



November 2017—Cheshvan/Kislev 5778 Volume XXX Number 9



## GELT-A-THON 2017

Fulfill your New Year Resolution in one short, easy step

If you were inspired by High Holy Days to reconnect to CST, to volunteer or to give more to your community, you have an opportunity to achieve all three goals in just three short hours! Join us on the morning of Sunday, December 10, to call temple friends and friends-to-be for the annual *Gelt*-a-thon.

The *Gelt*-a-thon is *CST*'s one and only yearly fundraiser. The money collected during the calling spree helps bridge the gap between members' pledges and congregational expenses.

Long-time *Gelt*-a-thon volunteer **Deborah Cutler** says, "Normally, I don't like calling people to ask for money, but the *Gelt*-a-thon is different. There's an easy script for callers to use, most members are 100% supportive and they just need a gentle reminder to put their check in the mail. It's actually a good chance to catch up and reconnect."

The day is fueled by a lox and bagel breakfast and other goodies. Volunteers receive a short training, helpful materials and a comfortable place to make calls. To sign up and for further details on time and location, please email *denise@cstsr.org* or call (707) 578-5519.

Can't volunteer, but would like to help? The best way to contribute is to make your *Gelt*-a-thon donation before December 10. An early contribution means one less name for volunteers to call (and it's one less phone call that you will receive). The suggested donation

is \$180, but any amount will assist CST in paying for programming, its helpful staff, rabbinic leadership and all that you've come to love and expect from our congregational community.





## Rabbi's Tisch with Jonathan Greenberg

Friday, November 10, 6:15 PM

"The Power of Grassroots Organizing to Heal the World with Real Life Examples from Sonoma County"



Jonathan Greenberg, founder of Progressive Source Communications and the Sonoma Independent, is an award-winning national investigative journalist and new media innovator committed to enhancing responsive government and expanding media democracy. Jonathan writes the ProgressiveSource.com blog, a political

column, and is a political blogger for the *Huffington Post*. He has been an investigative financial and political journalist for such publications as *The New York Times, The Washington Post, Mother Jones, Forbes, Money, Playboy, Self, Inc., GQ, The New Republic* and *Alternet*. Jonathon is the recipient of many awards including two first place Greater Bay Journalism awards for his coverage of the closing of West Sonoma County's Drive Hospital and the successful grassroots uprising that made it the first small hospital in the United States to reopen after closing. Jonathan received his B.A. in rhetoric and literature from the State University of New York at Binghamton and a Masters Studies in Law degree from Yale Law School.

Suggested donation of \$18 for the catered dinner, please email *denise@cstsr.org* or call (707) 578-5519.

### 50 Shades of Talmud

Postponed — Look for new dates soon!



Learn what the first rabbis had to say about "you-know-what." Join us for a taste of sex in the Talmud and in Jewish tradition inspired by Maggie Anton's book. In this class, perfect for

beginners, we will explore some of the more racy sections of *Talmud*. Come ready to learn and laugh!

#### **New Member Shabbat**

Friday, November 3, 6:15 PM

Our clergy, staff, Board of Directors and Membership Task Force invite members who have joined the synagogue in the  $\,$ 

past year to attend the New Member Shabbat service on November 3. New members will be officially welcomed to the CST community with Rabbi Stephanie's blessing on the *bima* and an opportunity to meet established members and other



new members at the evening's *oneg* Shabbat. Mark your calendars for this special evening.

## Mikvah Field Trip to San Francisco



Sunday, November 5, 10:30 AM

Have you ever wondered about the mysterious ritual of immersing in a *mikvah*, ritual bath, but you didn't want to

get wet? Join **Rabbi Kramer** in touring and learning about Jewish *mikvaot* (plural for *mikvah*), discover the history, ritual, and spiritual practice throughout the centuries. This field trip is for anyone wanting to see a *mikvah* and learn about its uses. No previous knowledge required; men and women are welcome. RSVP to *denise@cstsr.org* or call (707) 578-5519 and we will try to help coordinate carpools.

