month of Av does bring us two lesser-known holidays: Tisha b'Av and Tu b'Av. These two holidays contrast tragedy and mourning with the joy of love. Tisha b'Av marks the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. Tu b'Av is sometimes known as the Jewish Valentine's Day, when women dress in white and dance in the fields, celebrating joy with the goal of perhaps finding a partner. We can reflect in our current lives how tragedy combines with love to provide a spectrum of our human condition. We can search for insight about how to accept and then modify our deepest challenges into opportunities to connect with community, partner with lovers, and move from "humans needing" to "humans being".

Please let Deborah Wechsler debwex52@yahoo.com know if you have any ideas about what you would like to see in our bi-monthly newsletter.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Jonathan Corr, President

I hope everyone is having a wonderful summer, and you have exciting plans with family and friends. Mazel Tov for the celebrations including B'Nei Mitzvah, graduations and weddings that many of our members and their families are experiencing.

It was so heart-warming to see and talk to so many of you at our "Welcome Home" gala in May. It was a beautiful celebration of our community and coming together after a tough two years "apart". It was such a privilege to honor Naomi Ehrlich for all that she has done for our community and our community at large. Thank you to all who contributed to our record-breaking fundraising of over \$100,000. And again an incredible thank you to Tanya James and the entire committee.



We continue efforts on the strategic plan and spend much focus to help solidify our financial position for the future. Thank you to many of you that have provided help in this area, and I expect we will be talking further with many more as we move into the next phase of our plans.

I look forward to seeing you as we approach the HHD which are just around the corner. And finally thank you to each and every one of you who provides their time and efforts to make Beth Chaim such a wonderful community.

Regards,

Jonathan

SIMCHAS

"There are two ways to live. You can live as if nothing is a miracle. You can live as if everything is a miracle."
– Albert Einstein

Mazel Tov to Rabbi Dan & Zoe Francesca

They were married in mid-June in a private ceremony on the beautiful Northwest coast with their immediate family.

We look forward to toasting their simcha at a community-wide Shabbat oneg reception on the Beth Chaim patio on August 26th. Look for more information in The Happenings soon.

Enjoy your honeymoon, Rabbi Dan and Zoe!



Mazel Tov to Gabriel Piccus Friedman & Lauren Jane von Szeremy

Marci Piccus is thrilled to announce the marriage of her son, Gabriel Piccus Friedman, to Lauren Jane von Szeremy on May 6, 2022 in the high desert of Yucca Valley at Tumbleweed Sanctuary. They began dating their freshman year at Chico State University, and the rest is beautiful history ❤️!

*"Seven and a half years in the making..."
Wishing you a lifetime of love together.*



BETH CHAIM CONGREGATION WELCOME HOME FUNDRAISER

An Amazing Night – A Grand Success!

We schmoozed, dined, laughed, danced and came together as a community to support Beth Chaim! Thanks to the generosity of our members, we DOUBLED our goal and raised over \$100,000 (after expenses). HVAC systems, lighting, and landscape plans are underway to further enhance and maintain our beautiful Beth Chaim home. We honored Naomi Ehrlich, who has been the heart and soul of our Tikkun Olam efforts for so many years.

THANK YOU TO

OUR GENEROUS “CHAI” SPONSORS

Rae & Jonathan Corr
Fremont Bank
Stacey & Evan Levy

OUR WONDERFUL BUSINESS PARTNERS

Bay Area Redwood, Balloon Thrills, Charity Benefit Auctions,
Classic Catering, Cohen Bleier Group,
Corporate Couture LLC, DJK Productions, Heller Jewelers,
McGrail Vineyards,
Plants Unlimited, Prestige Printing & Graphics



AND OUR DEDICATED ‘WELCOME HOME’ TEAM

Tanya James – Chair

Kathie Bleier, Susi Cherry, Rae Corr, Anne Feder, Debbie Ferman, Karyn Fishman, Roberta Gabriel,
Judith Markowitz, Pam Messing, Debbie Roof, Jeff & Rhona Shulman, Deborah Wechsler
and of course our incomparable BCC Staff: Neela Arumugham & Heidi Benson Stagg

Gratitude also goes out to so many more amazing, energetic members who dedicated their time to help with donations, basket designs, decorations, schlepping, bartending, set-up, tear-down, greeting and so much more. We also greatly appreciate the wonderful donations from our members and the larger community that supported this fundraiser. We could not create this event without all of these people, so please when you see them around make sure to let them know you appreciate their efforts and contributions.

Each year these fundraising events have proven to be opportunities that bring our members together with a shared sense of purpose and commitment to community. We are blessed this year that once again, after a two-year hiatus, we were able to get together in-person.

Please enjoy these photos taken by Beth Chaim photographer member Marc Feder.

[Feder Photos Link](#)



SPIRITUAL LIFE

by Larry Candeub, Director Religious Affairs/Spiritual Life



Please feel free to contact me,
Larry Candeub,
Bccreligiousaffairs@gmail.com
with ANY thoughts you have
about this, or things you
would like to see for next
year...it's all about serving our
community.

Raindrops on Roses.....

And whiskers on kittens.....these are a few of my favorite things.

One of my favorite things happens when I enter and leave BCC. I take my kiss, or leave my kiss on our beautiful mezuzah. If you haven't taken a close look at it, it is truly a piece of art. (This mezuzah was created by artist Victor Ries (Zichrona L'vracha), who was well-known for many iconic metal sculptures designed for synagogues throughout the Bay Area.)

