

SHERITH ISRAEL NEWS

SEPTEMBER –
DECEMBER 2022

Bugs, birds and ... B'reishit

NEW CSI PRESCHOOL COMBINES JEWISH, ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES

God created ... all the living creatures of every kind that creep ... Genesis 1:21

When Sherith Israel's new preschool opens in May 2023, the real action won't be in Newman Hall. A summer camp program will take 3–6-year-olds into the dirt and under the rocks of Lafayette and other local parks. "Our preschool will be a mostly outdoor, nature-centered program," says preschool director **Carolyn Mulcahy**. "It really fits with the mission of Sherith Israel's climate action team and the Jewish values of being keepers of the earth."

The full preschool program will launch in September 2023 with 30–40 children ages 2–6. Carolyn describes a typical day

New Preschool continues, page 5



PRESCHOOL RECRUITMENT: Preschool director **Carolyn Mulcahy** gets to know pre-preschooler **Frankie** at a recent Tot Shabbat.

Studio welcomes new education director

JONATHAN EMANUEL BRINGS DYNAMIC VISION TO CSI

Longtime Bay Area Jewish educator **Jonathan Emanuel** joined Sherith Israel as our new education director this July. He will lead the congregation's education programs, working alongside CSI clergy, preschool director **Carolyn Mulcahy** and youth programs director **Natalie Connell**.

Search committee member **Erik Migdail** emphasizes, "Jonathan had everything we were looking for: experience working in temples, experience running religious schools, experience managing staff, experience recruiting teachers, experience recruiting families and experience as a classroom teacher. Not only has he held numerous positions in the Jewish educational world, but Jonathan is passionate about building community. And he is marvelously charismatic."

Building community, or perhaps more accurately, rebuilding community, is at the top of Jonathan's agenda. "What

does it mean to bring community back after the pandemic? How do we build community up again, not just among students, but among families so they feel part of a greater cohort that they've been missing?"

Parents, especially of young children, are hungry for community and support, Jonathan notes. They've been stuck at home. "But Judaism offers centuries of support structures. Fun things to bring families together like holidays and Shabbat. Going on a walk. Just doing things together. Small things are going to make big impacts."

Jonathan's approach to Jewish education springs from teaching middle school at Brandeis Marin Day School along with jobs at synagogues, Jewish educational organizations and camps.

The key? Making Jewish education relevant to students' lives. He loves to "demystify" Judaism. "When we can

Jonathan Emanuel continues, page 4

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

REMEMBER—REFLECT—RETURN
SUNDAYS, SEPT. 11, 18, 25
10–11:30 AM

REPARATIONS TEACH-IN
SUNDAY, SEPT. 18, 2–4 PM

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SHERITH ISRAEL NEWS

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A MOMENT WITH GEORGE ALTSHULER, RABBINIC INTERN

CHANGING ACTIONS, NOT IDENTITIES

A few years ago, I stumbled upon a sentence that changed the way I think about the High Holidays. Unsurprisingly, this sentence came out of a Jewish text study. Sitting around a table in a rabbi's apartment in Washington, D.C., a handful of unassuming young adults and I encountered an excerpt from the work of psychologist Carl Rogers. Rogers wrote: "The only way to really change is to accept that you can't change." This paradoxical idea touched on something deep in me. For years, I had undertaken the same process during the High Holidays. I would confess to the same misdeeds. It didn't seem like I was making progress.

The underlying question of whether it is possible to change gets to the heart of a central concept in our liturgy for this season: *t'shuvah*. *T'shuvah* famously defies translation. It most often means repentance, but it also means return and turning to the side. The concept is so essential and yet hard to sum up. Throughout the centuries, enough Jewish ink has been spilled on analyzing exactly what *t'shuvah* is to fill the Galilee.

Tractate Yoma in the Talmud argues that one can know that *t'shuvah* is complete only after one is given the opportunity to repeat the same action again, and one chooses not to. The medieval sage Maimonides says something simi-

lar. In this example and in others, our tradition emphasizes the importance of changing our *actions* rather than changing our fundamental identities. As parents and teachers, who have to correct children's behavior, will often tell you, it's important to make a distinction between one's identity and one's actions. Our Jewish tradition also makes this distinction. Perhaps this is a two-step process. First we accept who we fundamentally are—beings who struggle and make mistakes, but who are valuable and worthy of respect. Once we take this first step of acceptance, we can do the work of changing our actions.