## Men's Bagel Club

Sunday, November 5, 9:00 AM



Mike Kennedy, Director of Behavioral Health Services for Sonoma County, will be the guest speaker at this Bagel Club brunch. He will discuss the Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) and the upcoming changes in Sonoma County behavioral health as we transition to

our new Behavioral Health Wellness Campus. Mr. Kennedy has been in his position since 2008 and implemented a number of new programs in the County. With attention on mental health services, an issue in Sonoma County, Mr. Kennedy's presentation promises to be most interesting and informative.

Prior to the program we will feast on lox, bagels and cream cheese with all the trimmings for a \$7 donation. To RSVP, please email *denise@cstsr.org* or call (707) 578-5519. As always, women are also welcome.

The Bagel Club schedule is filling up for the coming year. Mark your calendars:

- » On December 3, Warren Wiscombe will speak to us on Climate Change and the Cryosphere, a very timely topic.
- » On January 7, Shomrei Torah members Reuben Weinzveg and Padi Selwyn will talk about the efforts of Preserve Rural Sonoma County (PRSC) to control the excessive growth of wineries and entertainment venues.
- » And on February 4, the speaker will be CST member **Ed Navarro**, who will address education topics.

## **Tot Shabbat**

Friday, November 10, 5:00 PM Potluck, bring vegetarian dish to share.

Tot Shabbat is an informal, child-centered Shabbat service designed especially for children newborn to elementary school age. Everyone is welcome; members and



non-members, Jewish and non-Jewish, partners and spouses alike. All Tot Shabbat experiences include a kid-friendly service, lively music and movement, exciting stories, art activities and open play. Tot Shabbat is a FREE program.

#### HAPPENING IN **DECEMBER** AT CST

## PJ Library Read Day: Preschool—3rd Grade

Sunday, November 12, 9:00 AM



Parents with small children, including those in KIDdish, are invited to join STaRS for a special PJ Library Read Day

program. Books and more will be the focus, along with a special performance by a well-loved Bay Area children's entertainment group. Don't miss this fun event; kids are encouraged to wear PJ's! We'll even have a special snack of cookies and milk.

#### **KIDdish**

#### Sunday, November 12, 9:00 AM

KIDdish is an introduction to Religious School for all Pre-K, children 2–5 years old. Meet new friends and build budding Jewish relationships that can blossom for years to come. These classes include tons of hands-on art activities, spirited movement and music, playground time



and fun Jewish learning. \$180 for the entire program. Download the registration form at *shomreitorah.org/community/Kiddish*.

## **Babies & Bagels**

Sunday, November 12

Babies & Bagels members love to get together with you and your little ones. Join us for a light nosh and some refreshing adult conversation, while you watch your children interact and play with others in their age group. Babies & Bagels meets at a private home. For more



information, to RSVP for the address, or just to say hello, please email *denise@cstsr.org* or call (707) 578-5519. Babies & Bagels is a FREE program.

## Shabbat Service with Special Guest Speaker and Author Haroon Moghul

Friday, December 1, 6:15 PM



With the Trump administration's failed Muslim travel ban, there's been an increase in anxiety and uncertainty for many Muslim Americans. "To be a Muslim today is to be disappointed, frustrated, even scared. We are 1.6 billion people who

can't seem to make a mark on the world worthy of our numbers, our histories, our ideas," writes **Haroon Moghul**.

Now, in his book *How to Be a Muslim: An American Story*, Moghul, a senior fellow at the Center for Global Policy and the Muslim Leadership Initiative facilitator at the Shalom Hartman Institute, details his coming-of-age story as an American Muslim and his struggle to forge his identity as a second-generation immigrant in a post-9/11 world. Moghul documents the crushing pressures of living in a world that shuns and fears Muslims, as well as his own complicated relationship with Islam and his battles with bipolar disorder.

# Foundations — Readings from Heschel's "The Prophets," Maimonides and Hasidism

Wednesday and Thursday, December 6 and 7, 7:00 PM

This class is part 1 of a 3 part series offered by Lehrhaus, focused on the philosophy of the late, great Jewish thinker Abraham Joshua Heschel's social justice work. **Rabbi Peretz Wolf-Prusan** will draw on Heschel's writings about the Prophets and other key

texts. While this class is designed for students with some Jewish background, all are welcome.



