



CONGREGATION
SHOMREI TORAH
שומרי תורה

THE VIEW

A GLIMPSE OF OUR CONGREGATION

CONGREGATION SHOMREI TORAH is the welcoming home of progressive Reform Judaism in Sonoma County. Blending the traditional with the innovative, we are a diverse, inclusive and socially conscious congregation that provides a doorway to Jewish life through worship, study, social action, fellowship and play.

We are married and single, old and young, LGBTQ and straight and members of interfaith families. Some of us are steeped in Jewish tradition; some are exploring it for the very first time. We are brought together by faith, scholarship, service, activism, music and friendship.

CONGREGATION SHOMREI TORAH
Sonoma County's Progressive
Reform Congregation

www.cstsr.org



ALL ARE WELCOME

SINCE OUR FOUNDING in 1974 by eleven Sonoma County families, Shomrei Torah has grown into the North Bay's largest Jewish congregation. The reasons so many are drawn to CST are as diverse and varied as our membership. For some, it's our welcoming, accessible approach to Judaism, combining traditional Jewish spirituality with progressive ideals. For others, it's our embrace of interfaith families or the doorway we offer to social action and community service. Still others seek to educate their children – and themselves – in the ways of Jewish life, history and culture.

Whoever you are and no matter what brings you, Congregation Shomrei Torah welcomes you.



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COMMUNITY

BUILDING relationships, serving the congregation and effecting positive social change are deeply rooted values of our community.

Our Social Action Committee seeks to be a force for good in the wider community, while our Caring Committee comforts individuals who are ailing or bereaved. Our *Chavurot* bring people of similar interests into friendship groups. The Men's Bagel Club meets monthly to strengthen the bonds of fellowship, while our active seniors participate in all manner of activities.

Volunteering opportunities, both within the congregation and in the community, abound.



LEARNING

SHOMREI TORAH offers learning opportunities for everyone. Babies & Bagels is for parents with their youngest ones. Pre-schoolers meet monthly for *Tot Shabbat* and KIDdish. STaRS, grades K-7, builds Jewish identity by exploring Jewish culture, history, ritual and tradition.

Chaverim challenges middle and high school students to apply Jewish values and teachings to everyday situations.

Lifelong Learning presents a variety of authors, scholars, activists and artists in a lively mix of educational and entertainment programs.

Members also participate in Torah study, adult *B'nei Mitzvah*, Hebrew language instruction, chanting meditation and more.



PRAYER

SHOMREI TORAH'S approach to worship combines a deep respect for tradition with a progressive sensibility. Weekly Shabbat services and holy day observances are accessible to those with little formal Jewish experience while satisfying those who seek a more traditional worship experience.



SERVICES

SHABBAT SERVICES

Friday night services at 6:15 PM
Saturday *Torah* study at 8:45 AM
Saturday services at 10:30 AM



BABYSITTING

Free Babysitting for Children

FREE BABYSITTING is now available for our Friday night *Shabbat* services, Saturday morning services when there is a *b'nei mitzvah*, and other events throughout the year. Childcare costs are underwritten by a generous grant from the Jewish Community Federation San Francisco Jewish Women's Fund. The grant is especially designed to help single mothers integrate into the Jewish community and to greatly enrich our Jewish community. Be sure to check with the office about babysitting availability at the events you plan to attend.

RABBI'S TISCH

2ND FRIDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT 6:15 PM

On the second Friday of each month, join your CST family for a Rabbi's *Tisch* (table) in lieu of regular Friday night *Shabbat* services. All *Tisches* take place at 6:15 PM and include a brief service (including *Mi'Shebeirach* and *Kaddish*), communal dinner and program.

Reservations can be made through the CST office.

FROM OUR RABBIS

AS RABBIS AT CST, we are so excited about what this year has to offer! Jewish spirituality is expressed in myriad different ways: prayer, study, meditation, social action, community. Our goal is to be an open door for anyone looking to enter into Jewish life.