Just before tractate Yoma pronounces that we have completed *t'shuvah* only when we refrain from the same mistake, the Talmud cites the opinion of Rabbi Meir. He says that *t'shuvah* is so great that if one person is successful in *t'shuvah*, the entire world is forgiven. That is how important this work of transformation can be.

As we do this work of *t'shuvah* during this season, it seems to me we would be best served by separating our fundamental identities as flawed creatures worthy of respect from our actions.

During these months, may we analyze and critique our actions, and may we remember that we are more than our mistakes. *Shanah tovah*. ■

PEOPLE OF THE BOOK

Return [to God] one day before you die. — Avot 10:5*

T'shuvah, or repentance, challenges us each year at Yom Kippur—unless we heed the wisdom of Rabbi Eliezer that we repent the day before we die. But how, he asked, do we know on which day we will die? We don't. Therefore, we should repent each day. Rather than confine our struggle to turn back to God during the ten Days of Awe, we're bet-

ter served when each day of the year we heed our values, correct wrongs and ask forgiveness of people we have offended—while we can. The last is critical. The Mishnah (Yoma 8:8–9) teaches: . . . for transgressions between a person and another, Yom Kippur does not atone until he appeases the other person. ■

* *Pirké Avot: Wisdom of the Jewish Sages*, edited and commentary by Chaim Stern

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Questions for RABBI JESSICA GRAF

As we approach the New Year, our world both needs repair and demands near constant decision-making. But as individuals and as Jews, we have a lot of decision fatigue. We asked Rabbi Jessica Graf how she sees that affecting the congregation and what can Judaism teach us about staying the course and moving forward.

Q: The long tail of Covid is complicating what used to be easy choices. How are you seeing this play out for congregants?

A: Three summers of this pandemic—frankly, we’ve all had enough—have disrupted our lives and upended our plans. Things still feel confusing: What events can we attend? When do we need masks? Is it safe to gather at all? Though I respect individual choices, I also see the negative effects of isolation. People are short-tempered, frustrated, lonely and feeling anti-social. We see increased anxiety and depression in all age groups. Though we need to remain vigilant about our health—and everyone else’s—we also need more human contact.

The good news is that our team at Sherith Israel has weathered the pandemic with poise, grace and generosity of spirit. Everyone has worked hard to pivot, reinventing their roles to keep our community together. I’m grateful to have such wonderful colleagues. We are all excited to welcome everyone back to California Street. We are planning many programs leading up to the High Holidays and look forward to being together in the sanctuary for services this year.

Q: What choices have you made within the congregation to accommodate the current moment?

A: Our summer literary series was terrific—allowing us to gather living room-style to hear our CSI authors talk about and read from their new books. We also recorded the talks, so if you missed them, you can still enjoy hearing from our CSI writers on YouTube.

We’ve also been doing hybrid Shabbat services, in person for those who are comfortable, and livestreamed for those joining from home. Congregants can attend whichever way feels best. We say *Kiddush* and bless the challah on the bimah, but we’ve started inviting people to stay for an oneg after services. It’s lovely to hang out again. Torah study and other adult classes continue to be on Zoom. Many congregants enjoy Zoom’s ease. People from all over the country can join the call—and have—and no one has to park!

Q: Looking ahead, what are the staff and clergy excited about?

A: This summer, we had a day-long retreat to welcome new team members, brainstorm and re-envision what comes next. We laughed as we tried to build towers of marshmallows and bucatini pasta. We collaborated as we followed tricky directions as a group. We all came away from the day feeling energized and excited about working together. And, most importantly, we shared our ideas for building community.

We also took turns explaining how we see ourselves on the team and realized how our roles link together—and what makes a strong staff. It became clear that we each play a different role, each staff member contributing to the goal: Grow Sherith Israel so we can build a stronger Jewish community.

Q: As we move into the new year, how do we re-engage fully with our community and the world around us?

This is such a challenging question because things are not back to normal yet. That said, there are many opportunities to re-engage. And we must. We need to exchange ideas, learn together, debate and dialogue, and just schmooze. We need to share our lives again. It is time for us to banish fear and take back control of our lives. It’s imperative.