Additionally, our family has three leaf plaques on the "Modeh Ani" gratitude tree that adorns the north wall of the foyer as you enter. I also take and leave my kisses on our family members' plaques who are honored. This provides me a moment to stop, say hello to those who are, and were, most important to me and show them a little love.

It only takes a moment, but it challenges me to pay attention. It helps me enter the Sanctuary with intention. It reminds me of those who have been, and continue to be, important in my life. Their guidance and support help me to be the person I am today.

I hope you will take the opportunity to create your own "favorite thing" that helps you "pay attention" and enter BCC with "intention." Honor a B'nei Mitzvah, new grandchild, relatives who have passed, or anyone for any reason you wish.

Looking forward, what would make your BCC experience better? Please let me know how I can help!!

MODEH ANI – "I AM GRATEFUL"

"Appreciation is a wonderful thing: It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well." - Voltaire

This is a new section of The Star where we call attention to people in our community who have gone above and beyond to help us thrive

Lara Groch for bringing her energy, enthusiasm and warmth with PJ Library and all the activities for our families with younger children, including Torah Tots and Tot Shabbat.

Debbie Roof for submitting our successful CCJCC grant application, for donating mini challot for our Welcome Home Dinner and Fundraiser, and for donating challah for Shabbat Onegs and other fundraisers.

We want your involvement in this process!

We would like to recognize Beth Chaim members who have "stepped up", or "given back" to our Beth Chaim community. As this is a community recognition, we would like the community to recommend members that are deserving of this honor.

Please take a moment to let us know who we should recognize. It's easy. Just use the link below to nominate someone you think deserves to be noticed for their contribution to our community.

I AM GRATEFUL FOR [LINK](#)

TISHA B'AV

The most grief-drenched day on the Jewish calendar, marking the destruction of the first and second temples in Jerusalem as well as several other occasions for mourning.

“Tisha b’Av, Again” by Daniel Leger, RitualWell

Through these three weeks,
growing in our apprehension,
we’ve waited.
Waited as the sun set for the sun to rise.
We went to sleep each night waiting –
still with confidence –
knowing that the same setting sun’s light
would brighten the morning sky,
overcome the darkness of each night.
And we would see that we were
alive again
and that You, *HaShem*, would
be here with us for one more
of Your creations: Another day. *Yom ekhad*.
The same sun sets once more tonight,
but do we dare
keep that same confidence
in its rising again in the morning,
bringing breath back to our lungs,
its light back to our eyes?
After 586 and 70 –
After 1492 and 1939 –
After 2018?
By the rivers –
homeless, under bridges,
weeping with no tears left to cry,
our mouths open, gaping, stone tongues dry as sand.
Between the Tigris and the Euphrates,
Between the Genil and the Thames,
Between the Allegheny and the Monongahela.
In Babylon, in Spain, In England,
Ukraine, California,
Poland, Pittsburgh.
O Jerusalem!
We see the plows,
we recoil at the crackle,
the gunshots deafen us.
We feel the mud drying on our shoeless feet,
the sickening rocking of the boats.
We are cooked by the flames.
We are ripped open by the bullets.

As this day begins its dark descent
our tongues go dry again,
our ears lose the sound of the harp strings,
displaced by shards of glass and metal casings.
Underground, underfoot,
sisters and brothers named and nameless,
gone – taken – reminding us of what –
as we wonder and wander
these desolate corners of our souls
unable to remember or forget
or even muster a greeting of shalom.
Yes, I believe with a perfect faith
But do I, have I – really?
If so, then why these
sunless days through centuries
of days and nights coming again and again and again,
covering us with this darkness –
this airless suffocation –
this insatiable hunger?
And where, *HaShem*, are You
as we ask again these unanswerable questions
every year on this day?
Have You hidden, or have we hidden Your Face
from us?
Either way – we are terrified.
We have no strings to wrap
around our fingers for our *Shema* today.
And we can’t tap the leather boxes
holding the treasure of Your word
as we recite Ashrei.
Here we are –
what’s left of us –
sitting together on
the ash heap of the ages
with no light to see
even a handful of its grit and grime.
Do we need this again, Eternal One?
Must we face this day without You?
Dare we beg of You – as we push ourselves
through these hours, that
if sunset comes again tomorrow at this time,
please, O Holy One of Blessing
return to us again with it?
So that we may sing once more –
Adonai li, v’ lo ira?

TU B'AV

Offering this meditation in contrast to the troubled spirit of Tisha b'Av, hopefully as an inspiration of resilience in times of sorrow and stress.

“Harnessing Tu b'Av” excerpted from a 2016 posting by Rabbi Rachel Barenblatt, the Velveteen Rabbi

On the Jewish calendar, the full moon of the lunar month of Av is Tu b'Av (the 15th of Av -- Hebrew numbers double as letters, so the number י"ו becomes the word Tu.) Just a few days earlier we mark Tisha b'Av, the most grief-drenched day on the Jewish calendar, anniversary of the destruction of both Temples, anniversary of so many great shatterings in our people's history. That's the psycho-spiritual low point of the year. Immediately after that, the emotional tenor of our calendar starts looking up as we approach the Days of Awe. Tu b'Av -- the full moon following Tisha b'Av -- is supposed to be a day of joy.

