

SHERITH ISRAEL NEWS

FALL 2021

Worshippers and students return in person

CONGREGATION SHERITH ISRAEL COMES HOME

Three days after California reopened on June 15, Sherith Israel welcomed worshippers for their first post-pandemic Kabbalat Shabbat. Torah Study congregants exuberantly discussed the weekly parashah together the next morning. After 15 months of separation, the Sherith Israel community had lots to cheer about.

Three congregants said it best, all striking the same theme. According to **Helaine Weinstein**, “Being back in the sanctuary is like coming home—to my wonderful huge family whom I’ve missed so much.” Said **Thierry Jahan**, “It is absolutely phenomenal. It feels like coming home.” **Christina Jefferson**, board member and membership chair, added, “It’s incredible. It’s so great to see everyone. There’s just nothing like being home.”

[CSI Comes Home continues, page 5](#)



BEAUTIFUL MUSIC TO EVERYONE’S EARS: Music director **Jonathan Dimmock** plays our magnificent concert grand piano during our welcome-back Kabbalat Shabbat service on June 18.

If we build it, they will come — and stay

CSI PRESCHOOL TO OPEN IN 2022

When Sherith Israel’s new preschool opens its doors in September 2022, it will be more than just another education program. It will be a bold statement of a vision for the future of the congregation.

“This is the most exciting opportunity Sherith Israel has had in a long time,” says **Senior Rabbi Jessica Graf**, who believes that a preschool is essential to attract young families. “We will be building our community from youth up, fostering a life-long love of Sherith Israel and Judaism. We will be able to create relationships that last for generations.”

CSI president **Lindsay Braunig** knows from personal experience how important a Jewish preschool can be. “The young mother next door knew that I was ‘active in my synagogue,’” she recounts, “so she asked me if we had a preschool. I had to tell her ‘no,’ and, sadly, they are sending their daughter to another congregation’s preschool.”

Lindsay envisions the new preschool as a gateway to a lifetime of involvement by young families. “It’s not just about the two or three years of preschool,” she says. “It’s about the long-term relationships that young families form with Sherith Israel’s clergy and other families.”

An unexpected opportunity presented itself last year. In 1989 Marin Day Schools (MDS) partnered with Sherith Israel and California Pacific Medical Center (CPMC) to operate a preschool in our classroom space, using adjacent land owned by CPMC for the outdoor play space. For the past several years, the lease of the land was on a month-to-month basis. In 2017 CPMC sold that land to a third party, along with the historic library building on the corner of Webster and Sacramento and the former CPMC healing garden on Webster Street. Last year the new owner notified Sherith

[CSI Preschool continues, page 6](#)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

EREV ROSH HASHANAH
7:30 pm, Monday, Sept. 6

KOL NIDRE
7:30 pm, Wednesday, Sept. 15

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Abby Phelps

Rabbi Educator

Toby Glaser

Cantor

EMERITUS CLERGY

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A MOMENT WITH RABBI JESSICA GRAF

WELCOME HOME!

How wonderful to be back together in person again! Nothing feels completely normal yet, but I'm starting to remember what normal life used to feel like. In June, we had our first in-person Shabbat service since March 6, 2020, the night we celebrated Purim. Dressed in a giraffe costume, I spent much of the evening climbing over seats and loudly disrupting the service as I poured Dixie cups full of wine. We had a fun evening. Who could have imagined we wouldn't be back together in the sanctuary for more than 15 months!

As things open up for us here in San Francisco, there is much to redefine and to rethink. When will life feel comfortable again? Will I stop carrying a giant bottle of Purell in my purse? Those 15 months of lockdown challenged our relationships, patience and tolerance for the unknown. But through it all, we've taken care of each other, reaching out to help neighbors and friends. And asked for help when we felt isolated or afraid.

Before re-opening, I spent most of my time at home—or out on walks. We are so lucky to live in this beautiful area, surrounded by parks and beaches. Weeks went by when I didn't enter the synagogue. When I did, I made sure no one else was planning to be in the building. Occasionally, I would go up to the sanctuary and sit in our beautiful space, watching the sun come in through the stained glass. It was peaceful but eerie—too quiet, too empty.

Throughout the pandemic, I insisted that community could be built anywhere—and that the space didn't matter. Our ancient ancestors built both community and portable sacred space *bamidbar*—in the wilderness. We did this, too. We created new temporary—yet sacred—spaces; we navigated a modern wilderness. I am reminded, though, that while it is true that sacred space can be created anywhere—even on Zoom—it's so much better to be HOME!

Standing in our sanctuary on our first in-person Shabbat, I looked up, up, up into the center of our historic dome and was filled with gratitude. I thought of these words from the Torah: *Ma tovu ohalecha Yaakov, mishkenotecha Yisrael... How good are your tents, O Jacob, your dwelling places, O Israel!* This blessing took on new meaning for me after fifteen months of being separated from friends, family and community. How beautiful is our magnificent "tent"!

In the next weeks and months, I look forward to filling our sanctuary with conversation and prayer, learning and friendship. We will again be together for lifecycle events, Shabbat services, High Holidays and the reopening of in-person Studio, our youth education program.

We've been on quite a journey! I'm so grateful that we've arrived at this place together! *Baruch ata Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam shehecheyanu v'kiyimanu v'higiyanu lazman hazeh. Blessed are you, God, who gives us life, sustains us and has helped us to reach this time. Amen!* ■

PEOPLE OF THE BOOK

"When the seventh month arrived... the entire people assembled as one man in Jerusalem." — Ezra 3:1

In 538 BCE, following over forty years of Jewish exile in Babylonia, the Persian King Cyrus conquered Babylonia and issued an edict: Jews who wished should go back to Jerusalem and build God a house (Ezra 1ff). Not all Jewish exiles returned, but those who did undertook

what proved a long and arduous process. Following Cyrus' death, the project faced opposition by the people who lived in and around Jerusalem. The returned exiles pushed on, their faith and persistence leading to the completion of the Second Temple ca. 520–515 BCE. ■

4

Questions for CANTOR TOBY GLASER

Music plays an integral role in worship at Sherith Israel. We asked Cantor Toby Glaser what challenges he faced when he joined our clergy during the pandemic and his response to taking part in his first live service when we returned to our sanctuary on June 18.

Q. After leading Kabbalat Shabbat services on Zoom for nearly a year, how did it feel meeting congregants in person?

A: This was my first publicly open service since I was ordained a cantor 13 months earlier. It was so exciting to see—and hear—the community praying together. And the feedback I got was both welcome and amazing. People seemed to be pleasantly surprised when meeting me in person, which is fortunate, since I would hate for them to be disappointed with the real thing after a year on screen! It was incredible to feel the energy in the sanctuary, the way bodies change the resonance of the room. And hearing all those voices! I also enjoyed those ambient sounds that fill a synagogue—people standing, sitting and rustling prayerbook pages.

Q. What's the difference between music on Zoom and live?

A: Leading services on Zoom was challenging in terms of human contact—or the lack of it—and technology. There's a challenge in leading and chanting music when you can't see or hear the congregation. At Hebrew Union College, we didn't have any classes on digital worship. Now cantorial students are learning this out of necessity. At Sherith Israel, it took time to develop the technical side. **Peter Bonos** provided great expertise and worked so hard to tie together the clergy and our wonderful musical director, **Jonathan Dimmock**.