This timeless message from Pirkei Avot seems so relevant and inspirational: *Kol ha olam kulo, gesher tzar meod; V’ha ikar, lo lefached clal. The whole world is a very narrow bridge; the main thing is not to be afraid.* Wise, ancient words, they inspire us today. The world has felt like a very narrow bridge for too long. But like our ancestors did, we must cross to a new beginning.

As we look to a new year, each of us should plan our return to regular life. It’s time to get back to helping others and building a better world. To start, I invite everyone to our Elul adult learning series on three Sundays, September 11, 18 and 25, leading up to Rosh Hashanah. We will learn with Dr. Susan Borkin, the preeminent thinker on the Jewish use of labyrinths. This in-person class will prepare us for the holidays with themes of renewal and repair. We’ll also have a chance to visit a nearby labyrinth for a meditative session right before we enter the new year. It’s a great way to head into the year 5783! ■

JONATHAN EMANUEL, from page 1

talk about what's going on in the world and make an immediate connection to what students are learning, that's dynamic," he says. "Take the pandemic. There's so much in the Torah that's relevant. Torah talks about sickness in the Israelites' camp, how diseases spread and how people treated each other during that time. How they isolated themselves or didn't isolate themselves. How to talk to somebody and not embarrass them."

When the Parkland, Florida, shooting happened in 2017, Jonathan was teaching eighth-grade students. "They were shaken but wanted to learn and be active about it. We went through texts about weapons. The Israelites didn't have guns, but they had weaponry. So the class talked about what it means to be responsible for something that is deadly."

The environment offers younger students a wonderful way to engage Jewishly. Jonathan and preschool director Carolyn Mulcahy have been talking about outdoor- and eco-Judaism. "There are multiple stories in the Torah and around holidays that emphasize conserving our resources, ways to plant or to treat our land and each other." According to Jonathan, we can look at the story of the Israelites' going down to Egypt as a tale about climate change. "They were climate refugees." Jonathan's goal is to give students a Jewish lens to help them understand what's going on in the world today. At all grade levels, Jonathan thinks about teaching in terms of questions, not answers. "If you only come with answers, you shut it all down."

Studio's schedule is similar to that of recent years. Students will be at Sherith Israel on Sunday mornings from 9:30–12:30. Hebrew classes take place on Zoom on Tuesdays. Teen classes meet on Fridays for Shabbat services with early evening classes following. Jonathan and Natalie will launch a Sunday afternoon elective option, including mental health first aid and working with HaMotzi.



Most Studio teachers are returning. "We need to hire a couple of positions, but we're in good shape," says Jonathan. Reflecting on the role of teachers at Studio, Jonathan comments, "They are part of the community—role models who feel at home in their Judaism and are proud to share that with their students and others."

Jonathan is clearly at home with his Judaism. He laughs that his Jewish lens is naturally "progressive" since he grew up in Berkeley. "I grew up kind of Conserva-dox. I just call myself Jewish. I don't really affiliate with a movement." He adds, "Most of my teaching and professional work has taken a much broader approach than one movement suggests." He acknowledges that he's new to Reform Judaism and is eager to be a part of it, given how the community accepts people and adapts to change.

Jonathan sees CSI as a historic synagogue with an amazing legacy. He has taught the history of the Bay Area Jewish community and the Gold Rush. His wife, **Cara Buchalter**, who works at the Contemporary Jewish Museum, is also fascinated with local history. "To have a link to the earliest Jews in California is huge," he says. "I love that." ■



Training teens to help each other

TEEN MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING COMES TO CSI

Teens and stress have been top of the news since the pandemic grounded the country.

Add school shootings, bullying, racial injustice, anti-

semitism and existential climate fears to the mix, and teens are ripe for feelings of anxiety and depression.

"I was always aware we could be doing more for our teens," says youth programs director **Natalie Connell**. She and other CSI educators have been certified in Youth Mental Health First Aid through the National Council for Mental Well-being. They now can offer initial help and support to teens in crisis. Sherith Israel is doing the training under the auspices of Jewish Learning Works.

The training CSI staff did initially taught them to recognize signs of stress and gave educators tools to talk with young people and point the way to assistance, if necessary. Natalie notes, "We don't diagnose kids or identify what the problem is. We are trained to identify that there is a problem and help kids get the help they need."

Natalie wondered how she could bring something like this training to the teens themselves. She discovered that the National Council for Mental Well-being is launching a program for teens called Teen Mental Health First Aid Training. Sherith Israel is sponsoring Natalie to train as a trainer to certify teenagers in peer mental health first aid.