This is the anniversary of the day when our mythic ancestors, condemned to wander in the wilderness for forty years because their lack of trust meant that they couldn't enter the land of promise, discovered that their years of alienation from God were over. There's a beautiful story about digging graves every year on Tisha b'Av and sleeping in them, and each year waking to discover that more of their number had died. This went on until the 40 years of wandering were complete, whereupon they [awakened], and everyone was still alive. By the 15th of the month, they realized that that chapter of their journey was over, and in wonderment they clambered out of their graves into renewed life.

Another tradition sees Tu b'Av as a kind of Jewish Valentine's Day. Talmud teaches that in antiquity this is when the unmarried women would put on white dresses and go dance in the vineyards, and by the end of the night they would have found husbands.

The challenge is harnessing the emotional uplift of Tu b'Av to help us climb out of our emotional low places even if there is no white dress in the vineyards, no simple happily-ever-after. On this day long ago our ancestors rejoiced that their years of deep alienation from God were over -- and then their story continued, with new challenges to face and new lessons to learn. We always have new challenges to face and new lessons to learn.

The work of authentic spiritual life is facing that truth not with dismay but with readiness. Whatever comes, we can find blessings in it, if we take the leap of faith of climbing out of our mourning. We can find blessings in whatever the next chapter of our story may be, even if we are not yet ready to dance.

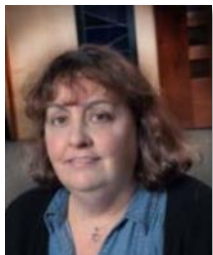


Image by [Ben Kerckx via PixaBay](#)

SOCIAL ACTION | TIKKUN OLAM

“When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves.” – Viktor Frankl

by Naomi Ehrlich, Director, Tikkun Olam



THANK YOU, BETH CHAIM CONGREGATION!

I am so grateful to have been honored at the BCC Gala last month and want to extend my thanks to our amazing gala committee for all of their hard work, enthusiasm and love in creating an incredible evening. It was made that much more special because I was not only surrounded by my family and friends outside of BCC but by my BCC family.

As special as the honor and award was to me, I truly believe that the Tikkun Olam work our congregation does at BCC, is the best of who we are as a Jewish community and this could not be done without our members.

So, thank you for all of your support the past 11 years. Whether it is cooking a dinner for the Winter Nights Shelter, purchasing a gift for our Adopt-a-Family program or buying matzo for our JFCS Passover Food Drive, you have made a difference and made my position as the Director of Social Action, much easier and so much more rewarding.

All my Love,
Naomi

ICARE/ INTERFAITH COUNCIL OF CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

Our toiletry kits for moms was a huge success! Monument Crisis Center and Crossroads High School (school for pregnant moms and their children), received over 200 kits as well as packages of diapers and wipes.

Along with volunteers from the Pleasanton Islamic Center, First Christian Church and the ICARE community, we had a wonderful afternoon on the Beth Chaim patio organizing and packing the supplies. Thank you to all who volunteered that day or made monetary donations to moms in Contra Costa County who needed and very much appreciated the gifts. It made for a great Mother’s Day!



GENEROSITY

"It's not how much or how little you have that makes you great or small, but how much or how little you accomplish with what you have." - Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch

GIVING FUNDS | Building Fund | Community Fund | Religious School Fund | Rabbi's Discretionary Fund | Torah Restoration & Sacred Objects

If you would like to make a donation you now can do so online at <http://www.bethchaim.com/donations>. Every effort is made to individually acknowledge each donation by letter. If a donation is made in memory of someone the family is notified and if a donation is made to honor someone he or she is notified as well. The generous support of the synagogue made by member and non-member contributions is very much appreciated. Donations are listed by the donor's name followed by the honoree's name.

Community / General Fund

Barry & Laura Denenberg Rick Ferber	In honor of Naomi Ehrlich
Jo-Ann & Arnold Jacobson Amer Budayr	In Appreciation for Rabbi Dan In honor of Alan Vengel
Paul & Patricia Yamshon	Happy Birthday Alan Vengel
Paul & Patricia Yamshon	Happy Birthday Harry Kulwin
Beth Chaim Brotherhood	

Rabbi Dan's Discretionary Fund

Ira & Sharon Book
Guided Healthcare

Contra Costa JCC Grant

The Contra Costa County Jewish Community Center (CCJCC) has awarded Beth Chaim Congregation a 2022 Community Impact Grant of \$7,000 to be used for a shade structure on our patio and for young family programming.

Larry Jacobs, President of the CCJCC, said in the grant award letter: "Mazel Tov! ... The CCJCC Board of Directors looks forward to hearing about your organization's future success!"

We are very grateful to Debbie Roof for writing and submitting this grant application.



MEMBERSHIP

"... Community - in the fullest sense: a place and all its creatures - is the smallest unit of health" – Wendell Berry

Meet the Shapiro Family!

by Debbie Roof, Director, Membership



We have had several families join Beth Chaim recently whom you may not have met. Here is an interview with one of our young member families who joined last year – Sarah and Ben Shapiro. They have two children, Abby and Noah, and are in our Young Family Chavurah. You may have met them recently at the Beth Chaim Welcome Home Fundraiser and auction. Ben helped us get many exciting sports package donations for this event!

Beth Chaim: Tell us about your family:

Sarah: Our whole family is really into sports. Abby is 11 and will be starting sixth grade at Stone Valley. She is on a Performance Team for dance. Soon she will start tumbling and theater. Noah will be nine in August and will be in third grade at Rancho Romero. Noah wants to be always outdoors, with a ball in his hands. He is on a competitive soccer team. His other main sports are tennis, baseball, basketball and flag football. We also have Jasper – a cockapoo, who is like our third child! Ben and I play a lot of tennis and many of our tennis friends are also members of Beth Chaim.