When I came on board for Zoom services, **Rabbi Jessica Graf**, **Rabbi Abby Phelps**, Jonathan and I were in different locations. We only saw and heard each other on screen. While clergy from many congregations continued to lead services from home, we jumped at the chance to lead from the sanctuary when it presented itself. For a long time, Jonathan played in his office while I was alone in the sanctuary. I felt fortunate that I was able to lead worship in such a beautiful historic space.

Q. On "opening night," what did you notice about the congregation?

A: Our building is so inspiring, and more so with real, three-dimensional people in it. In-person services constitute a truly humanizing and humbling experience. I

felt such unbridled enthusiasm. I also appreciated that congregants could be more comfortable connecting with their cantor in person, and that so many said hello. I'd never met most of them outside tiny Zoom boxes. Everyone was so positive about Shabbat and being together. I saw a lot of smiling eyes over the masks. And people told me how much they missed services in the sanctuary. I was so happy that our service and the music resonated with the congregation.

This also started a new learning process for me. There are many nuances about how congregants pray, sit and stand, bow, sway—a congregational minhag. Every synagogue also has its own emphasis on certain words and rhythms. Saying Kaddish with our rabbis and the community meant a great deal. Also, my drums and Jonathan on keyboard are much more exciting in person. In our b. mitzvah services the *Aleynu* prayer with the open ark as each service concludes becomes much more powerful than simply praying to a screen. Also, as we begin to hold Saturday-morning Torah services again, standing by the ark feels so special.

Q. How are you preparing for live High Holiday services and also b. mitzvah?

A: When the governor announced the June 15 California reopening, even if some guidelines remained amorphous, we anticipated that High Holiday services would be live and began to plan. There are liturgical choices to make, who says and does what when, selecting Torah readers, musical cues. Jonathan and I started working in May.

We have held five b. mitzvah ceremonies in May and June, which transferred from wholly Zoom services from people's houses back to in-person private ceremonies with families in the sanctuary. We could not yet have the congregation present. We conducted three b. mitzvah on one day in June, with siblings in the morning and another in the afternoon. Our ceremony for the siblings was particularly meaningful, as they only joined this year and had never actually been in the sanctuary before. So it was wonderful to provide such a meaningful opportunity for their first lifecycle event with the congregation.

Although I'm a cantor just beginning to lead Sherith Israel congregants in our sanctuary, I'm delighted to say, "It's great to be back." ■



B. MITZVAH BACK ON THE BIMAH: After a year of at-home Zoom b. mitzvah, CSI transitioned to family-only celebrations in the sanctuary in May and June. *Left:* Rabbi Abby Phelps, Rabbi Jessica Graf and Cantor Toby Glaser with b. mitzvah Olivia Almqvist. *Right:* Ben and Maya Bergman read from the Torah at their combined celebration.

Engaging with the world and themselves

B. MITZVAH PROJECTS ADD DEPTH DURING PANDEMIC

Interviewing a Holocaust survivor. Studying racism in the U.S. Collecting books for children in need. Cultivating a meditation practice. Gathering supplies for refugees. Feeding the hungry.

“The range of topics is amazing,” says Rabbi Educator **Abby Phelps** about the projects Sherith Israel b. mitzvah students choose to pursue while they study their Torah portions and prepare their divrei Torah speeches. “I’m continually impressed by how varied their interests are.”

Each b. mitzvah enrolled in Studio undertakes a project of 20 or more hours that explores an aspect of Jewish living, learning or service. “The students’ projects express their commitment to Jewish values, especially when they present what they learned to friends and family during their b. mitzvah ceremonies,” adds Rabbi Phelps.

Olivia Almqvist linked her parashah about the power of words to her project assembling a collection of 200 books that she donated to the Children’s Book Project. The local nonprofit accepts donations of new and gently used books for children from infants to teens.

Ike Braunig is working on an advocacy project that seeks justice for people who are wrongly incarcerated. To prepare for his project, Ike read the youth version of *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism and You* by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi. Explains Rabbi Phelps, “We met for six half-hour sessions to discuss the book and how racism continues to this day. We both learned a lot.”

Trevor Foss volunteered for HaMotzi and Chicken Soupers. The pandemic played a role in Trevor’s project choice. “I was cooking a lot with my mom, **Michelle Foss**, during the shutdown. I realized that other people aren’t as lucky as we are and can’t afford food,” says Trevor. “I also learned that there is a huge community willing to help out.” A lot of that community, the Chicken Soupers and HaMotzi volunteers, joined Trevor’s family, friends and Studio classmates on Zoom to celebrate his b. mitzvah in January 2021. His parashah, *Yitro*, includes the Ten Commandments.

Also impacted by the pandemic, **Zachary Kamil** explored meditation and mindfulness. He read *Be Still and Get Going* by Rabbi Alan Lew (z”l) to get started. “We were deep into the quarantine, and I wanted to do a project that I could do from home at my own pace,” Zachary says. His portion, from *Numbers*, relates to punishment and forgiveness. He applied the practice sections in Rabbi Lew’s book, met with Rabbi Phelps and sat in meditation every afternoon following school. “The meditation gave me time for self-reflection. It was a way to dive deeper into the lessons of the parashah and experience it myself.”

Perhaps the most poignant project this year was the one undertaken by Evie Richard. A student with a real interest in World War II, Evie wanted to interview a Holocaust survivor. Through Sherith Israel, Evie was introduced to **Ruth Kagan** (z”l), the mother of **Lida Morgenstein**. Ruth, born in 1927 in Czechoslovakia, and her cousin were saved by the Kindertransport. Later Ruth went on to join the Israeli Air Force as a radar operator.

“As I spoke to Ruth, I was thinking that I was the same age as she was when she left on the Kindertransport, and that my decision to have a bat mitzvah was a good one,” recalls Evie, whose b. mitzvah took place before California reopened. “Keeping my bat mitzvah date was important to me. I was moved by people who grew up in much more difficult times, like Ruth. If they could manage during a time when Jews were persecuted, then I could have my bat mitzvah during a world pandemic.” Evie was touched that Ruth was able to attend her bat mitzvah. Sadly, Ruth died in early June.

For a description of Kai Denmark’s b. mitzvah project on immigration, see “Profile: The Denmark-Hochiuma Family,” on page 10.

Yasher koach to all our b. mitzvah students, who take their studies seriously and learn how our Jewish teachings relate to the world and themselves. ■

CSI COMES HOME, from page 1

CSI's clergy, board and medical advisory committee parsed guidelines from the city, state and federal governments to re-open safely. On June 4, the sanctuary hosted a dry-run Kabbalat Shabbat service with board members present in person, while congregants attended on Zoom, as we had for more than a year.

The June 18 reopening required attendees to wear masks even if they were fully vaccinated. According to executive director **Gordon Gladstone**, "We acknowledged that some congregants wanted to wear masks even though they were vaccinated, not knowing which attendees might not be. Otherwise, they'd prefer to stay home and participate in digital services. We understood the emotions involved and wanted to make sure everyone felt comfortable."

Initially Torah Study participants were required to have vaccinations but did not have to wear masks. Now masks are again required. Some participants continued on Zoom and were able to ask questions and make comments along with those in Bart Hall. Program manager **Peter Bonos** and **Zach Migdail** played major roles in making the technology work for us.

The late-July rise of the Delta variant of the virus has created a new level of uncertainty and concern for the congregation. "We are keeping an eye on the Delta variant and plan to consult with our medical advisory council as we get closer to the High Holidays," noted board president **Lindsay Braunig**.