To qualify, an organization like Sherith Israel needs ten percent of its staff to be

certified in youth mental health first aid. According to Natalie, that means trusted adults know what to do and what resources are available for support. CSI educators will train with Jewish Learning Works coordinator **Deb Massey** as part of their professional development time.

The new teen training is open to tenth- to twelfth-graders in the Teens at Studio cohort. It consists of six 45-minute sessions and includes a parent meeting. A workbook will help them digest new ideas and concepts regarding being a better friend and guiding someone in crisis towards help. "Our teens really want to be compassionate, helpful people," adds Natalie. "We are the only synagogue I know of that's doing anything like this." ■

GEORGE ALTSHULER RETURNS TO CSI AS RABBINIC

INTERN: Studying remotely in San Francisco for his fifth and final year at Hebrew Union College, New York, George will intern 10 hours a week at Sherith Israel. George became a b. mitzvah and was confirmed at CSI. Upon his rabbinic ordination this May, he will become the ninth rabbi who grew up at Sherith Israel. A graduate of Middlebury College in Vermont, George worked as a journalist and a teacher in Washington, DC, and Haiti before deciding to become a rabbi. He and his wife, **Kate Bass**, are living with his mom, **Julie Cheever**, in the Richmond District. "It means so much to work at Sherith Israel as I complete my rabbinical studies," he says. "From our awe-inspiring sanctuary to the kindness of this community to my memories of Rabbis Weiner and Raphael, Sherith Israel means so much to me."



NEW PRESCHOOL, from page 1

for preschoolers: "They'll arrive in the morning, be greeted by their teachers, enjoy a group activity like circle time, and have a healthy snack together before heading outdoors to learn all about the environment through play in nature." They will walk or be transported to outdoor spaces that offer natural exploration. "Not playing on the metal play structures," she says, "but climbing on trees and rocks, playing with bugs, looking at plants, just being immersed in nature."

Carolyn imagines children "down in the dirt, doing things that kids should be doing—running, jumping, crawling, moving their bodies. It will be a play-based program." The curriculum will be inquiry based. "Whatever questions the children have from their experience outside will drive what they learn."

Carolyn recognizes the preschool as integral to Sherith Israel's long-term goal to grow the congregation. "We hope that once families have finished the preschool, they'll want to continue." She is already working with education director **Jonathan Emanuel** and youth programs director **Natalie Connell** to make sure there's a seamless transition from preschool to Studio. "Jonathan and Natalie will be a presence at the preschool," Carolyn promises. She expects **Rabbi Jessica Graf** and **Cantor Toby Glaser** to take part in the program as well. "Once the kids graduate, I will still come to a lot of events for the families, including each of their b. mitzvahs, if I am invited."

Carolyn's sense of the strategic role of the preschool is in line with how Rabbi Graf and the CSI board envision it. "A preschool allows people to come into the community with tiny kids and to grow with us," says Rabbi Graf. "Families will be able to connect to us for decades, making life-long friends and sharing their journey together."

CSI president **Judie Wexler** highlights the multigenerational nature of a synagogue community. "It's exciting to be creating a preschool that is values-based and nature-oriented. This combination will provide a solid foundation that will serve these children throughout their lives."

Carolyn's experience and credentials make her a perfect fit.

She has been working in outdoor schools and preschools for 11 years. She has a bachelor's degree in psychology from San Jose State and a masters in early childhood education from San Francisco State. She expects her connections at SF State and other local early-childhood programs to help her recruit teachers who share her vision of a nature-based program.

The preschool task force intends to make the preschool as inclusive as possible. "We're going to offer both half-day and full-day programs because some parents work and need childcare and others just need a preschool," Carolyn explains. Full-day participants will enjoy afternoon enrichment programs like cooking, soccer and language immersion. To make sure that the preschool is accessible to a wide range of families, Carolyn notes, "There's a whole team working on raising funds for scholarships."

While Carolyn ramps up for next summer's camp and next fall's full opening, she is offering outdoor classes for parents and children under age two. The weekly meetups start September 10. There will be two class meeting times to accommodate both working and stay-at-home parents. She is passionate about engaging young families and building a close community before the opening of the preschool with the hope that they will enroll in the preschool or become members of the Sherith Israel community. ■



The cantor is in the house

OLD, NEW MUSIC—AND KOLEYNU—TO ENRICH HIGH HOLIDAYS

For the first time in three years, Sherith Israel will celebrate the High Holidays in our historic sanctuary. No one will be happier than Cantor Toby Glaser. “I’ve seen the sanctuary full for my installation and various events,” he notes, “but I’ve never experienced the entire congregation praying together in the full High Holiday context.”