Beth Chaim: Where did you both grow up?

Sarah: I grew up in LaVerne in Southern California, which is next to the Claremont Colleges, technically in LA County. I grew up in a big Irish Catholic family – my grandfather came here from Ireland! But I was never confirmed - I just was not that religious.

Ben grew up in a very small town called Boonville, in Mendocino County. It's a town of 1000 people, three hours north of San Francisco. He had the very first Bar Mitzvah in Boonville. His family would drive an hour to go to a temple in Mendocino, but the Bar Mitzvah was in Boonville, with Rabbi Margaret from Mendocino. We had a Jewish wedding with Rabbi Margaret. Ben's family always welcomed me, and I have enjoyed learning more about Judaism as I go. Rabbi Margaret also did the baby naming for Abby and was there when Ben's Dad passed away five years ago. Rabbi Dan knows her and has even been to her house.

Beth Chaim: How did you two meet?

Sarah: We met in 2006 in Las Vegas! Ben was working for the Warriors, and they were there for summer league. I was there for my sister-in-law's Bachelorette Party. He was with a big group of guys and I was with a big group of girls at the restaurant Tao in the Venetian, and he bought drinks for our table. We didn't notice each other right away, but soon we did, and then started going out. Three years later Ben proposed to me in Las Vegas, then surprised me by flying in our parents who were waiting for us at the same restaurant where we met – Tao.



I went to Cal Poly Pomona, then transferred to Cal State East Bay after I met Ben. I rented a small house in Alamo and majored in Business Marketing. I did buying and merchandising for upscale women's boutiques. Ben went to Sac State, where he played division one tennis, and majored in Business Marketing. He got a job with the Warriors and went to USF, where he got a master's degree in Sports Management. He was with the Warriors for 13 years, starting in sales, and by the time he left he was an Executive VP of Sales & Services. The team got new owners, and Ben left to

start Pivot, a sports marketing agency that does sponsorships and travel for the Warriors, Giants, and many other professional teams.

Beth Chaim: How did you choose Beth Chaim?

Sarah: We lived in Lafayette for 10 months before we moved to Alamo. We went to another temple a few times, but it felt a little too big for us. We went to High Holiday services at Beth Chaim before we joined, and really liked it. We have found the community to be very inviting. Rabbi Dan makes you feel very comfortable. We really liked the introductory meeting with him. It's nice that he takes the time to get to know people. We have noticed that the members love the Beth Chaim community – it exudes from them, especially at the recent Welcome Home fundraiser party. We are interested in connecting more with other families who have children in middle school and upper elementary school.

We joined Beth Chaim last year for Abby and Noah to start getting their training for their Bat and Bar Mitzvah. We already have a date for Abby picked out. Noah will start Hebrew School this year. We want our children to have a strong foundation of Jewish religion and morals, before they get into the upcoming more challenging years.

Chavurah at Beth Chaim Congregation



We are looking for more families with teenagers and preteens to start a new chavurah – families of our sixth and seventh graders in our Beit Midrash, and/or our madrichim and Contra Costa Midrasha students. If you are interested in joining any Chavurah, please email me at debbie.roof@yahoo.com.

**chavurah* - a small group of friends who get together to socialize, celebrate and have fun. Joining a *chavurah* enriches their experience as members at Beth Chaim, through meaningful relationships and positive connections.

COMMUNITY | Sisterhood

by Lois Kamoroff and Suzie Homer, Sisterhood Co-Presidents



We are looking forward to an October 15 Women's Day Retreat at San Damiano in Danville. The committee is headed by Kathie Bleier and plans for a relaxing, informative, creative and team building day taking advantage of our local treasure. Mark your calendars to share an experience with our other members.

On June 24, Judith Markowitz led an energizing Shabbat Evening Service. She encouraged participation from those who attended. It was a lovely service and a beautiful Sisterhood Oneg, organized by Kathie Bleier and her committee.

The Ladies Who Lunch, Rosh Chodesh gathering, Walking Group and Book Group plan to continue their activities during these lazy summer months. Stay safe and enjoy!

Warmly,
Lois Kamoroff
Suzie Homer



MILESTONES

"When you have a life milestone happen, it's good to step back and reassess the things you thought you knew about yourself." Emily Yoffe

Wedding Anniversaries

Names	Date	Years			
Michael & Sarah Karatov	July 1	21	Stacey & Seth Blackman	Aug 6	17
Matt & Marissa Gillette	July 1	15	Bradley & Judith Colton	Aug 8	46
Mitchell & Jeannene Hertz	July 2	27	Mark Shuster & Sofia Rahman	Aug 8	2
Grace & Carlos Munoz	July 3	28	Ogie Strogatz & Richard Bikoff	Aug 9	35
Rae & Jonathan Corr	July 4	29	Norton & Gwen Levine	Aug 9	24
Randall & Lisa Gross	July 4	28	Yoel & Julie Cohen	Aug 10	19
Sara Goldstein & David Weinstein	July 8	32	Melissa & David Mann	Aug 11	15
Gregory & Kristen Heiden	July 8	16	Jeff & Heidi Becker	Aug 13	39
Gene & Sarah Simpson	July 10	12	Adam & Kelly Holden	Aug 13	27
Larry & Barbra Candeub	July 11	30	Yael & Yaniv Benaroya	Aug 14	14
Sanford & Joy Severin	July 13	65	Dave & Kimberly Kamalman	Aug 15	24
Tony & Michelle Erlick	July 16	33	Bobbi & Marty Bach	Aug 19	60
Craig & Debbie Hertz	July 18	30	Yana Greenstein & Boris Yankilovich	Aug 20	16
Glenn & Julie Sulzberg	July 26	25	Hayuta & Maheesh Jain	Aug 23	25
Scott & Courtney Finder	July 28	21	Joe & Michelle Gabriel	Aug 27	61
David & Melinda Bandler	July 29	33	Craig & Melissa Rosenblatt	Aug 27	16
Jerry & Laura Raney	Aug 5	32	Emily Bach & Thomas Moglia	Aug 29	24