While the current situation is again in flux, our June reopening gave us a taste of what "normal" feels like. "I anticipated mixed emotions—great excitement about being back together, mixed with some fear of resuming in-person events," commented **Rabbi Jessica Graf**. "There was real delight in being able to be together in person, listen to music in the sanctuary and pray surrounded by community." *For more, see "Moment With Rabbi Jessica Graf," page 2.*

Rabbi Abby Phelps, who also led Torah Study on June 19, said, "It felt wonderful to be surrounded by a real congregation. It also seemed surreal and a little nerve-racking since this was

the first time I'd been in a roomful of people for some time."

Cantor **Toby Glaser**, who sang and chanted in his first in-person Kabbalat Shabbat since being hired by CSI, commented, "It was so exciting to see—and hear—the community praying together. It was incredible to feel the energy in the sanctuary, the way bodies change the resonance of the room." *For more, see "4 Questions for Cantor Tobias Glaser," page 3.*

Music director **Jonathan Dimmock** added, "Cantor Toby chose music that was familiar so we could all be relaxed. But at his and my insistence, we had a sound check at 5:15. Peter Bonos and I did a lot of rearranging in the front of the sanctuary so the piano would project well into the room but still be positioned so I could see the cantor for mutual cues."

Jonathan continued, "We were surprised at how strongly everyone was singing. By the time we got to the *Amidah*, the hair on my arms was standing on end. The whole service, from beginning to end, felt like we were involved in something that was unique, special, blessed. Everyone's enthusiasm was contagious."

While services have returned to the sanctuary, board committees generally will continue to meet via Zoom. Committee members were polled, and most were happy to stay on Zoom rather than drive to the synagogue. The board, to maintain bonding, will gather in person at least quarterly. The practice will be evaluated over the last half of 2021.

Board president Lindsay Braunig summed up, "Safety remains our most important concern. Fortunately, our community has a high rate of vaccination and low rate of infection."

Sherith Israel continues to offer a streaming option for people more comfortable staying home Friday nights. Meanwhile, Rabbi Graf, Gordon Gladstone and Lindsay Braunig will continue to consult with our medical advisory committee, review upcoming gatherings at the synagogue and be respectful of congregants' worship experiences. "As the world shifts," said Lindsay, "Sherith Israel will shift with it." ■

DELIGHTED TO BE BACK: Clergy and congregants enjoy special moments as we re-opened for Friday-night services and Torah Study. Top (l-r): **Rabbi Jessica Graf**, **Cantor Toby Glaser**. Bottom (l-r): **Dan Weiss** and **David Perlstein**; **Rabbi Martin Weiner**, **Steve Weiner** and **Norm Dito**; program manager and streaming tech guru **Peter Bonos**.





WELCOMING YOUNG FAMILIES: Sherith Israel's proposed preschool will create new opportunities for young families, like **Liz Ekshtat-Schultz** and **Zev Schultz** and son **Jonathan**, to connect to the congregation. It will also give young children, like **Shira Braunig** and **Ari Graf**, seen here with teacher's aide **Nina Morgenstein**, a rich Jewish learning experience.

CSI PRESCHOOL, from page 1

Israel and MDS that it would no longer allow the use of the leased parcel for the play space. Because having an outdoor play space is mandatory for a preschool, MDS opted not to renew its rental agreement with Sherith Israel when it expired in August 2020.

At roughly the same time, the new owners decided to sell the healing garden on Webster Street. The loss of the MDS rental income and the availability of the Webster Street property triggered a serious study of whether a Sherith Israel preschool made business sense. "It would have been hard to walk away from the stable rental income from Marin Day Schools," says Lindsay. "But when MDS left on their own, it presented a great opportunity to think about creating our own preschool."

The CSI board of trustees hired a consultant to assess the demand for another Jewish preschool in San Francisco. "The consultant helped us see that there is plenty of demand for preschool spots here, including within the Jewish community," notes Lindsay. "I feel good about our due diligence to make sure the demand is there." She adds, "We've really been thinking about how to grow a community of young families. I'm confident there is no better way to accomplish that goal."

The possibility of acquiring the Webster Street property made the creation

of a preschool even more realistic. According to Craig Etlin, whom Lindsay asked to spearhead the project, we are in active negotiations with the owner as this article is being written.

Craig believes it is "very important to have our own land," even though we have alternatives, such as walking the children up to Lafayette Park. Rabbi Graf thinks that the availability of the Webster Street property has been key to moving forward on the preschool.

Executive director **Gordon Gladstone** agrees that having our own space is desirable. Children would not need to cross any streets to get to the play area, and he notes that we could use the space for other purposes, like building a sukkah.

Craig, who coordinated our seismic retrofit project, is working with ELS Architecture and Urban Design and Plant Construction, the team we used on the retrofit, to define the potential scope of the project. He accepted Lindsay's invitation to be involved because he believes having our own preschool is critical to make Sherith Israel "a place where we can welcome and attract young families and support them in raising their kids as part of a strong Jewish community, beginning with preschool and continuing for many years beyond."

Clergy involvement is critical. Helping young families make lasting connec-

tions means that the new preschool must become an integral part of the Sherith Israel experience. Rabbi Graf emphasizes that "it is critical that we have control over the quality of the curriculum and teachers to make sure that the preschool's goals are aligned with the congregation's."

For Lindsay, the success of a CSI preschool in enhancing our community will flow from the opportunity for young families to build relationships with the clergy. While we will hire an experienced preschool director, Lindsay expects each of our clergy to be involved. **Rabbi Educator Abby Phelps** will ensure a smooth bridge from preschool to Studio, our youth education program. The goal is for families to see the preschool as the entry point to a relationship that transitions to religious school, b. mitzvah, confirmation and beyond.

Fundraising has already begun with generous commitments from the board of trustees, as well as other donors. While the full scope of the project and its ultimate cost have not been finalized, Lindsay is confident that the congregation and the Bay Area Jewish community, which rose to the challenge of our seismic retrofit, will embrace this project with great enthusiasm. "The retrofit was about saving the congregation," she says. "Creating a preschool is about building our brightest possible future." ■



BEHIND THE SCENES WITH GORDON GLADSTONE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

WHAT I WON'T MISS ABOUT ZOOM

I am so done with Zoom. Don't get me wrong, I love being able to work from my kitchen. I enjoy being able to end a committee meeting and then walk three feet to dinner with my family. I appreciate that it allows people to participate in programs without regard to their location or mobility. That is all great. What I am done with is the largely invisible work that goes into making Zoom programming great.

Whether it is Friday night services, a b. mitzvah or our wonderful Conversations from the Front Lines series, there is an enormous amount of work that goes into it. Each program is choreographed to ensure that the visuals work, the sound is clear and we know how it starts and ends. Often that takes multiple people to get everything set up. Each Friday we hold sound checks and rehearsals to make sure that nothing was disconnected during the week (camera firmware upgrades can really mess with our setup). A b. mitzvah involves making sure the family has their space set up so we can see and hear

all of the participants. We also have to make sure that all of the participants have a solid internet connection; we all recall watching Cantor David Frommer's feed freeze in the earliest days of the shelter-in-place.

During the actual Zoom program, one staff member keeps an eye on the waiting room, another watches the chat. Slides need to be shared, the sound is monitored constantly and there is always the risk of a camera going offline at the worst possible moment.