He adds, “Just the way the vibrations change when the place is full of people, whether it’s the rustling of pages or the way the sound rebounds differently, it’s such a different sensation. I think it’s going to be very special.”

For Cantor Glaser, the opening prayer in the Erev Rosh Hashanah service—*Hineini*—immediately sets the tone. Sung as an unaccompanied solo, it is the cantor’s confession that he is unworthy to lead the congregation in prayer, but he’s going to do it anyway. “It’s absolutely a powerful moment, to convey that sentiment, looking out on a kahal, a holy community,” he continues. “*Hineini*—here I am—I’m going to do my best on behalf of the congregation.”

Another powerful moment for Cantor Glaser will be the return of Koleynu, our volunteer choir, to the High Holiday service. “We’ve been rehearsing since late June, which has been really wonderful.” Some Koleynu members are still nervous about getting together, but “the core of people really loves getting together and learning new music. We introduced some pieces last year, but we had to shut it down when Omicron happened,” he notes. “The choir got a taste of the new music, but hadn’t really experienced it.”

For long-time Koleynu member **Merle Kovtun**, “it’s a real joy to hear each other singing in what is designed to be four-part harmony after an eternity of Zoom rehearsals where we were all muted and unable to hear each other.” Merle is excited to be working in person with Cantor Glaser and music director **Jonathan Dimmock**. “It’s unbelievable how little escapes their ears.” He adds that “listening to other parts rehearsing makes me appreciate how it all fits together.”

Cantor Glaser describes the choice of High Holiday music as a “bit of a balancing act” between contemporary and traditional settings. “If you introduce new music, you also have to pay respect to our traditions, pay respect to music that has really stood the test of time.” He plans to introduce a few contemporary pieces, such as a setting of *Ya’aleh* by Joey Weisenberg, and an English-language piece, “We Return.” He says he started to use the latter last year, but it seemed “a little

hollow” when we weren’t in the sanctuary. He hopes it will feel more meaningful this year.

He will also be bringing back some traditional settings that we haven’t heard for many years. One is a *Mah Tov* by Lewandowski that hasn’t been sung here for so long that Jonathan Dimmock wasn’t familiar with it. Another is the setting of *Unetanah Tokef* by Janowski that **Cantor Martin Feldman** used to sing. Cantor Glaser describes it as “a beautiful work, very expansive. I was actually a little hesitant to sing it last year, because I didn’t know if I had the chops, but this year I’m just going to go out and see if I can do it.”

Cantor Glaser believes that High Holiday music plays several roles. For most congregants, the music of the High Holidays brings us into the moment, creating the combination of awe and reflection that is unique to the Days of Awe. Cantor Glaser points to the simple six-note niggun—da-Dah-da-Dah-da-Dah—that marks the beginning of the melody of the *Bar’chu* and the *Mi Chamochah*. “It signals to the congregation that this is the High Holidays because they’ve been hearing it since they were children.” Other melodies, such as *Ashamnu* and the congregational singing of the last verse of *Avinu Malkeinu*, draw the congregation into the liturgy.

The music also “creates a sense of grandeur that just reading doesn’t convey.” He cites the cantorial opening to *Sh’m’a Koleynu*—“Hear our Voice”—in which the opening word is extended for several seconds—*Sh’MA-A-A-A-A*—generating a sense of urgency and command that merely reading the words could not evoke. Finally, on the simplest level, he notes that the music serves to move us through the liturgy. “It helps get us through a lot of text and leads us to the next part of the service.”

Cantor Glaser is looking forward to the synergy among our magnificent sanctuary, the majestic music of the High Holidays and the congregation. “It’s a chance to really experience the space as it was designed to be experienced,” he explains. “When it’s the unaccompanied human voice, it’s just as special as when we have a full choir with the organ. It gives a meditative quality that allows us to experience the synagogue as it should be, as a place for ourselves and just the human voice.” ■

Editors’ note: much of the interview with Cantor Glaser was sung. We apologize for not conveying the full flavor in print, but that’s why you’ll want to be at services.