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MILESTONES, cont'd

Membership Anniversaries

Names	Years	Names	Years
Alan & Kathleen Vengel	28	Sanford & Joy Severin	9
Michael & Mindy Murphy	26	Molly Larabee	8
John Goldstein	25	Dr. Harry & Judy Levin	8
Jeff Reitzes	24	Debbie & Richard Roof	7
Brad & Rachel Goldblatt	22	Tim & Keren Carter	7
Susan Friedman	22	Scott & Courtney Finder	7
Rob & Stacy Kadash	22	Rabbi Pam Frydman	7
Marc Mazer & Susan Talon-Mazer	22	Karen & Phil Grenetz	7
Dave & Debbie Rosenberg	22	Adam Rubinfeld	7
John & Delia Verber	22	Linda Engelman	6
Peter & Vickie Eiges	21	Boris & Lori Troyanovsky	6
Janice Frankel	21	Samantha & Brian Hanlon	6
Savyon Plumb	21	Sara & Dan Welch	5
Heidi Levine	19	Ashley & Adam Heller	5
Burt Feldstein & Lynne Gross	17	Leila Naslavsky & Kleber Sales	5
Ellen Severson	16	Damon Thornburg	5
Elliot & Lisa Bloom	15	Sandi Morris	4
Brian & Morna Gersho	15	Lara Groch & Jeremy Wall	4
Arie & Kelley Cohen	12	James Sorhagen & Jean Lee	3
Steve & Donna Kronenberg	11	Bradley & Judith Colton	3
Lauren Herbstman	10	Jane Sondel	1
Audra & Frederick Saul	10	Mark Shuster & Sofia Rahman	1
Bonnie & Keith Brors	9		

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Use smile.amazon.com when you shop online at Amazon as so many of us do. Simply set Congregation Beth Chaim of Contra Costa County as your charity. (They list more than one Beth Chaim, so be sure to choose our congregation.)

Automatically Amazon will donate half a percent of every purchase thereafter to BCC. No fees or extra costs. You'll make a difference with this one-time small step!



MILESTONES, cont'd

Children's Birthdays

Name	Birthday	Age
Jacob Blum	July 4	18
Chase Hall-Pinner	July 6	12
Adelah Shuster	July 6	6
Max Eisenberg	July 13	11
Caitlin Torres	July 13	13
Maddox Fisher	July 13	13
Madeleine Becker	July 15	14
Levi Wall	July 20	4
Nathan Benaroya	July 22	7
Zoe Karatov	July 25	10
Gabriella Battermann	July 26	12
Mackenze Torres	August 3	11
Jack Heller	August 4	10
Riley Sacks	August 7	17
Arielle Benaroya	August 7	13
Hannah Binder	August 8	16
Noah Shapiro	August 9	9
Naomi Jain	August 21	10
Liza Corr	August 25	17
Gabriel Kolis	August 25	15
Orion Rhodes	August 28	8
Milo Gillette	August 29	11



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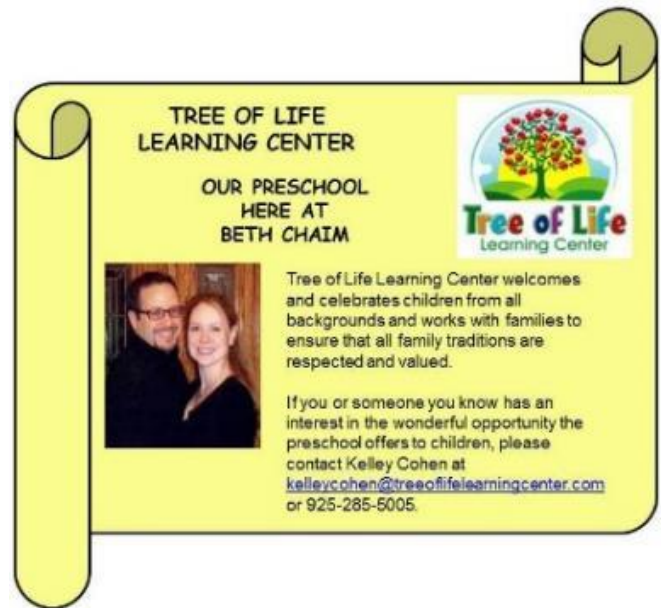
T'lamed Ve'Tilamed (You shall teach and you shall learn)

Pre-K

Tree of Life Learning Center is a private, family-owned, developmentally based Jewish preschool, offering full-day, part-day, and school-day programs for children ages 2 – 5 years-old.


Director: Kelley Cohen

kelleycohen@treeoflifelearningcenter.com



TREE OF LIFE LEARNING CENTER

OUR PRESCHOOL HERE AT BETH CHAIM



Tree of Life Learning Center welcomes and celebrates children from all backgrounds and works with families to ensure that all family traditions are respected and valued.