We also share a deep love and commitment for teaching in both formal and informal settings and especially enjoy getting to know folks through our classes. As rabbis, we live by the cycle of Jewish life and also by the cycle of the lives of the Jewish community we serve. As corny as it may sound, we really are here for you “from cradle to grave.” Getting married? Please let us know. We would love to stand with you or your loved ones under the *Chuppah*. Having a baby? *Mazel Tov!* We can’t wait to talk to you about a *Brit* or a Baby Naming that is authentically Jewish and just right for you. Of course, we know that life is not just celebrations and we want you to know that we consider it part of our sacred calling to walk with you down the hard road of illness and death as well. For us, God is most present in relationships and in community. We can’t do it alone, but, together, we know we can make a difference.



Rabbi George Gittleman

PHOTO: THE GELFMAN'S



Rabbi Stephanie Kramer

PHOTO: THE GELFMAN'S

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LEGACY CIRCLE



LEGACY
CIRCLE

Legacy Circle

Please join the Legacy Circle and be part of the group of people who have committed to ensuring that our vibrant Jewish community exists for generations to come.

The Legacy Circle includes congregants and others who have chosen to remember Shomrei Torah in their wills or estate planning. The important element is that you have remembered Shomrei Torah in your estate planning regardless of the size of your generosity.

Jewish tradition teaches us that it is our duty to make the world a better place for future generations—*Tikkun Olam*. As you read this, please consider creating your legacy and the work of your heart for Sonoma County's Jewish population long after you are gone. Legacy members gather periodically to share thoughts and examine the broader future-focused happenings in our community.

ON COVER: Torah Mantle © Nina Bonos, 2011 with needle-point by Marcia Gladstone

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WE ARE HERE

Shomrei Torah's clergy and our entire synagogue family are available to share the joys and occasional sorrows of major lifecycle events. Whether a private service or a communal gathering, Shomrei Torah is here for you.

BABY NAMING



WE ARE ELATED to help welcome a new child into your family, our congregational family and the family of the Jewish people! We understand that every family is unique; our rabbis will meet with you to understand your needs, then will create a Jewish ritual to celebrate your new baby. Whether it is a *brit milah* (circumcision, also known as a *bris*) or a *simchat bat* (baby naming for a girl), we will celebrate with you in the synagogue at a *Shabbat* service or in your home.

HOUSE WARMING

CELEBRATE YOUR NEW HOME with a *Chanukat HaBayit* (literally, dedication of the house). During this brief ceremony, we will help you to affix a *mezuza* to your front door (you can purchase one in our gift shop). It is traditional to fill your new home with blessings, warmth and holiness, so invite family and friends to join you in this lovely ritual. Talk to one of our rabbis about how to make this a meaningful experience.

PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Babies and Bagels

It takes a village to raise a child, or in our case, a tribe! Babies and Bagels is a FREE program open to the entire Jewish community that meets once a month, usually on a Sunday morning, in a private home. Meet with other parents for a light nosh and refreshing adult conversation, while children interact with others in their age group. For more information and dates, visit the website or call the office.



Tot Shabbat

Tot *Shabbat* is an informal, child-centered *Shabbat* Service designed especially for babies, toddlers and preschool children. Everyone is welcome at our free services and programs: members and non-members, Jewish and non-Jewish, partners and spouses.

Tot *Shabbat* features a kid-friendly service, lively music and movement, exciting stories, art activities and open play. Tot *Shabbat* typically happens on the second Friday of the month at 5:00pm, check the website or call the office for details.



KIDDish

2-5 Year Olds

Welcome to KIDDish, an introduction to Religious School for all Pre-K children 2-5 years old. This is a preschool class where children can meet new friends and build Jewish relationships that can last a lifetime. Classes include hands-on art activities, spirited movement and music playground time and fun Jewish learning. This program is open to the entire Jewish community. \$180 for the year. Registration form available on the website.



STaRS Religious School K-6th Grade

Shomrei Torah Religious School (STaRS) is a nurturing, joyful and hands-on Jewish education program for children in grades K-6. Teachers and staff are committed to each child's experience. From art projects and games, to cooking and dancing, students have the opportunity to study and learn using multiple modalities. More information and registration forms are on the CST website.



JuSTY

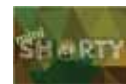
3rd-5th Grade

Third, fourth and fifth graders are invited to join Junior Shomrei Torah Youth (JuSTY), a social youth group that allows younger students to have fun together in a Jewish setting.



miniSHORTY 6th-8th Grade

Sixth, seventh and eighth graders are invited to join miniSHORTY, CST's chapter of NFTY-678, the Reform Movement's junior youth network of middle school-aged kids. This social group allows members to enjoy Jewish life in a whole new way and attend Camp Newman events where their community can grow.