Rabbi Peretz Wolf-Prusan is the Chief Program

Officer and a Senior Educator at Lehrhaus Judaica.

Please RSVP to the *denise@cstsr.org* or call (707) 578-5519.

Wednesday, December 13, 6:15 PM
Night of Lights

Everyone is welcome! Bring your friends and let's commemorate the miracle of the light together! We'll supply the latkes and all the fixin's; you bring your favorite vegetarian or dairy dish to share, *Hanukkah menorah* and candles. Songs will be sung, festivities will abound and, of course, *dreidels* will spin. Delicious *sufganiot* (donuts of all flavors) will be served.



## **Award Winning Film Series Returns for 2018**

"Social Action Goes to the Movies" Spotlights Women's March, Money Bail Trap, Single Payer Health Care

**Democracy is NOT a Spectator Sport** is the theme of the sixth annual film series sponsored by Congregation Shomrei Torah's Social Action Committee. The primary goal of the series is to inform the audience of critical issues and empower people to take action for positive change.

The program will include a panel of experts and information about volunteer opportunities with community organizations. All events are on Saturdays and begin at 7:00 PM in the Congregation Shomrei Torah sanctuary. Admission is free to all; donations accepted.

January 27 • "Women's March: A Documentary Film About

Democracy and Human

# **WOMEN'S MARCH**



Democracy and Human Rights"

A powerful short film about democracy, human rights and what it means to stand up for your values in America today. Learn how organizing is

done and meet people who organize for social action throughout Sonoma County.



#### February 24 • "The Bail Trap: American Ransom"

Over 70% of low-income Americans sitting in jails for days, months,

and even years have been accused, but not convicted, of minor misdemeanors simply because they can't afford to pay a bail amount that often is excessively high. Come find out about the devastation caused by money bail and how we can fix the system.



#### March 17 • "Fix It: Healthcare at the Tipping Point"

Learn about the advantages and challenges

of a single payer health care system and how California can lead the nation by creating one.

## California's Wildfires Remind Us That Natural Disasters See No Race Or Class

As a young child lying in bed, I would often think about planets. I thought about stars, our solar system, galaxies far away, time, light, distance and other possibilities of existence. As I got lost in thought, confused by the infinite nature of the universe, I would always find comfort and calm by speaking directly to God.

God listened, and often responded. We always ended with my singing the *Shema*, a sacred ritual reminding me of the oneness of God — an omnipotent, omnipresent, completely just and good God. *Baruch Shem kevod malchuto le'olam va'ed*. May God's glorious kingdom reign forever and ever.

Many of us sing the *Shema* in unison at temple, say it alone before bed and mutter it silently when we are nervous, afraid or looking for strength. Sometimes, the most familiar ritual is the one we think about least. It becomes second nature; the meaning is so innate that we don't even pause to question its purpose.

And then something in our world shakes and we start to look for answers. If God is completely just and good and omnipotent, how can God allow catastrophic flooding



Rabbi Stephanie

and deadly fires? As a Houston native, I am still in shock about Hurricane Harvey. As a Santa Rosa rabbi reeling from the fires, it is taking every ounce of my being to fight off spiritual paralysis.

I have drawn spiritual strength from a synagogue that mobilized to become a makeshift shelter and a source of solace for any who walked through the doors.

The flooding in Houston was indiscriminate. It did not spare white people, Democrats, men, the rich or the elderly. One family friend waited for rescue on the kitchen counter of her one-story home as the waters rose. The fires in Santa Rosa were just as unmethodical — taking our Jewish community's beloved Camp Newman along with the homes of dozens of

my congregants. The fire did not spare the generous, the kindhearted or the innocent. One family woke to a firefighter in their bedroom at 3:00 AM yelling at them to get out. There was no time to get dressed. Another had to jump over a line of fire to make it to safety. Many were petrified they would not make it down the hill alive.

These traumas will not soon leave our memories. More of my friends in California and Texas than I can count lost their homes, all of their possessions, their photographs and their heirlooms. On Rosh Hashanah, barely two weeks ago, I preached to my congregation about the heartbreak of Harvey and the resilience of Houstonians. Now I stand in the midst of a community grappling with its own heartbreak and trauma. hoping to draw upon the wisdom and strength I witnessed in my native city.

