



CONGREGATION
SHOMREI TORAH
שומרי תורה

May - July 2021

VOICE & VIEW SPECIAL EDITION



UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN

How do you say goodbye to someone who has been such an integral part of the life and breath of Shomrei Torah for almost a decade? The answer is, you don't.

Or at least you try not to. *L'hitraot*, Hebrew for "until we meet again" seems more fitting. And if you're still recovering from a global pandemic, you send those farewell wishes virtually. More details will follow, but please mark your calendars for the evening of **June 16** when we can communally honor Rabbi Stephanie with a special musical interactive Zoom tribute.

Rabbi Stephanie arrived in 2011 as our first rabbi educator and hit the ground running as the director of our religious school and Assistant Rabbi.

Rabbi Stephanie arrived in 2011 as our first rabbi educator and hit the ground running as the director of our religious school and Assistant Rabbi. She had just finished her rabbinical training at Hebrew Union College in Los Angeles and was a new mom to her first child, Micah. She and her husband, Adam, settled in Santa Rosa and have enjoyed all the bounties that



Sonoma County has to offer. Micah is now a fifth grader and his sister, Noa, is a first grader.

Rabbi Stephanie, like Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*, encountered some lions and tigers and bears along the way. The Tubbs Fire of 2017 tested the mettle of our entire community. Rabbi Stephanie immediately went into helper mode and organized meals, childcare and temporary housing for folks within the Shomrei Torah family. She enlisted community partners and made sure that everyone who lost their home had a basket of Judaica with which to start anew.

Who can forget her beautiful sermon at High Holy Days that ended with her singing *Seasons of Love* from *Rent*? Or her celebrating Shabbat and the momentous Supreme Court decision of 2015 granting same-sex couples the right to marry while wearing a rainbow *tallit*? Rabbi Stephanie has grieved with us, taught us, prayed with us and has inspired our youth with her many innovative programs such as *L'Taken*, an advocacy program for teens that takes them to Washington, DC to meet with and lobby elected leaders.

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There will be several ways to honor our beloved Stephanie. Look for upcoming communications about a **digital photo collection**, a **wine drive**, a chance to **virtually toast Rabbi Stephanie**, in addition to the aforementioned **Zoom tribute**.

We wish Rabbi Stephanie the very best as she follows the yellow brick road to Kansas. The congregants of The Temple, Congregation B'nai Jehudah in Overland Park are blessed to have her!

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FROM RABBI GEORGE



Rabbi George

I returned from Sabbatical at the start of April and I'm gradually getting back into the familiar rhythm of life at Shomrei Torah. I've missed being with you, even virtually! Thank you for giving me the time to rest and recharge. The pandemic kept me close to home, with many trips to the coast and days outdoors around Sonoma County. Being able to spend time reading, writing and reflecting on our beloved community and what we will need to thrive going forward was such a gift! I look forward to sharing some of my experiences and thoughts with you soon.

It's heartening to realize that in the face of fires and pandemic – challenges of almost Biblical proportions – our community remains strong. We are here to support one another and to learn and celebrate together. I hope you will join us in some of the activities you'll find described in this edition of the View.

B'ahavah v'shalom/with love and peace...

Rabbi George

Shomrei Torah Annual Meeting

Thursday, June 24, 6:15 PM

Save the date! Please join us for our annual meeting where we will discuss budget, election of board members and other important topics related to the future of Shomrei Torah. More info to come in your weekly CST Connect emails.



As the Covid Committee anxiously anticipates Sonoma County moving into the orange tier, we are excited to be knee-deep in reopening plans. We are closely monitoring local and state guidelines and consulting with local physicians as we develop this plan.

Our Rabbis and Board of Directors are concerned about our health and safety and we plan to reopen when it is safe for all of our congregants. Stay tuned in your CST Connect email for more details.

Donate to Shomrei Torah Without Costing You Anything!

As many CST members already know, it's easy and free to support Shomrei Torah Religious School & Youth Programs, our Rabbis, Social Programs and many, many other programs.

Oliver's and Amazon will send Shomrei Torah a percentage of every dollar you spend. Sign up next time you shop.

Oliver's Market

Ask for an Oliver's Card at the Service Desk and designate Congregation Shomrei Torah to receive a percentage of your purchases. Next time you shop just show your card or give the cashier your phone number.

Amazon Smile

When you shop, 0.5% of every purchase will be sent to Shomrei Torah. Sign up at smile.amazon.com and specify Congregation Shomrei Torah as the organization you support.

On the second Friday of each month, join your CST family virtually at the Rabbi's Tisch (table) in lieu of regular Friday night Shabbat Services. Services will be held at 6:15 PM. For live-stream links visit our online calendar: www.cstsr.org/calendar

Naama Haviv - *This Is Hunger*

Friday, May 14, 6:15 PM

Facilitated by Naama Haviv, MAZON's Director of Community Engagement, we'll engage with *This Is Hunger*, a digital exhibit experience centered on six individuals' stories of food insecurity, featuring images by renowned photographer and documentarian Barbara Grover.



We'll follow this experience with text study and a discussion on the pervasive – yet solvable – problem of hunger in America and working at the intersection of Judaism and anti-hunger advocacy. We will also address hunger issues in Sonoma County. Read more at www.cstsr.org/event/rabbis-tisch8.html.