If you or someone you know has an interest in the wonderful opportunity the preschool offers to children, please contact Kelley Cohen at kelleycohen@treeoflifelearningcenter.com or 925-285-5005.



Join PJ Library Parent Connector **Ema Lara**, her monkey friend **Koofi Katan** and Beth Chaim Congregation for anyone with little ones ages 0-5!



Tot Shabbat and Torah Tots will resume in October.

Look what we did for our last session in June! It was challah-baking time with master challah baker, member Debbie Roof. Thanks Debbie!



BCC is proud of its religious school program serving pre-school through high school. We offer Torah Tots, Sunday School for ages 5+, B'nei Mitzvah Program, Madrichim Program, and a robust teen program in partnership with Contra Costa Midrasha.

Grades K-7



Shelby Margolin
Principal, Beit Midrash

Beth Chaim Beit Midrash is looking for Teachers!

Do you have an interest in connecting with the next generation of Jews? Our Beit Midrash is looking for teachers for the 2022-2023 school year! We know that many of your older children might be attending college locally or finding work in the area and we'd love to have them reconnect to Beth Chaim in this meaningful way. If you are interested, or if you know of anyone who might be interested in teaching, please email Education Director Shelby Meyer Margolin at educator@bethchaim.com. Thank you!

Shavuot is my favorite Jewish holiday. I learned about this sacred day just a handful of years ago when I was exploring my Jewish identity while living in Oakland. Some friends started counting the Omer—something else I had never participated in—just after Pesach. We concluded the counting by staying up all night on Shavuot discussing themes in Torah we wrestled with. On the night of Shavuot this year, I was up at night with my four-month-old, which is a very different kind of metaphorical wrestling!

I'm grateful that I have these summer months to continue in the Shavuot spirit and dive deeply into what will further enliven our Beit Midrash. After introducing Mishpacha Groups, enriched Holiday celebrations, and a flurry of camp-like, whole-school activities, I saw how powerful and important Jewish community really is. Over the past two weeks I called every family in our Beit Midrash program. After hearing their feedback, my focus this year will be on expanding our Jewish community outside of the classroom, to younger families, and to our high school students.

Students' relationships can start on Sunday mornings, but they will thrive with out-of-school activities. I see this every year with the B'nei Mitzvah class: a special bonding that happens because students spend weekends together at services and celebrations. My hope is to start that bonding *now* by supporting families in each grade to plan at least one social event each semester. In addition, we will have community dinners before each *Ruach* service. I will build the space for the community to form, but we need family support to host and attend these gatherings!

The earlier a person connects with a Jewish community, the more Judaism becomes a way of life. Our Tot Programming is led by our stupendous first grade teacher, Lara Groch, who is also a PJ Library connector! Once a month she leads Torah Tots – a time for young children and families to learn about holidays and Jewish traditions—and Tot Shabbat—a child-focused Shabbat celebration. This year, we will have guest presenters to join Lara in providing Jewish fun and depth for families. I will also start Bagels and Blocks—a program for families with children 0-2 to connect, play, and share the joys and challenges of raising a Jewish family in the Bay Area. Focusing on these younger programs will provide a bridge to our Beit Midrash!

My hope is that our children will continue to seek Jewish community beyond their Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Joining our Madrichim Leadership Development Program is an important step for our children to stay connected to each other, Beth Chaim, and the larger Jewish community. Teens in this program will learn mentoring skills, facilitation strategies, project management techniques and more. I will work with each teen to develop and implement an activity stemming from their own interests. I truly hope parents will encourage your teens to enroll in the program!

If you have any questions, feedback, or thoughts to share, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at educator@bethchaim.com. It takes a community to build a community, and I hope you'll join me in my efforts!

Kol tuv,

Morah Shelby Meyer Margolin
Principal, Beth Chaim Beit Midrash

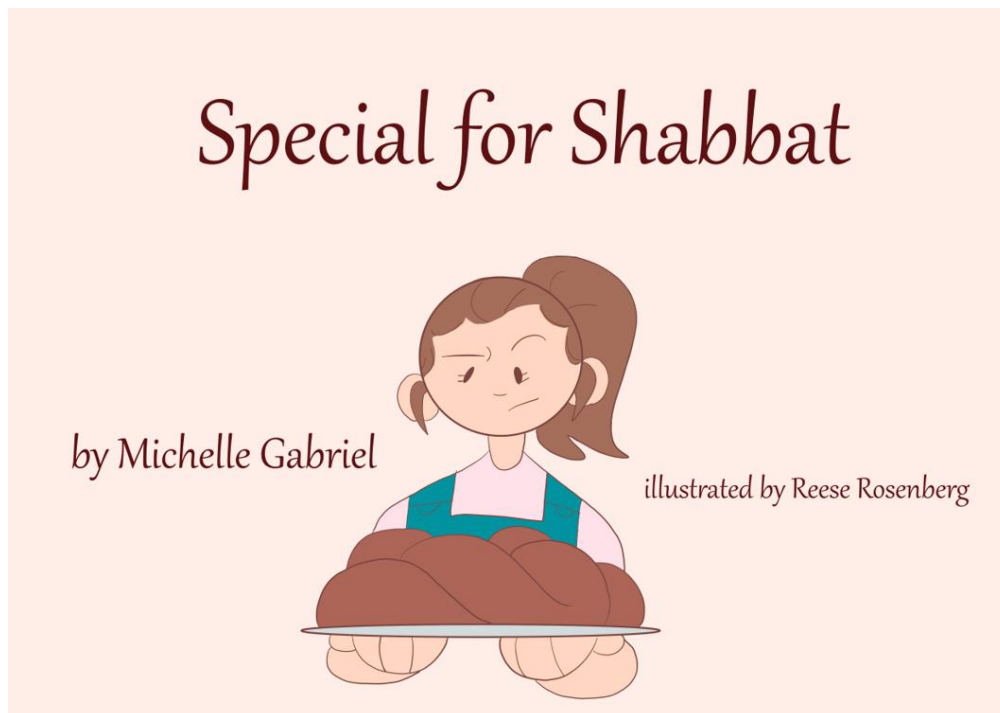
Save the Date!