I gained hope from the Houstonians who formed a human chain on the interstate to rescue a man nearly swept away by the current, and from the mattress store owner who opened his showroom doors as a shelter from the storm. Their stories are now more than inspiration. They are blueprints for how we now must react.

In Santa Rosa, I have drawn spiritual strength from a synagogue that mobilized to become a makeshift shelter and a source of solace for any who walked through the doors. I am

determined to feed and comfort all those in need. I am working tirelessly to find beds for all of those in my community. Some homes have five families staying together. People are eager to help.

These stories are undeniable evidence of the divine spark that lives within each of us, regardless of polarized politics, racial divides and social classes.

Just as the floodwaters and the fires see no class or race or status, we the survivors of these traumas must remember that we are one. Our voices are one, our spirits are one, helping each other to make it through each crisis and each day.

We needed to be reminded.

At Jewish weddings we often hear that a light rises from every human being, reaching straight to heaven. When two souls, destined to be together, find each other, the streams of light flow together and a single, brighter light beams from their united being. They go forward, brighter still, day after day.

The same is true for communities coming together. When events like this shake our core and challenge our theology, we see that we are one: Our divine lights come together.

Shema Yisrael, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad. Hear O Israel, Adonai is our God, Our God is One.

And so are we.

### **Time To Give Back**



Cy Wilcox, Board Member

In 2003 I came to Santa
Rosa to work at Medtronic
CardioVascular as a visiting
scholar while on sabbatical
from Emory University Medical
School. I was mostly on my
own and commuted every
month back and forth to
Atlanta to see my family and
maintain my research lab there.

My rabbi in Atlanta knew Rabbi George from rabbinical school and suggested I check out CST while I was here. I quickly became a regular at Shabbat services and Torah study and found a second home for myself while in Santa Rosa. In the middle of my sabbatical year my sister passed away in Minneapolis. I wasn't a member then but CST was there for me as I left for the funeral and afterwards, as many strangers (now friends) attended a minyan at my apartment. My wife, Billie Blumenthal, worked as the religious school director at our synagogue in Atlanta but came out to visit me that year and attended services at CST as well.

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Towards the end of my sabbatical year, Medtronic wanted me to stay and take a full-time job. Right about that same time, then CST president Dianne Smith came up to me one night after services and asked if Billie would consider moving out to California as they needed to hire a new religious school director. How often do two professionals find themselves being recruited to the same beautiful place at the same time. It was besherit. We moved to Santa Rosa in 2004 and came to love both Sonoma County and our CST community. When Billie became ill we found out just what an incredible caring community we had joined. I belong to a great chavurah, we have laughed and cried together, CST is family. Now that I have retired it is time for me to give back to the community that has given me so much and I am looking forward to my first year on the CST board.

#### **Environmental Action Committee**

Tip of the Month

Shelter us beneath thy wings O Adonai
— from the Evening Liturgy

# Since fall is a time to think about shelter, prepare your house for winter.

- Consider performing an energy audit and check out energy rebates.
- Seal air leaks and insulate your attic.
- Get a furnace inspection.
- Check out a do-it-yourself toolkit from the central library.
   Supplies for you to keep and install in your home: LED bulbs, light switch plate and gaskets, weather stripping, low-flow shower heads faucet aerators and a user guide. Tools will need to be returned to the library once you are finished with the kit.

#### For information about making your home more energyefficient, go to:

- energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=home\_sealing.hm\_improvement\_ sealing
- pge.com/includes/docs/pdfs/myhome/saveenergymoney/rebates/ home\_insulation\_factsheet.pdf
- sonomacountyenergy.org/uploads/sonomacountyenergy.org/how\_ to\_maximize\_your\_energy\_savings.pdf
- sonomalibrary.org/events/programs/diy-toolkits

## **Legacy Circle Seeks Your Input**

The Legacy Circle allows Congregation Shomrei Torah members to contribute to a structured program that helps sustain CST as a center of progressive Reform Judaism for future generations. Since its inception in 2011, more than 75 CST member families have found a way to participate.