Combine this with the fact that there is little to do besides sit and stare at the screen in anticipation of disaster and you can see how draining it is. That is why I am done with Zoom. It has a place—and it helped us keep the congregation together through the pandemic—but after 15 months I am very ready to stand in the back of the sanctuary and listen to people complain about the heat. ■

CSI welcomes rentals back post-pandemic

RENTAL INCOME GROWS

Until the pandemic hit, Sherith Israel's various facilities provided many opportunities to attract critical rental income. With California open again, we are rebuilding our rental income stream.

Corey Christopher-Waxman, our office and facilities manager and rentals manager, is listing our various venues on an online booking service called Peerspace and other forums. "We also get quite a bit of business and referrals from our congregants, as well as neighbors in Pacific Heights." The synagogue's website continues to offer a rental page.

Sherith Israel is well-equipped to host any range of events, Corey points out. These range from afternoon cello lessons to multi-day corporate offsites. "My goal is to make any rental easy and stress-free for our clients, providing a memorable event for them and producing a reliable revenue stream for the synagogue."

CSI was never completely shut down. Midway through the pandemic, we recruited two medium-term tenants, according to executive director **Gordon Gladstone**. Starting last summer, a childcare program used our space while adhering to COVID guidelines set by the City. They continued to run the program through the school year, connecting children to their school Zoom sessions. An after-school program accommodated parents who needed to be out of their homes. And a day camp is running through the summer of 2021.

Our wonderful commercial-grade kitchen is also being put to good use. The Hamlin School for girls, located in Cow Hollow near Sherith Israel, reopened quickly, but the building containing its kitchen was being renovated. In winter 2019, the school approached CSI about using our Newman Hall kitchen. After work on the new building slowed, Hamlin extended its CSI kitchen rental through the fall 2021 semester.

Our classroom space is also being well used, replacing the Bright Horizons–Marin Day Schools preschool, which left in August 2020. Another day school, SF Schoolhouse, renting space at Conservative congregation Beth Shalom on 14th Avenue in the Richmond District, recently expanded. They're now renting additional classroom space from CSI for the 2021–22 school year. Edah, an after-school Hebrew immersion program, is also renting classroom space from us.

As to recurring rentals, the pandemic forced Alcoholics Anonymous to suspend operations until this past May, when they started holding sessions one day a week. As of summer, they have increased their frequency to two or three days a week, and they expect to resume their seven-day-a-week schedule soon.

Says Gordon, "I expect we'll see corporate businesses and neighborhood associations resume renting offsite space for team meetings. Maximizing the use of our space is a win-win for the surrounding community and the synagogue." ■

WHAT'S HAPPENING

For more information on upcoming events, including vaccine and mask requirements and Zoom and YouTube Live video links, please visit our online event calendar at sherithisrael.org/calendar. Please see weekly email updates in Under the Dome for up-to-the-minute information.

Questions? Contact executive director Gordon Gladstone, ggladstone@sherithisrael.org, 415.346.1720, x25, or program manager Peter Bonos, programs@sherithisrael.org 415.346.1720, x24.

Shabbat

FRIDAY EVENINGS

6 pm: Kabbalat Shabbat

Now in person in our historic sanctuary!

Welcome Shabbat with Rabbi Jessica Graf, Rabbi Abby Phelps, Cantor Toby Glaser and musical director Jonathan Dimmock along with guest musicians. *Also streams on YouTube Live.*

SATURDAY MORNINGS

9:15 am: Torah Study

In person in Bart Hall

Discuss the weekly Torah portion with Sherith Israel clergy, congregants and guests. *Vaccinations and masks required. Also hosted on Zoom.*

10:30 am: First-Saturday Service

Oct. 2, Nov. 6, Dec. 4

Cantor Toby Glaser leads a monthly learners' service presenting the meaning, structure and significance of our Saturday morning prayers. *In person only.*

S'lichot, Sukkot and Simchat Torah

S'LICHOT

Saturday, Sept. 4, 6:30–8 pm

Enjoy Havdalah, music and text study in observance of S'lichot. Prepare for the High Holidays with our clergy and the community. Services will conclude with a ceremonial changing of the Torah mantles. *Also streams on YouTube Live.*

SHABBAT SUKKOT

Friday, Sept. 24

5:30 pm: Yizkor

6 pm: Kabbalat Shabbat

Celebrate Sukkot with Rabbi Jessica Graf, Rabbi Abby Phelps and Cantor Toby Glaser leading a special musical program. Join our clergy and community after services to schmooze in our cozy sukkah, where you can shake the lulav and etrog. *Also streams on YouTube Live.*

SIMCHAT TORAH WITH STUDIO

Sunday, Oct. 3, 11 am

Join our family-oriented Simchat Torah celebration. *In person only. All are welcome.*



Chanukah

CANDLE LIGHTINGS

Nov. 28–Dec. 1, 2, 4 and 5, 6 pm

Zoom with the community as you light your chanukiah at home.

CHANUKAH SHABBAT

Friday, Dec. 3, 6 pm

Bring your chanukiah to the sanctuary for our in-person celebration. *Also streams on YouTube Live.*

Conversations from the Front Lines

Join leaders from the community for our ongoing series of online discussions and interviews on topics of current interest. Watch Under the Dome for upcoming events on COVID-19, and US and Israeli politics.

TIME DONE: SENATE BILL 731

Wednesday, Aug. 18, 5 pm on Zoom

Sherith Israel's social action committee and Jewish Community Relations Council present a discussion of SB 731, the proposed California legislation to allow some people who have served time for felonies to have their convictions expunged and the charges against them dismissed. The program will be moderated by David Newman, chair of JCRC's public policy committee.

Groups and Classes

PIRKEI AVOT STUDY GROUP

Rabbi Abby Phelps

Thursdays, 5 pm on Zoom

Explore Pirkei Avot (Wisdom of the Fathers), an ancient text offering timeless ethical and spiritual guidance.

ADULT INTERMEDIATE HEBREW

Noa Levy

Sundays, 1–2 pm on Zoom, beginning Oct. 6

Hebrew for the advanced beginner, focusing on reading and deeply understanding prayers from the Siddur. *Information: Noa Levy, noalevy8@gmail.com.*

JEWISH BOOK CLUB

Mondays, monthly, 7 pm on Zoom

Sept. 27: *The Gift of Asher Lev* by Chaim Potok. Discussion facilitated by Tanya Berezin.

Oct. 25: *A Bookshop in Berlin* by Francoise Frenkel. Discussion facilitated by Margaret Scheinman.

Nov. 22: *The Song of the Jade Lily* by Kirstie Manning. Discussion facilitated by Joan Korenman.

Dec. 20: *The Reader* by Bernhard Schlink. Discussion facilitated by Nancy Sheftel-Gomes.

Jan. 24: *Inheritance: A Memoir of Genealogy, Paternity and Love* by Dani Shapiro. Discussion facilitated by Myra Rothfield.

Information: Julie House, juliehousessf@gmail.com

ANTIRACIST DISCUSSION GROUP

Second Tuesdays, 6:30–8 pm

Talk about antiracism informed by selected readings. *For reading materials, media resources and online meeting details: Jesse Ratner, jesse.p.ratner@gmail.com.*

MEMOIR WORKSHOP

Mondays, biweekly, 3 pm, on Zoom

Share memories from another time, wishes for the present and desires for the future. *Members only. Information: Gale Gottlieb, galegott@gmail.com.*

High Holidays



EREV ROSH HASHANAH

Monday, Sept. 6

7:30 pm: Evening Service

ROSH HASHANAH

Tuesday, Sept. 7

10 am: Morning Service

EREV YOM KIPPUR

Wednesday, Sept. 15

7:30 pm: Kol Nidre

YOM KIPPUR

Thursday, Sept. 16

10 am: Morning Service

1 pm: Afternoon Programs

Please check the service flyer for a full list of activities.