GESHER 7th Grade

GESHER (Bridge) takes the place of our traditional 7th grade religious school. The program's exciting speakers and engaging activities encourage youth to explore their own thoughts and opinions as they progress towards Jewish adulthood. Seventh graders participate in field trips, overnights and a Camp Newman retreat during the year.



B'NEI MITZVAH TRAINING PROGRAM

B'nei Mitzvah Training Program

The time of a child's coming of age is one of the most meaningful experiences in a family's Jewish life. During this program, children begin the process of becoming Jewish adults and developing their own relationships with our ancient tradition. CST has structured our training program to ensure each child an engaging and spiritual learning experience. During the *B'nei Mitzvah* training, children receive one-on-one tutoring and work directly with a rabbi.

The culminating service is a liminal moment along the way, rather than an end-point. Our process is successful if it instills a desire to continue with education and involvement in Jewish community into adulthood. CST students are extremely successful and feel a deep sense of pride and accomplishment.

POST B'NEI MITZVAH PROGRAMS

SHoRTY 9th – 12th Grade

Shomrei Torah's Reform Temple Youth Group (SHoRTY), part of the North American Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY), the Reform Movement's national teen group. SHoRTY is open to all 9th-12th graders to enrich their connection to Judaism, socialize with other Jewish teens, attend local and regional events and enhance their leadership skills. NFTY strives to provide meaningful and engaging youth experiences for teens and fosters leadership at the national, regional and congregational level.

Madrachim Program 8th – 12th Grade

Shomrei Torah's *Madrachim* Program welcomes 8th-12th graders into our religious school to serve as Jewish role models. *Madrachim* serve as teaching assistants in STaRS classrooms, sharing their passions, knowledge and positive energy while assisting in the overall process of the religious school day. *Madrachim* learn skills vital to becoming Jewish educators in the future.

L'Taken 9th – 12th Grade

Are you ready to change the world? Every year, nearly 2,000 high school-aged students participate in the Religious Action Center's *L'Taken* Seminar in Washington, D.C. The program is designed to expose students to a variety of public policy issues, explore the Jewish values surrounding these issues and teach the skills of an effective advocacy. Throughout the weekend, participants gain the knowledge and tools to write an effective, persuasive and passionate speech on a topic of their choice to present to the offices of their senators and representatives during the trip. At the same time, students meet and mingle with hundreds of Reform Jews from across the United States, all of whom are in D.C. for the same reason—to pursue *tikkun olam*.

The group will also take advantage of the opportunities available in our nation's capital by visiting the National Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Smithsonian National Mall and celebrating *Havdallah*



at the Jefferson Memorial. CST sends the majority of our high school students on this program. It is a transformational experience for our teens to connect Judaism to Social Justice. Contact Rabbi Kramer for more information. Space is limited.

Jewish LA Teen Trip 7th, 8th, and 9th Graders

Discover Jewish Los Angeles during this fun, educational weekend. Participate in a unique *Shabbat* service, learn the history of Boyle Heights and other historically Jewish neighborhoods and attend a Jewish-Muslim dialogue.

Visit *Beit T'shuvah*, a Jewish rehabilitation center and participate in a program led by their prevention program. Eat a deli lunch and tour Pico Robertson with an expert. This is a trip that is not to be missed!

Single Parent Discounts

Single parent discounts are available for all CST programs! Confidentially contact Rabbi Kramer for more information. These amazing discounts are underwritten by a generous grant provided by the Jewish Community Federation San Francisco Jewish Women's Fund. The grant specifically aims to help single parents integrate into the Jewish community.

WE ARE HERE

FUNERALS & MEMORIAL SERVICES & Yahrzeits

It is a *mitzvah* (a commandment) to comfort the mourner, and Judaism offers a number of rituals to help the mourner cope with the grief of losing a loved one.

Our rabbis are available day or night—it's never too early or too late to call when death touches your home.

Whether planning a funeral, officiating at a memorial service or performing a headstone unveiling or *yahrzeit* ritual, our rabbis are here to assist you. After the funeral, we typically have a short service called a *minyan* at the home of the deceased.