Since its inception in 2011, more than 75 CST member families have found a way to participate. You can help with this important mission. The Legacy Circle planning committee is looking for a few volunteers to join the committee and help develop a new strategic plan for the next few years. Fresh ideas are needed — all are welcome.

Please email *denise@cstsr.org* or call (707) 578-5519 for more information.

# Elisha's Pantry

Serving Bennett and Rincon Valleys



# Elisha's Pantry Needs Your Help!

Every Thursday, 4:00 to 5:30 PM 1717 Yulupa Ave., Santa Rosa

Twelve years ago, CST opened Elisha's Pantry along with Christ Church United Methodist. A few years later, we were joined by Bethlehem Lutheran Church. All three faith-based organizations send volunteers to work every Thursday, and we are in need of the following:

- Volunteers to help distribute canned goods, fresh vegetables, fruit and other products on Thursdays starting at 3:00 PM and ending by 5:45 PM volunteers are always shade and rain protected.
- 2. Volunteers to pick up donated fresh bread and desserts from Whole Foods in Bennett Valley and from Boudin Bakery in Montgomery Village (picking up donated breads requires transportation vehicle and light lifting of up to 25 lbs.).

All volunteers are welcome — families, teens, singles, couples. To sign up, please email *denise@cstsr.org* or call (707) 578-5519. Volunteer dates are assigned as we cannot handle drop-in volunteers.



#### **Volunteers Needed!**

Are you looking for a way to get involved in the congregation and help out behind the scenes? If so, **CST Matchmakers** is looking for people like you to help out in the office. You can come in on a monthly, weekly or, as often as you can basis. Here are some of the tasks that are in need of your help.

- Set up sanctuary for Shabbat service
- · Prepare correspondence for mailing
- Answer phones
- · Make calls
- Proofreading

It is rewarding work that is greatly appreciated by the clergy and the office staff. If you are interested or would like to find out more, please email *denise@cstsr.org* or call (707) 578-5519.

# Sonoma County District Attorney Speaks to Bagel Club Gathering



Above: District Attorney Jill Ravitch, Bagel Club host Jerry Newman, and speaker coordinator Stephen Harper

Sonoma County District Attorney **Jill Ravitch** joined us for a Bagel Club Brunch on Sunday, October 8, and more than 40 people came out to hear speak and answer questions about what's happening in the field of law enforcement. We were not disappointed.



## **Outgoing Mail**

On Wednesday, October 4, the **2017 CST Membership Photo Directories** were submitted to the Santa Rosa Post Office for delivery to our 440 member families.

## **Security Changes Around CST**



Enhanced security has become a top priority for synagogues and Jewish organizations across the country and around the world. Reflecting this concern, CST has decided to step up our own security program by retaining a professional

security firm led by **Alan Rosenthal**. With over two decades of experience in law enforcement, Alan has extensive training in identifying and responding to security risks.

A member of our Jewish community, he's now using his expertise to provide security to synagogues across the Bay Area. He or one of his associates will be providing a security presence during services and public events.

We're pleased that Alan is joining the select group of vendors who provide important services to our congregation.

## **Chavurah** Happenings

#### From Coordinator Jan Schwartz

Many members interested in joining *chavurot* have sent in information over the last year or so and might feel that their information disappeared down a hole somewhere. I have recently begun coordinating the *chavurah* process and have started the process of contacting everyone who submitted a form with



an update. You are welcome to contact me if you have questions or if you are interested in joining a *chavurah*. Also, I would love to know if you are currently in a *chavurah* that has room for additional people. If interested, please email *denise@cstsr.org* or call (707) 578-5519.



## **Madrichim** Rotate Through the Stations

On Sunday, September 17, the STaRS students at CST celebrated the High Holy Days by rotating through stations that represented different parts of the holidays. The five stations were *shofar* blowing, braiding clay *challah*, tasting apples and honey, atonement, and a holiday related scavenger hunt. At *shofar* blowing, the kids learned about the history of *shofars* and attempted to blow the many different kinds. At *challah* braiding, students learned how to braid circular *challah* out of clay. At the apples and honey tasting station, they tasted three different apples and three different honeys.