2:30 pm: Healing Service

Led by Ruth Auerbach and Shira Shore, the service features piano accompaniment by Jonathan Dimmock.

3:30 pm: Afternoon Service (Mincha)

5 pm: Yizkor

5:45: Ne'ilah (Closing the Gates) and Havdalah

Additional Holiday Observances and Events

S'LICHOT

Saturday, Sept. 4, 6:30–8 pm

Enjoy Havdalah, music and text study in observance of S'lichot. Prepare for the High Holidays with our clergy and the community. Services will conclude with a ceremonial changing of the Torah mantles. *Also streams on YouTube Live.*

TASHLICH

Tuesday, Sept. 7, 3 pm

Crissy Field, West Bluff

Join us for lunch (bring your own) and symbolically cast away your sins by tossing pieces of bread into the water. *In person only.*

SHABBAT SHUVAH

Family Hike and BYO Lunch

Saturday, Sept. 11

10 am: Tennessee Beach

Enjoy an easy walk (1.7 miles each way) to one of Marin's beautiful beaches with youth-oriented activities along the way to celebrate the High Holidays. Led by our clergy and youth program manager. Bring your own lunch and enjoy the sunshine at an oceanside picnic.

Due to the lack of vaccines for young children, we will not offer childcare, youth or tot services this year.

Volunteer Opportunities

BLOOD DRIVE

Sunday, Aug. 22, 10 am–2 pm

Bart Hall

The need for blood is increasing significantly, and you can help. *Appointments required. To schedule your donation, visit donors.vitalant.org and enter our blood drive code: Sherith. Information: Mitchell Wunsh, mkwunsh@gmail.com, 415-895-2055.*

FOOD DRIVE

Sept. 15–Oct. 3

During the High Holiday season, Sherith Israel partners with the San Francisco-Marin Food Bank to collect canned foods for the hungry. Non-perishable food items may be donated in person at Sherith Israel.

CHESED COMMITTEE

Stand with congregants in times of need, celebration or transition to sustain the warmth and inclusiveness we value at Sherith Israel. *If you or someone you know in the congregation can benefit from support or you can offer food, supplies or phone support, contact Janet Parker, jparkersf@gmail.com.*

HAMOTZI & CHICKEN SOUPERS

HaMotzi:

Sundays, 9:30 am–12:30 pm

Chicken Soupers:

Sundays, monthly, noon–3 pm

Oct. 3, Nov. 7, Dec. 5

In person in Newman Hall

Each week HaMotzi volunteers prepare healthy meals for two San Francisco shelters. Chicken Soupers cook and deliver meals monthly for clients of Jewish Family and Children's Services. Donations of homemade baked goods are encouraged. *Contact: Nancy Sheftel-Gomes, hamotzi@sherithisrael.org, to arrange a volunteer shift, shop, pick up donations, cook or deliver food.*

SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Help get out the vote, support immigrants and refugees, and advocate for senior and homeless housing. *Information: Karen Alschuler, kalschuler@gmail.com, or Stacy Passman, spassman@gmail.com. See Tikkun Olam Corner, page 14, for current activities.*

JEWISH COALITION FOR LITERACY TUTOR TRAINING SESSIONS

Hosted by JCL online

Tuesday, Aug. 24 and Thursday, Sept. 23
4:30–6:30 pm

In just one hour each week, help a struggling young reader become more confident and successful. Change a child's life—and your own! *Registration: jclread.org/sign-up. Information: Nieema Galloway, ngalloway@jcrc.org.*

A unique immigration tale and family history

PROFILE: THE DENMARK-HACHIUMA FAMILY

The immigration story for many Jewish Americans begins among the tired and poor who sailed into New York harbor under the Statue of Liberty's upheld torch. But not everyone's Jewish coming-to-America story begins that way. Andy Denmark's and Yuka Hachiuma's tale is a unique one. It not only crosses oceans and continents, but also religion, race and culture—all leading to Congregation Sherith Israel and a spiritual home for the couple and their children, 13-year-old Kai and nine-year-old Mia.

"To find a community like Sherith Israel that is so welcoming of our family and the unique ways in which we are Jewish was important to us," Andy says. His family background is Ashkenazi Jewish on his father's side while his mother was born in Iceland, raised Lutheran and converted. Yuka is Japanese-born (her family came to the U.S. when she was four) and has not converted. They are raising Kai and Mia Jewish and also keeping them connected to their Japanese heritage. Now add to that the cultural and societal norms of life in America. At Sherith Israel we celebrate the richness that cultural diversity brings to the community.

"Sherith Israel has been wonderfully open and inclusive of diverse families. I feel as welcome as anyone else," Yuka says. "I did not grow up religious at all, but I came to realize how important the spiritual aspect is in people's lives. What has really struck me is that the core principles that are taught in Judaism are very much how I was raised, with the human values that were important in my family."

Says Andy: "For us Judaism is a framework that binds us to our community, to our values, and to how we should treat others and make the world a better place."

Andy and Yuka are conscientious about passing Jewish values and traditions to Kai and Mia. Sherith Israel has been integral in that role. When Kai was old enough to go to Jewish preschool, Yuka joined a CSI group for mothers in interfaith families. "That was a wonderful welcome into the community. It taught me the traditions and holidays and customs."

In preparation for his becoming b. mitzvah last May, Kai and his family attended a Jewish studies class for families that Rabbi Abby Phelps led on Sunday mornings. Topics ranged from analyzing the Ten Commandments to the full story of Purim to exploring views on gender in rabbinic texts.

"People at Sherith Israel are people I look up to," says Kai, who went through Sherith Israel's Studio religious school program on Sundays and now participates in Studio's teen program, which meets on Friday evenings. "Rabbi Abby is a great teacher who puts a whole new lens on a lot of things."

Kai appreciates new ways of seeing, as is clear from his d'var Torah and b. mitzvah project, both of which addressed the challenges of immigration and of being strangers in a strange land.

Kai's Torah portion, *B'midbar*, tells of the earliest Jewish immigrants, the Israelites who had fled slavery in Egypt and found themselves

"bamidbar"—"in the wilderness." In his drash, Kai shared his personal connection to the reading, noting Yuka's difficulties growing up in a Chicago suburb where not everyone accepted their new Japanese neighbors.

"It is challenging," Kai said, "adjusting to living in a new country where you don't always feel welcomed. My mom and her parents experienced discrimination like the Israelites. And as a result I've learned from both sides of my family what it feels like to be a stranger."

For his b. mitzvah project Kai created a website (www.kaidenmark.com) that addresses U.S. immigration policies and the plight of immigrants and refugees. Many of us can relate to such discrimination, and hopefully, like Kai, respond by stepping up and speaking out. Our traditions and teachings repeatedly implore us to remember that we were strangers once ourselves and so should treat a stranger kindly.

The hardships the Israelites faced during the Exodus more than 3,000 years ago parallel the current plight of refugees everywhere. Yet, as the Exodus shows, hardship can be the opening chapter of a larger story of resilience, strength and hope. Andy, Yuka, Kai and Mia prove the one constant throughout—new arrivals and their descendants not only find their place in an adopted society, they shape it for the better. ■

FINDING PARALLELS BETWEEN FAMILY HISTORY AND JEWISH TRADITION:

For Kai Denmark (bottom left), his family's immigration story echoed the story of the Jewish people, inspiring him to create a website about U.S. immigration policy and the plight of refugees for his b. mitzvah project. From top left: Andy Denmark, Yuka Hachiuma and Mia.