Challah Book & Bake sale for our Beit Midrash

Sept. 18, from 11:00 am - 12:30 pm (first day back for Religious School)

We will be taking pre-orders of all different flavors and toppings of round challahs, just in time for the High Holidays. We will have challot and a children's book by member Michelle Gabrielle for sale, all benefitting our Beit Midrash. The book will be sold for \$15, each homemade challah will be \$20 - these are both 100% donations to the Beit Midrash.

Look for more details in The Sept/Oct Star and in The Happenings in September



Special For Shabbat: A little girl finds meaning in Shabbat and challah when she discovers the beauty of both, especially for the challah that was baked special for Shabbat.



Contra Costa Midrasha functions as Beth Chaim's teen program, and Beth Chaim makes an annual per student contribution to augment the tuition and retreat fees of Midrasha.

By Devra C. Aarons, Executive Director, CCM

A huge Mazel Tov to this year's Class of 2022 graduates! Fifteen teens from many corners of our community graduated from Contra Costa Midrasha this May. They are: Josh Benveniste, Rory Bernstein, Teo Buegeleisen, Zack Corr, Adee Franbuch, Tamar Franbuch, Kaycee Futterman, Clea Hansen, Sophia Isaacs, Jonah Kunis, Bella Levine, Ben Levine, Jordan Smith, Esther Sokolsky and Ben Weiss-Ishai. The biggest theme from this year's graduation was how seen and heard our teens feel at Midrasha. We are so grateful to our amazing educators - Julia Babka-Kurzrock, Brandon Heller, Shekhinyah Larks, Asher Litschwartz, Sarah Romov, Veronica Siegel, Brandon Varona and Tamar Zaken - for creating a safe space where our teens are able to share their stories and have brave conversations, strengthening them and their connection to Judaism.

Our biggest Summer 2022 news to share - the Israelis are returning this summer! Join in the fun! From July 27 - August 7, 2022 we expect about 15 Israeli teens and their educators from the Holtz Academy in Tel Aviv, Israel for a 10-day adventure in the Bay Area with our teens! Any teen in our community interested in having fun, making friends, and learning about Israel is welcome to join. If you are an adult without teens at home - we still need your help! Consider hosting an Israeli educator, bringing cookies or being an adult chaperone. Find more information at <https://www.ccmidrasha.com/mifgash-2022>.

CCM's 2022-23/5783 year is just around the corner! We return to three full weekend-long retreats, great Wednesday nights and three Tikkun Olam projects. **Registration is open at ccmidrasha.com - click the "enroll" button!** Mark your calendars:

1. CCM's annual 8th grade Orientation is August 31st.
2. Opening night for all teens (grades 8-12) is September 7th.
3. The Fall retreat happens November 11 - 13, 2022 at our new site at Redwood Glen in Pescadero.
4. Our annual Gala is February 25, 2023.

Stay tuned for sign up information on CCM's website at ccmidrasha.com.

CCM's three Tikkun Olam programs ended the 2021-22 year with exciting milestones:

- Project Ezrach teens advocated at the California State Capitol in Sacramento.
- Hamsa Fund teens raised \$9,000 towards refugee resettlement, given to 2nd Families, JFCS of the East Bay and Orange County Jewish Coalition for Refugees.
- Better Together elders and teens celebrated their year playing bingo, sharing gifts and laughter!

And next year any teens signed up for these projects are welcome to join us for a week of service in Los Angeles.

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



Devra Aarons,
CCM Director

B'NEI MITZVAH

Siman Tov u'Mazal Tov!

Wishing our B'nei Mitzvah success, happiness, friendship, health, and adventure. We're very proud of their accomplishments and we look forward to celebrating many simchas as they grow into adulthood.



ARIELLE BENAROYA – August 6

Arielle has been working hard and is so very excited for her Bat Mitzvah! She's going into 8th grade at Charlotte Wood Middle School this coming year. She is such a loving, motivated, strong-willed girl with huge aspirations and dreams. She is an aspiring actress and singer and has many exciting opportunities and adventures awaiting her. She is a performer by nature, with years of training in acting, singing, and dancing. She loves hanging out with her friends and family. She is the first granddaughter to have a Bat Mitzvah out of 13 cousins and is an incredible older sister and daughter. Arielle is our first child, and we couldn't be prouder of her. May she be blessed with health, happiness, and success always! A saying we tell her often is "the only thing to fear is fear itself." Keep climbing mountains and never stop reaching for your goals and dreams, Arielle. We love you more than words! Mazal tov!



GRAHAM HERTZ – August 13

Graham Hertz is 13 years old and attends Stone Valley Middle School. He is looking forward to his Bar Mitzvah in August. He loves spending time with his mom Jeannene, dad Mitch, and two brothers Josh and Micah. As you can see, he absolutely adores his puppy, Gigi! When he isn't studying, he has taken a deep passion to football, basketball and hanging with all his good friends!!! Thank you, Morah Ellen and Rabbi Dan, for all your help. We love you, Mom and Dad. Shalom.