Alyse Golden Berkley - *Jewish National Fund and Israel at 73*

Friday, June 11, 6:15 PM

Alyse, a lifelong Zionist and accomplished attorney, plays a key role in JNF's strategy and growth as a local leader in Los Angeles and a Sapphire Society member. She is a member of Makor which is JNF's Ambassador group, and has played a key role in many JNF fundraising campaigns. Since her first trip to Israel in 1970, Alyse has studied, volunteered, and traveled across Israel many times. She holds leadership positions with numerous Jewish and pro-Israel organizations and is a Judge Pro Tempore for the Los Angeles Superior Court.



Rabbi George Refeels on 25 years of Serving Shomrei Torah

Friday, July 9, 6:15 PM

In May Rabbi George will receive his Honorary Doctorate from the Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion for 25 years of service to the Jewish community. 25 years as a rabbi is not that unusual, but rarely does a rabbi have the honor of serving one congregation for that many years.

In this Tisch talk, Rabbi George will share insight gleaned from his experience at Shomrei Torah as well as a vision for the future.



Jewish Literary Circle

Third Thursday of each month at 6:15 PM

FREE. All are welcome. Our focus is to read Jewish literature and other published materials and enjoy each other's insights and have lively discussions. If you are interested in joining us for upcoming meetings and/or would like to attend the planning meeting, please contact Sandy at sandy@sidorsky.com.

Wise Aging with Rabbi Meredith Cahn

First Friday of each month at 11:00 AM

For the Zoom link, please email

Rabbi Meredith at mcahn2@mac.com

This group is based on, but not limited to, *Wise Aging: Living with Joy, Resilience and Spirit*, by Rabbi Rachel Cowan and Linda Thal. We will explore how to find meaning, joy, acceptance and wisdom on our journey into our later years.



Bagel Club

First Sunday of the month at 9:00 AM

See our calendar for exact dates,
www.cstsr.org/calendar

The Shomrei Torah Bagel Club has lined up some interesting Zoom programs for you. Since the Bagel Club is meeting on Zoom, you will provide your own bagel, lox and cream cheese, but we are hoping it won't be too much longer until we can meet together for brunch. Watch the Shomrei Torah emails for zoom links and more information.



Women's Interest Groups

The women's interest groups are continuing to meet on Zoom for now with the hope to return to in-person meetings when we can. If you would like to join the email list for the movie group, the knitting and crochet group, the dinner group (or a new lunch or dinner group, depending on interest) or the book group (on hold until in-person meetings return) or would like to know more about the groups, contact Ronnie Campagna at ronniecc@gmail.com.



CREATING
SACRED
SPACE
The Jewish Meditation Center
Congregation Shomrei Torah

Creating Sacred Space – Meditation

Sundays at 4:00 PM

See our calendar for exact dates,
www.cstsr.org/calendar

Jewish mindfulness connects meditation to the wisdom of our tradition and the seasons of the Jewish calendar. Sessions include teaching, meditation instruction, and periods of silence. No previous experience or knowledge is necessary! By practicing together, we enhance our ability to listen to the voice within and expand our sense of interconnectedness.

Our Sunday afternoon sessions are typically conducted by Rabbi George, a graduate of the Jewish Mindfulness Meditation Program of the Institute for Jewish Spirituality and a practitioner of both Buddhist and Jewish meditative practices over the past two decades. We are also excited to occasionally welcome guest leaders including, in recent months, Rabbi Lavey Derby, Cantor Kerith Spencer-Shapiro, and congregants, Alissa Hirshfeld, Adele Pickar and Judith Richlin-Klonsky.

Check out the weekly schedule and leader information on the meditation page, www.cstsr.org/meditation.html, and in Shabbat Snapshot announcements from CST. For a weekly direct email reminder and the Zoom link, sign up through the office at aa@cstsr.org. Creating Sacred Space sessions are open to all -- feel free to bring family or friends! -- via Zoom or Live-Stream.

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CST Choir

The Shomrei Torah Choir is happy to welcome new members to the group. If you would like to sing for High Holy Days or other upcoming opportunities, let Erica know! A love of music and community is necessary; previous vocal training is not. Contact Erica Wisner at ericaw@cstsr.org for more information.

Torah Study

Saturday mornings at 8:45 AM

See our calendar for exact dates,
www.cstsr.org/calendar

CST's Torah Study is a lively discussion of the week's Torah portion, led by Rabbi George or by a temple member. We represent a range of knowledge and perspectives. Newcomers are welcome, whether or not you've read any Torah or know any Hebrew. You may call the office to arrange to borrow a Torah text with commentary. We invite you to join us! Contact Fran Danoff with any questions, frandanoff@aol.com.

Social Action at Shomrei Torah

The Social Action Committee is gearing up for some community events in the coming months; stay tuned to your weekly emails for more information. Some events include:

- Climate crisis advocacy program
- Voter engagement campaign
- Criminal justice event
- Working with Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism on legislation around racial justice issues

Congregation Shomrei Torah

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(unless otherwise noted)

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Office Hours

Monday–Friday
9:00 AM–12 Noon;
1:00–5:00 PM

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- Need help with Zoom or Streaming?
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Call (707) 578-5519

Or email zoom@cstsr.org

THE PURPOSE OF THIS CONGREGATION

- To worship God in accordance with the beliefs and teachings of Reform Judaism.
- To cultivate and nurture in ourselves and our children a love and understanding of Jewish heritage.
- To develop a sensitive, caring and supportive congregational community where all are welcome and included.
- To act with responsibility and compassion in our community.
- To support the principles of equality, freedom and shalom among all peoples.