Sherith Israel—and congregants—in the news: In March, **Rabbi Jessica Zimmerman Graf** wrote the *J.*'s Torah column about *Vayikra* and her rabbinic school classmate's "parashah" cakes. How was her friend going to decorate a birthday cake based on the first portion of Leviticus? Before spilling the beans, Rabbi Graf led readers on a journey through the Sinai and the new rules governing the Israelites. The cake? It involved marshmallow Peeps standing in for turtle doves. In June, Rabbi Graf, a regular guest columnist for the *J.* tackled *Balak*, writing about what it means to return to normal and our beloved sanctuary ...

The same June issue of the *J.* features a photo of congregant **Ellen Rosen** reaching out to hug Rabbi Graf during our first in-person service in 15 months. Executive director **Gordon Gladstone**, also director of the Bay Area Temple Administrators group, noted that "people were so happy to be together. There were lots of reunions going on." ...

Imagine everyone's surprise and delight to see **Christina Jefferson** dressed up in 49er red on the cover of the *J.*'s May 14 edition. Christina, CSI board member, membership chair and HaMotzi regular, was hired this spring to lead diversity and inclusion efforts for the NFL team following her human resources career at Sephora. "I've always been in diversity work, I just didn't realize it," a proud Christina told the *J.* ...

Sherith Israel News co-editor **David Perlstein** penned an opinion piece for the *J.* online, published on June 9, which notes that "conversation about Israel requires clear, accurate language" and analyzes provocative words like proportionality, apartheid, Nazi, Holocaust and genocide. In David's latest novel, *2084*, a group of stand-up comics known as the Minyan attempts to counter tyranny with humor. It's available

on Amazon and barnesandnoble.com in print and digital formats ...

Studio teacher **Lea Loeb** graduated from San Francisco State University with a BA in journalism and a minor in Jewish studies. She is following her journalism dreams and writing for the *J.* Mazel tov Lea! ...

Also congrats to **William Geist**, who graduated from University of Colorado Denver with a degree in sports business and minor in economics. He is working the MLB All-Star Game and HomeRun Derby this summer ...

Advocating for Jewish students in San Francisco public schools, congregant **Todd David** commented in the *San Francisco Chronicle* about the teachers union taking a position on the BDS movement against Israel. "The teachers union has failed in its most basic mission this year, opening schools and educating San Francisco's children," he said. "Instead of focusing on that, they are weighing in on an international political land dispute that experts have been unable to resolve for 70 years." Well said, Todd ...

Jacqueline Tabas, social-media maven and daughter of **Connie** and **Eric Tabas**, recently applied her expertise to help nonprofits increase donations and raise visibility in an article appearing in *Forbes.com*. She outlines success strategies for using Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter and TikTok. Congrats Jackie ...

Over at the San Francisco Towers, **Steve** and **Laura Olson** have been busy. Laura has recently taken on the position of editor for the San Francisco Towers Newsletter, distributed to 300 residents monthly. Steve has been elected to the San Francisco Towers Residents Council ...

Teaching self-defense: BC—Before Covid—former sheriff **Adrienne**

Kristine led weekly chair exercise classes for residents of her apartment building (about 70 percent of whom are Asian). When class resumes, Adrienne will be joined by a Cantonese-speaking SFPD officer to help teach the residents to box, promoting safety and helping alleviate fear ...

Marking World Refugee Day, June 20, Reboot launched an online art and story project, *What Would You Bring?* and asked illustrator and CSI congregant **Lisa Brown** to share her family's stories. These include one about her husband's grandmother, who hid diamonds in the heels of her shoes when the family escaped Europe. Lisa drew a suitcase with her family's treasured items, as well as an empty suitcase for readers to fill in with our own treasured items. Visit www.what-would-you-bring.com to learn more and download Lisa's empty suitcase illustration to color in on your own ...

Finally positive news from one of our favorite *Conversations From the Front Lines* speakers, **Jeremy Faust, MD**, son of **Leland** and **Susan Faust**. From the time he was a student at Sherith Israel, music competed with medicine for Jeremy's attention. Thus he was a double major. When the pandemic proved too much, Jeremy put music aside as he tended to patients, researched and wrote articles. Once vaccines became available, music reentered his life. He wrote a piece for voice and cello that he conducted for Harvard's graduation ceremony. To top it off, he wrote a guest essay for the *New York Times* reminding us all to return to the activities we love. Thank you, Dr. Faust. That's advice we're eager to take! ■

By the News Nosh, aka Ellen Newman.

Please send bits and bites of gossip to ellennewman@earthlink.net. Be sure to put "News Nosh" in the subject line.



STUDIO SPOTLIGHT

RABBI EDUCATOR ABBY PHELPS

LESSONS FROM THE PANDEMIC

Despite its hardships, 2020–2021 was an exciting year for Studio @ Sherith Israel. The pandemic forced our entire program online, which allowed us to try out many new tools and techniques while bringing our preexisting strengths into sharper focus. Here are some of my key takeaways:

A playful approach to serious study works best. Play sometimes gets a bad rap. Rabbi Tali Zerkowicz notes in her essay, “Dare to Play,” many of us think of play as “a fun luxury or a frivolous and irresponsible distraction that keeps us from our ‘real’ work.” In reality, play “is about being awake, alert, engaged, collaborative, and alive... Play is the process that brings about both learning and change.” This is true for adults, all the more so for youth.

This past year taught me that Studio excels at using play to build Jewish literacy and identity. Playfulness kept students Zooming with us each Sunday after a long week of online secular school. Our youngest students learned Hebrew by singing songs, playing games and twisting their bodies into the shapes of Hebrew letters in Aleph-Bet yoga. They learned Torah by creating colorful wreaths of painted clothespins decorated with the names of the weekly parashot and acting out Torah stories with stuffed animals and action figures. Our older students’ Tuesday Hebrew sessions began with dancing along to a Hebrew music video and ended with asking teachers to translate funny English phrases of their choosing into Hebrew. Games like Jewpardy and projects like creating pop-up books of Jewish heroes enhanced learning about Jewish history and values.

We even brought play into T’filah. Each session concluded with “Stump the Rabbi.” Students were encouraged to ask me the toughest Jewish questions they could think of—and they thought of some pretty tough ones! Our youngest

students loved hearing me say I wasn’t quite sure what God was like or how God created the world. Our older students asked challenging questions about esoteric areas of Jewish practice and belief, including why the agriculturally-rooted practice of counting the Omer is now seen as a time for reflection and self-improvement. I did have an answer to that (it has to do with Lurianic Kabbalah) but not for every question, and I believe that was important.

“Stump the Rabbi” allowed me to model the Jewish value of *anavah*, humility, by admitting to what I did not know. Students learned experientially that questioning, exploring and debating are more important than having all the answers.

Our teachers are our strength. Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel wrote that, in Jewish education, “what we need more than anything else is not textbooks but text people.” That’s what we have at Studio: a teaching team that practices what it preaches, always modeling curiosity, creativity and kindness. Our Studio faculty is an extraordinary team of educators. Outside of Studio, all work or hold degrees in Jewish studies, psychology, speech-language pathology, education or the arts. And each is a mensch.

Studio became a haven for our students where they could truly be seen, express themselves and connect with teachers, madrichim (teen teaching assistants) and peers. To ensure meeting students’ social-emotional needs, we put new practices into place. We began each class by asking students about their “emotional weather” or what animals they identified with that day. These check-ins allowed teachers to adapt their lessons to their students’ moods.