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Yahrzeits

Zichronam L'vracha – May Their Memories be a Blessing

Name	Date	Observed By	Relationship
Jean Levin	Jul 2	Sheila Kaplan	Mother of Sheila
Thomas E. Day, Jr.	Jul 3	Mary & Tom Day	Son of Mary and Tom
Pauline Rosenzweig	Jul 3	Paul Rosenzweig	Mother of Paul
Jack Zuckerberg	Jul 7	Janice Frankel	Father of Janice
Donna Perry Orr	Jul 8	Aaron Stagg	Mother of Aaron
Muriel Jencks	Jul 9	Tanya James	Mother of Tanya
Donald Morris	Jul 9	Sandi Morris	Husband of Sandi
Charlotte Hyman	Jul 13	Lynn Katz	Mother of Lynn
Robert Mueller	Jul 13	Jeffrey Mueller	Father of Jeffrey
Steve Chazin	Jul 14	David Chazin	Father of David
Frances Klein	Jul 15	Art Klein	Mother of Art
Rose Lederman	Jul 15	Herb Lederman	Mother of Herb
Susan Kolis	Jul 17	Michael Kolis	Mother of Michael
Marilyn Taylor	Jul 17	Kelly Holden	Mother of Kelly
Jeannette Kandel	Jul 17	Sandi Morris	Mother of Sandi
Marlene Melis	Jul 24	Brad Lawrence	Mother of Brad
Mary Harley	Jul 26	Trish Slomowitz	Mother of Trish
Rhoda Seltzer	Jul 26	David Seltzer	Mother of David
Steven Corr	Jul 26	Jonathan Corr	Father of Jonathan
Morris Pearlman	Jul 26	Bonnie Brors	Father of Bonnie
William Levine	Jul 27	Heidi Levine	Brother of Heidi
Michael Prince	Jul 31	Stephanie Abramowitz	Father of Stephanie



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YAHREZITS, cont'd

Name	Date	Observed By	Relationship
Marcia Amada	Aug 2	Naomi Ehrlich	Mother of Naomi
Joseph Rosenzweig	Aug 3	Paul Rosenzweig	Brother of Paul
Anita Dodge	Aug 3	Lisa Goldberg	Mother of Lisa
Jack Portnoy	Aug 4	Joy Severin	Father of Joy
Estelle Yamshon	Aug 7	Paul Yamshon	Mother of Paul
Tecca Blankfeld	Aug 8	Deborah Blankfeld	Mother of Deborah
Barton Heller	Aug 10	Scott Heller	Father of Scott
Raney Stanford	Aug 10	Morna Gersho	Father of Morna
Pearl Siegal	Aug 11	Bobbi Bernstein	Mother of Bobbi
Norma Ciabilli	Aug 15	Serena Piazza	Mother of Serena
Milton Levin	Aug 16	Sheila Kaplan	Step-father of Sheila
Ilene Hoffman	Aug 17	Michelle Gabriel	Sister of Michelle
Craig Perlmuth	Aug 17	Vickie Eiges	Brother of Vickie
Minnie Pearlman	Aug 17	Bonnie Brors	Mother of Bonnie
Ruth Kasper	Aug 22	Denise Zavaleta	Mother of Denise
Gerry Creighton	Aug 22	Robyn Mizes	Mother of Robyn
Michael Sondel	Aug 22	Jane Sondel	Husband of Jane
Muriel James	Aug 26	Donald James	Mother of Donald
John Mulrooney	Aug 27	Lisa Gross	Father of Lisa
Jack Katz	Aug 28	William Katz	Brother of William
Ralph Sacks	Aug 29	Andy Sacks	Father of Andy
Judy Robbins	Aug 30	Martin Goldberg	Sister of Marty
Sally Goldberg	Aug 30	Martin Goldberg	Mother of Martin
Harold Davidson	Aug 31	Darrell Davidson	Father of Darrell

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BAR/BAT MITZVAH VIDEOGRAPHER. Recent graduate of the Art Institute of San Francisco Brian Hanlon is partnering with his wife and longtime BCC member and Hebrew School teacher Samantha Waxman to record your service or party. Contact us at samanthabhanlon@gmail.com or hanlon86@yahoo.com.

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"SPECIAL FOR SHABBAT" is written by long time professional writer and Beth Chaim member, Michelle Gabriel. The book follows the story of a little girl who finds meaning in Shabbat and challah when she discovers the beauty of both, especially for the challah that was baked special for Shabbat. A sweet story with engaging illustrations for young children. mjgwrites@yahoo.com or mjgpress.com



"ARI'S JOURNEY" a novel by late Beth Chaim member Norman Binger, is now available on Amazon.com, including as a Kindle book. Ari Cohen, an Israeli Police officer, embarks on a perilous journey to save his son from terrorists. On his odyssey he meets friends and enemies, both Palestinian and Israeli, and encounters a long-lost love.

MEMORY ALBUMS. Do you need help organizing your photos? Would you like to preserve your family memories so they can be passed on to your children and their children? Whether it's baby's first year, B'nei Mitzvah, graduation, weddings, special vacations, and more, I can preserve these memories for you or teach you how to do it. Call Melinda Bandler on 829-0782, or e-mail mhandler@pacbell.net, for a free 1-hour consultation.

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