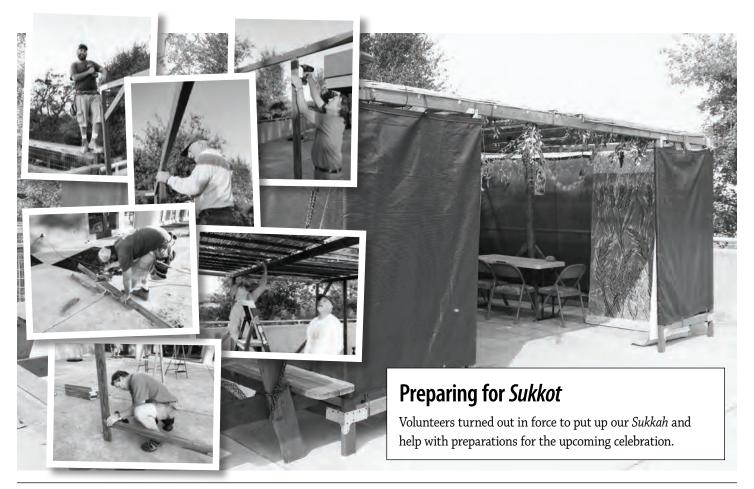
At the atonement station, students worked together to create a list of things to atone for with every English letter. At the scavenger hunt station, kids were given a small piece of candy and were told to eat it and then throw the wrapper away. They had to find clues that would allow them to find the trash can. This represented how easy it was to sin but how hard it was to atone.

All of the kids had a lot of fun going through the stations and learning about the High Holy Days.

# **In Good Hands**

Scenes from CST during the firestorm







**CST Car Rally was a Fun-raising Ride...** They showed up driving any vehicle they wished — sports cars, racing cars, luxury cars and even a VW bug — brand new and vintage. They gathered at 9:30 AM to say "hi" and got directions/instructions for the journey, a leisurely meander throughout the gorgeous Sonoma County countryside — along with a break for a bathroom stop. The adventure ended with lunch at 12:30 PM at the Mayacama Golf Club.

### Advertise in The Voice...



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Ads and payment must be received in the CST office by the 5th of the month to start in the next month's issue.

For more information, call 707-578-5519.

For your next event...

# **Think Shomrei Torah**

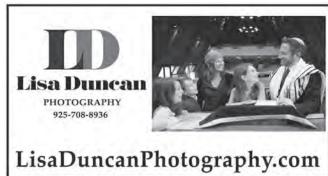
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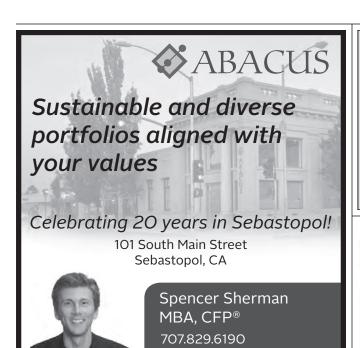
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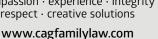
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#### The VOICE

shomrei@cstsr.org

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#### Simcha Torah — 5778







#### NOVEMBER **SERVICES**



**Friday, November 3** 6:15 PM — *New Member Shabbat Service* 

### Saturday, November 4

Weekly Torah portion: Vayera 8:45 AM — Torah Study 10:30 AM — Shabbat Service

### Friday, November 10

6:15 PM — Rabbi's Tisch with Jonathan Greenberg

## Saturday, November 11

Weekly Torah portion: Chayei Sara 8:45 AM — Torah Study led by Marcia Gladstone 10:30 AM — Shabbat Service

### Friday, November 17

6:15 PM — Shabbat Service honorina 4th and 5th arades

### Saturday, November 18

Weekly Torah portion: Toldot 8:45 AM — Torah Study 10:30 AM — Shabbat Service

## Friday, November 24

6:15 PM — Shabbat Service

### Saturday, November 25

Weekly Torah portion: Vayetzei 8:45 AM — Torah Study 10:30 AM — Shabbat Service

See our latest calendar at www.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.

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