To our teachers, **Chloé Erdan** (PK/K), **Natalie Weizman** (1/2, 7th grade and Hebrew), **Ana Dillman** (3/4/5), **Lea Loeb** (3/4/5), **Noa Levy** (6th grade and Hebrew) and **Kaitlin Wahl** (8/9): you

have my heartfelt gratitude and admiration. Studio could not have made it through this year without each of you.

Zoom is not all bad. While we missed setting up classrooms with students, working on group projects and hearing each other sing and pray, Studio online created new opportunities. Natalie and I regularly dropped off supplies at students’ homes, giving us the chance to keep in touch with their parents. Since most students were home during Zoom Studio, we got a greater view into their home lives. We seized the opportunity to have students find Jewish ritual objects, share beloved toys and creations with each other, and build tabernacle-forts in their living rooms. Zoom Studio helped us show students how Judaism could be an integral part of their everyday lives.

Zoom also allowed us to revive midweek Hebrew. When schlepping and parking are eliminated, meeting for Jewish learning twice a week becomes much more palatable. Also, features like screen sharing and breakout rooms make Zoom an excellent platform for teaching Hebrew. Tuesday Zoom Hebrew was such a success that we plan to continue it for the foreseeable future.

What’s next for Studio? Meeting in person! We are so excited to welcome our students back into our building (with some pandemic precautions in place) for our 2021–2022 school year. It begins on September 26 after the High Holidays. We plan to integrate innovations like Stump the Rabbi on Sundays. We are also planning special Sunday field trips to explore our city’s parks, museums and more through the lens of core Jewish values.

We have so much to look forward to this new school year. If you have Studio-aged children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews or friends, please encourage them to join us! ■

Movies, mysteries and indoor biking

CONGREGANTS CONNECT OVER COMMON INTERESTS

Sparks fly and wheels spin as Sherith Israel's affinity groups bring congregants together in new and exciting ways. As the CSI affinity program moves into its second year, the results have been "overwhelmingly positive," according to CSI president **Lindsay Braunig**.

The concept is simple: bring together a dozen or so people around a common interest as a way to build deeper connections. "We wanted to make it more likely that people know someone when they come to events and services," Lindsay explains. "What has been nice is that the groups consist of people of different ages and life stages."

Of necessity, the first round of affinity groups had to be Zoom-friendly, although the scope of interests ranged from crime novels to current events to Peloton. While the next round of groups isn't set, Lindsay expects a mix of in-person and Zoom groups. Some possibilities are a hiking group, a mountain biking group led by executive director **Gordon Gladstone** and an additional movie group. She also expects some of the first round of groups to continue, depending on the group leaders and members.

Lindsay was part of a group of Peloton biking enthusiasts. "We'd chat for 30 minutes, then get on the Peloton," she recalls. "I met some new people and got to know others in new ways. We really formed a mini-community."

Eric Safire and **Michael Gaines**, who co-lead the crime novel group, shared an equally positive experience. Eric and Michael are criminal defense attorneys in real life and avid readers of crime fiction. Their group included a number of congregants with trial or law enforcement experience, so the lively



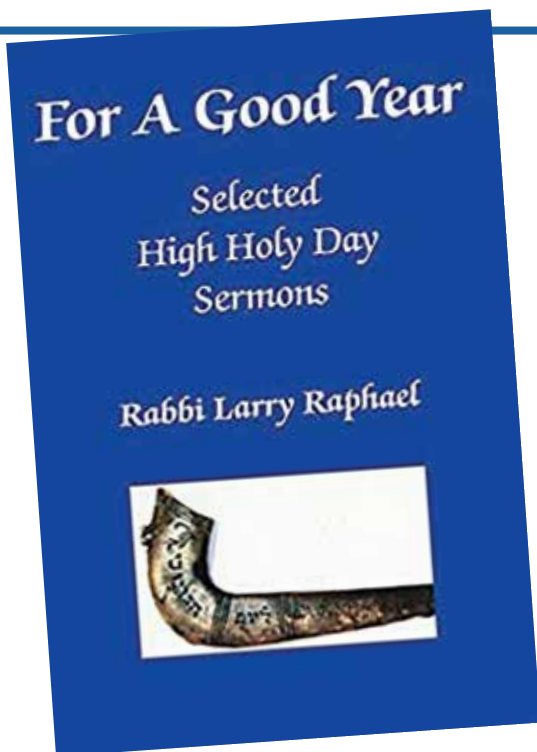
WHY ARE THEY SMILING? Despite the grim subject matter, the crime novel affinity group loves getting together. From upper left, **Eric Safire, David Newman, Greg Tolson, Michael Gaines, Benjamin Ruhs, Adrienne Kristine, Jerry Hurwitz, Fran Schreiber, Roz Tolson, Van Hart** and **Jim Davis**.

discussions drew on the members' personal war stories as well as the novel of the day.

In addition to being wildly entertaining, Eric believes the group accomplished its larger goal of bringing people together. "It nourished my connection with individuals and the temple," he says. "At the time the idea was broached, I was looking for connections. I found myself becoming a lot closer to people and the congregation."

Michael found the discussions "more than enjoyable because the group really mixed it up." He enthuses, "It has been a great activity to look forward to."

The next round of affinity groups will begin after the High Holidays. If you have a suggestion for a group you would like to join—or lead—contact Lindsay at president@sherithisrael.org. ■



New Book: "For a Good Year"

THE HIGH HOLY DAY WISDOM OF RABBI LARRY RAPHAEL

For all those of us who fondly remember studying with Rabbi Larry Raphael, *For a Good Year: Selected High Holy Day Sermons* will feel like a conversation with a dear friend. Compiled by his wife, **Terrie Raphael**, the book includes sermons from Larry's time as dean and professor at Hebrew Union College through his years as Sherith Israel's senior rabbi. Larry's sermons touch on the eternal themes of the High Holy Days. They also offer insights into the rabbinic process: how a sermon is born, grappling with issues that really matter and making choices that are sustaining all year long. *For a Good Year* also includes essays by some of Larry's treasured friends and colleagues, including **Rabbi Jessica Graf** and Larry's brother, **Rabbi Marc Lee Raphael**. It stands as a fitting part of Rabbi Raphael's permanent record.

For a Good Year: Selected High Holy Day Sermons is available from local booksellers and online from Barnes and Noble or Amazon. ■



SHERITH ISRAEL EXPANDS SUPPORT FOR IMMIGRANT FAMILIES

- Do you have a spare room or empty apartment?
- Can you help someone find a job?
- Are you fluent in a foreign language?

If your answer is “yes,” you can help asylum seekers and immigrant families in the Bay Area become self-sufficient. Sherith Israel Welcoming Resources, a bold initiative of our social action committee, will expand our ability to provide support from one family at a time to multiple families.

Helping families meet their basic needs is a critical part of our work as a sanctuary congregation, according to **Karen Alschuler**, co-chair of the social action committee. “The people who are coming to the border have nothing,” Karen explains. “If they come as a family group and are trying to support themselves, they need jobs and housing right away.”

Our tradition requires us to “welcome the stranger.” Karen notes that “many of our parents or grandparents were immigrants who came to America with little or nothing. We know how important the support of a generous community can be.”

As part of the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity’s Nueva Esperanza Accompaniment Team, Sherith Israel has been supporting individual families for some time, but increasing demand for services threatens to outstrip resources. “In the next six months, we expect a lot more people to show up in the Bay Area,” Karen says. “Requests are coming in at ten times the usual monthly numbers.”