The Caring Committee is available to provide food for mourning families. Our rabbis welcome any inquiry about mourning practices in Jewish tradition and at Shomrei Torah.

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WAYS TO CONNECT

CST Shabbat Choir

Gain maximum musical enjoyment with minimum time commitment! Come and learn the melodies of Friday night services by singing with the CST Shabbat Choir. No music-reading skills or vocal training required.



Social Action Committee: Looking Toward the Future...

Shomrei Torah's Social Action Committee (SAC) has been at work for more than 25 years using the principles of social justice and *tikkun olam* to create programs and events supporting the mission of the congregation. Our programs have gained wide recognition in Sonoma County which has increased Shomrei Torah's visibility and place within the larger community.

SAC produces the film series, *SAC Goes to the Movies*, which has focused on a variety of topics including mental health, LGBTQ aging, immigration, Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking, domestic violence, restorative justice, Muslim-Jewish relations, PTSD, teen suicide and masculinity. The series was recognized by the Union for Reform



Judaism's Religious Action Center with an Honorable Mention award presented at their annual meeting in Washington, D.C.

Other SAC programs include Elisha's Pantry, which feeds about 180 men, women and children every Thursday of the

year; Winter Clothing Drive, the Catholic Charities' Soup Brigade, annual *Yom Hashoah* Day of Remembrance, Posada Toy Drive, immigration reform, LGBTQ, Living Wage Coalition and the annual Rabbi Michael Robinson Memorial Lecture series.

SAC has partnered with many key organizations in Sonoma County on projects and special events. An ongoing effort involves the North Bay Organizing Project. Other partners include the YWCA, Family Justice Center Sonoma County, Restorative Resources, Jewish Family and Children's Services, the Press Democrat, St. Joseph's Health, Kaiser Permanente, and Sutter Health. Others include various local congregations of many faith traditions including several Protestant denominations, Unitarian Universalists, Congregations Beth Ami, Ner Shalom, and B'nai Israel.

By the way, you do NOT have to be a SAC member to work on a particular project. For more information, contact the office to be put in touch with the committee chairs.

Men's Bagel Club

Join the members of the Men's Bagel Club on the first Sunday of each month in the sanctuary for breakfast. Come chat with other members of the congregation, catch up with each other, and generally celebrate our presence at Shomrei Torah and in our community.



Each month we feature updates on current events at CST and host a variety of presenters.

Get informed about subject matters that are not always on our personal radar on both Jewish and community topics. As always, both men and women are welcome.

Chavurah

One of the benefits of membership in Shomrei Torah is the opportunity to become part of a *Chavurah*, from the Hebrew word for "fellowship." The concept has ancient roots: the *Talmud* defines *Chavurah* as a group of people with similar interests who gather to study, celebrate, socialize and dine.

The *Chavurah* committee works to put members with similar interests in touch with each other and to assist in the formation of a group. Shomrei Torah has approximately 17 *chavurot*.

Please contact the office if you are interested in joining a *Chavurah*.

Cancer Resource Team at Your Service

If you were recently diagnosed with cancer, there are other members of the congregation who have experienced similar challenges and want to help. Would you like someone to talk with you and/or members of your family? We are here to listen, answer your questions and hold your hand. Contact the CST office to be paired up with a member of the team.

CST Matchmakers

CST Matchmakers matches members with great volunteer opportunities. The committee's goal is to help all willing and able members feel a sense of belonging by volunteering. The best part is that volunteering leads to new friendships and makes our CST community stronger!

Members who join CST fill out a questionnaire asking about their interests. This committee looks at these lists and connects members with ongoing tasks, one-time projects or events and various other situations. Participation in CST is win-win.

When called upon please remember that it's okay to say "No" as long as you sometimes say "Yes".

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WAYS TO CONNECT



B2B@CST

Are you a business person or professional searching for opportunities to grow your business? Join the B2B@CST Business Networking Group and meet a variety of business people just like you, all members of CST. You'll forge and strengthen new friendships and alliances within our robust community.