The goal is to identify resources within our congregation so we can quickly match families with the resources they most urgently need. “We want to identify people in the congregation who are willing to be called,” she continues.

The committee is also looking for people who speak languages that will help us work with immigrant families. Spanish is obvious, but we also have experience with immigrants and asylum seekers from Eastern Europe and French-speaking Africa.

Karen is optimistic that congregants will step forward. “I will be thrilled to have people call and say they want to be involved. We’re looking for housing volunteers and potential employers, as well as people who can bring organizational skills to the project.” She believes that increasing the resources Sherith Israel brings to supporting immigrants “will redefine what it means to be a sanctuary synagogue.”

For information or to volunteer:

Karen Alschuler, kalschuler@gmail.com.

TIME DONE: A CONVERSATION FROM THE FRONT LINES

As we approach the High Holidays, our season of repentance, we have a chance to consider how to enable others to rehabilitate and redeem themselves. On August 18, the social action committee and Jewish Community Relations Council presents a Conversation from the Front Lines to discuss SB 731. This California legislation would allow some people who have served time for felonies to have their convictions expunged and the charges against them dismissed. The discussion will provide various perspectives on the legislation, including an interview with Isaac Yosef, owner of Hummus Bodega, who hires formerly incarcerated individuals and is a strong supporter of SB 731. The program will be moderated by **David Newman**, chair of JCRC’s public policy committee.

MAKING SOCIAL ACTION PART OF SHABBAT

Shabbat is a time when we commit ourselves to *tikkun olam*, repairing the world. Beginning this fall, we will make our social action work an explicit part of our Shabbat observance by including a brief announcement of the committee’s work in each Kabbalat Shabbat service. Karen hopes it will raise the profile of the congregation’s social action work and encourage even more people to get involved.

JEWISH COALITION FOR LITERACY

Volunteer reading tutors are needed more than ever in Bay Area public schools. In just one hour each week, you can help a struggling young reader become more confident and successful. Join the Jewish Coalition for Literacy (JCL) for this deeply meaningful *tikkun olam* opportunity. It will change a child’s life—and your own! JCL will hold online training sessions for new volunteer tutors on Tuesday, August 24, and Thursday, September 23, from 4:30–6:30 pm.

Register at jclread.org/sign-up. Information: Janet Parker, 415-282-1495 or jparkersf@gmail.com. ■



SAY HELLO: We are delighted to welcome **Talia Banarie** to the Sherith Israel team. Talia succeeded **Nia Taylor** as membership and development manager in March.

NEW BABIES

Emily Back, child of David and Stephanie Back
Willa Claire and **Maya Caroline Feldman-Focht**, children of Rachel Feldman and Evan Focht and grandchildren of Janet Parker and Chris Focht

Ezra Rosenblatt, child of Seth and Juliana Rosenblatt and grandchild of Erica and Andrew Rosenblatt

Rami Sackeim, child of Maryl and Alexander Sackeim and grandchild of Sandee Blechman and Steven Goldberg

BABY NAMINGS

Emily Back, child of David and Stephanie Back
Laura Gould, child of Doug and Pauline Gould and sister of Greta Gould

Ezra Rosenblatt, child of Seth and Juliana Rosenblatt

Rami Sackeim, child of Maryl and Alexander Sackeim and grandchild of Sandee Blechman and Steven Goldberg

B. MITZVAH

Olivia Almqvist, child of Heather Barrett and Johan Almqvist

Ben and **Maya Bergman**, children of Adriana and Erik Bergman

Kai Denmark, child of Andrew Denmark and Yuka Hachiuma

Trevor Foss, child of Michelle and Christopher Foss

Parker Harad, child of Mitchel and Kristin Harad

Zachary Kamil, child of David Kamil and Jun Yamashiro

Evie Richard, child of Marcy Zelmar and Andrew Richard

WEDDINGS

Zac Bloom and **Kristy Bruehl**

Jason Selinger and **Diandra Silva**

NEW MEMBERS

Adriana and **Erick Bergman** and children, Benjamin and Maya

Roman and **Nelly Fayman**

Kazue Lowenstein

Chris Parascandolo and **Jacqueline Wachtel** and child, **Mason Parascandolo**

Maryl and **Alexander Sackeim** and children, **Cooper** and **Rami**

Jason Selinger and **Diandra Silva**

Dale Silver

Dmytro Voytenko and **Nicole Cooksey-Voytenko**

Doug and **Judy Weil**

CHOOSING JUDAISM

Kristy Bruehl

Nelly Fayman

Chris Parascandolo

Dmytro Voytenko

COLLEGE BOUND

Shoshanah Alessi – Smith College, linguistic anthropology

Emmy Etlin – UCLA, art history

Max Klivans – Hamilton College, physics and rowing

David Milberg – UC Berkeley, physics

Nina Morgenstein – University of Colorado, Denver, major undeclared

Jessica Schwarz – Boston University, environmental sciences

May the memory of the righteous be for a blessing.

Ingrid Apter, mother of Janine Cuthbertson & Brian Apter

Dr. Elliot S. Eisenberg, fiancé of Jacalyn Kornblatt

Doba Gendelman, mother of Arkady Gendelman and mother-in-law of Irina Gendelman

Carole Jean Hemingway, wife of Fred Harris and mother of Dan and John Himelstein

Ruth Kagan, mother of Lida Morgenstein, mother-in-law of David Morgenstein and grandmother of Nina and Orly

Arnie Kahn, husband of Jane Carey Kahn

Leon Mirviss, father of Alan Mirviss, father-in-law of Diane Fellman and grandfather of Isaac and Lillian

Stanley Newman, father of David Newman, father-in-law of Ellen Newman and grandfather of Benjamin

Carolyn Olson Stelman, sister of Steve Olson and sister-in-law of Laura Olson

Iris Tandler, mother of Bob Tandler and mother-in-law of Valli Benesch

Joanne Weiss, mother of Dan Weiss and mother-in-law of Lisa Weiss



UPCOMING B. MITZVAHW: In the next few months, the congregation can celebrate along with our b. mitzvah students and their families. From left: **Ike Braunig**, son of **Lindsay** and **Warren Braunig**; **Willa** and **Simone Andrade**, daughters of **Rebecca Handler** and **David Andrade**; **Harrison Maring**, son of **Karen Aidem** and **Harry Maring**. Also being called to the bimah, **Emma Raukman**, daughter of **Gary** and **Katherine Raukman**.



CONGREGATION SHERITH ISRAEL
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WWW.JEWISHCEMETERIES-SF.ORG

Join our **Circle of Lights** legacy society. Include Sherith Israel in your estate plans.

Questions?

Contact Gordon Gladstone, executive director, 415.346.1720 x25 or ggladstone@sherithisrael.org



SHERITH ISRAEL

2266 California Street • San Francisco, CA 94115

415.346.1720 • www.sherithisrael.org

Member of the Union for Reform Judaism since 1903



OPEN FOR THE *High Holidays*

We look forward to welcoming you in our sanctuary—safely and joyously—for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

EREV ROSH HASHANAH

Monday, Sept. 6

ROSH HASHANAH

Tuesday, Sept. 7

KOL NIDRE — EREV YOM KIPPUR

Wednesday, Sept. 15

YOM KIPPUR

Thursday, Sept. 16

For a complete schedule of services and events, see page 9.

Digital access will also be provided.