Environmental Action Committee

The Environmental Action Committee's goal is to help create a sustainable environment for our synagogue and our wider community. The Committee focuses its efforts on three areas: achieving a green Shomrei Torah, environmental education, outreach and



The Environmental Action Committee takes great pride in CST's participation in composting most of our waste, installing solar panels and participating in a Community Supported Agriculture food delivery.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Program at Shomrei Torah

Boxes of fresh veggies and fruits arrive at Shomrei Torah every Wednesday afternoon from our wonderful associate Singing Frogs



Farm, located just west of Sebastopol. We have partnered with this farm for years. They have an active network of CSA members to whom they deliver veggies, fruits, eggs, olive oil and brown rice throughout Sonoma County.

Waste Management Program

Ma nishtana ha zevel ha ze me kol ha-ashpa?

Why is this trash different from all other trash?

Because it is 'food-related waste' and it is all compostable!

As *Shomrei Torah* (guardians of the Torah) we are also *shomrei adamah* (guardians of the earth) and our waste management program is an opportunity to express this important Jewish value. More than 90% of what had been considered trash is now compostable! We no longer have a trash dumpster and we are now on our way to becoming a zero waste synagogue!

CST is the first religious organization in Sonoma County to become part of North Bay Corporation's commercial 'green' program.



Women's Retreat

The Women's Retreat, offering a chance for women to get back to their roots, is a biennial event open to all adult women members of CST. The retreats feature contemplative *Shabbat* services, break-out sessions featuring Jewish teaching, art projects, yoga and other topics of particular interest to women, along with the opportunity to relax and rejuvenate. There will, of course, be food, wine, time for reflection and a chance to unwind from our everyday lives. We will have time to truly enjoy the beauty that surrounds us in the company of good friends.

Whether this will be your 10th retreat or your first, please join us!

Men's Retreat

CST Men's Retreat is an opportunity for the men of CST to build camaraderie, contemplate, play and enjoy great food. The CST weekend long Men's Retreat happens every other year, and on the off years there is typically a day long Men's Retreat. The Retreat Center offers a beautiful setting with hiking, sports, swimming and connecting with fellow men.

Caring Committee

The Caring Committee expands the outreach of our clergy in performing the *mitzvah* of *Bikur Cholim*, visiting the sick.

We make phone calls, hospital and home visits, and provide food after surgery or during serious illness. We also sponsor an annual brunch with Rabbi George for those who are bereaved, and deliver High Holy Day baskets with apples and honey and a *yizkor* candle to those who lost loved ones in the previous year.

All members of CST form a Caring Community. We invite everyone to help out occasionally. We welcome new members, but you don't need to officially join the committee to do acts of loving kindness. Please let us know if you can, on occasion, provide a meal or offer a ride to services to someone who no longer drives. And don't forget to call the office to let us know if you are ever in need.

DONOR OPPORTUNITIES

Yahrzeit Wall

In keeping with tradition, Congregation Shomrei Torah provides opportunities to honor the names of our loved ones (*may they be remembered for a blessing*). Our Yahrzeit wall and memorial plaques can be seen on the western wall within our Sanctuary. Both members and non-members are invited to contact our office to obtain donation information and to reserve a memorial plaque. Plaques are \$360 for members and \$720 for non-members.

Kir HaTruMah (The Builder's Honor Wall)

To build a Jewish sanctuary and home is to build the future of the Jewish people. On the *Kir HaTruMah* wall we recognize extraordinarily generous donors. Each donor recognized is also invited to write their personal story and dedication to a loved one in our enduring *HaBonim (Builders) Book*, maintained and displayed in our Heritage Display Cabinet at the main entrance to our sanctuary building. Various donor naming and recognition opportunities start at \$18,000 and are further explained in a brochure available through our office.

Kir HaKavod (Tree of Honor and Recognition Wall)

Congregation Shomrei Torah provides an opportunity to honor and celebrate friends, family or a special event (*simcha*) by adding a leaf or a pomegranate with an inscription on our *Kir HaKavod* (Tree of Honor). Donations benefit the congregation's Facilities Endowment Fund, create a permanent recognition, and provide lasting support for the congregation. Prices begin at \$360.



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There is Shopping at Shomrei



Visit the SHOMREI SHOP for your Judaica needs
...it's the window store with so much more!

We have all your household Judaica and gift needs: *mezuzot*, candles, *tallitot*, jewelry, greeting cards and more—and we can special order items for you as well. Proceeds help us all—they go directly to the temple's operating budget!