BEHIND THE SCENES WITH GORDON GLADSTONE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

REMODELING THE TEMPLE HOUSE FOR THE PRESCHOOLERS

When I was almost nine years old my parents used a job transfer from New Jersey to Wisconsin to make a major change in their lifestyle. They moved from the kind of people who added a new bedroom suite to their ranch home to the kind who buy a 100-year-old dairy farm as a fixer-upper. I learned a valuable lesson.

My father had a degree in engineering and approached each new project (fencing horse pastures, repairing leaky roofs and rewiring the barn) with the same basic assumption. He said none of it was rocket science and being able to read and plan were the only skills required. From age nine, I was his apprentice. That has served me well.

Since the onset of the pandemic and the closure of the Bright Horizons preschool at Sherith Israel, there has been a plan to open what eventually will be an outdoor preschool at Sherith Israel, a preschool with an earth-based approach to early childhood education, rooted in the values of our Jewish community.

Having hired the wonderful **Carolyn Mulcahy** as director, started on our licensing application and thought about our curriculum, we have had to face a challenging next phase of our journey: renovating the Temple House.

As anyone who has ever decided that they wanted or needed to alter their house knows, this is where the rubber meets the road. The dance of contractor lead times, the sequence in which things have to happen and all of the other potential complications are an essential component to being open next summer. The result will be new flooring, a kitchenette, replaced doors and more. These improvements will benefit our new preschool and our education program. In addition, we plan to bring Newman Hall from the late 90's to the 2020's, providing a refreshed space for programs, events and rentals.

Each week brings a new wrinkle, some good and others requiring problem solving. One thing I can say with confidence: all of those years working alongside my father as we ran pipe, wire and tractors remind me that the best tool for each job is between my ears. ■

It's never too late

ADULT B. MITZVAH CLASS BEGINS IN FALL

Adult learners will have a chance to become b. mitzvah in a six-month program beginning in late October. Led by **Cantor Toby Glaser**, the class will explore the Shabbat and weekday liturgies to see how our services are put together and how the different parts of our services relate to each other. The class will culminate in a Shabbat morning service at which each participant will choose a Torah reading and chant a verse or more.

For many congregants, Cantor Glaser believes, "The structure of the service is not obvious unless you've really explored how it's constructed." He notes that a traditional Kabbalat Shabbat consists of a cycle of several psalm settings, leading into the main service. "But because we only have an hour-long Friday night service, we only do one psalm, so you don't really get a feel for how the Kabbalat Shabbat leads us to the *Bar'chu*."

The class will also look at Torah to see how it relates to the liturgy. "I want to give people an idea of where the prayerbook comes from so they can navigate it in an intentional way," Cantor Glaser explains. "We'll look at different texts to see how the liturgy leads us from the *Bar'chu* into the *Sh'ma* and the blessings around the *Sh'ma*, as well as how the *Amidah* for Shabbat differs from the *Amidah* for weekday services."

At the end of the program, students will lead a Shabbat morning service. Each student will choose a prayer that is particularly meaningful, then either chant the traditional Hebrew or read from the left (optional) side of the prayerbook or present their own take on the prayer's meaning. Cantor Glaser expects that each student will chant at least a verse of Torah, "so we'll go through the chant system and how that works."

He anticipates working with adults to be different from working with sixth- and seventh-grade students. "Adults are more hesitant than youngsters to sing in public because they are caught up in their own perceptions of themselves," he says. "It will be interesting to see how we can get people to let go of their reservations. The only way to do that is to build a community of trust."

Students do not need to be able to read Hebrew, but they will need to know the Hebrew *alef-bet* to be able to decode the written Hebrew. That doesn't concern Cantor Glaser. "It's only 22 letters. We can work with people," he promises. "It's less important that they have the *alef-bet* than that they have a will to learn." ■

WHAT'S HAPPENING

For information about new events as they're announced, please refer to our event calendar at sherithisrael.org and our weekly email, Under the Dome. Questions? Contact executive director Gordon Gladstone, ggladstone@sherithisrael.org, 415.346.1720, x125, or program manager Peter Bonos, programs@sherithisrael.org, 415.346.1720, x124.

Shabbat

FRIDAY EVENINGS

6 pm: Kabbalat Shabbat

End your week on a high note at our warm and welcoming Friday night services led by Sherith Israel clergy followed by a festive oneg. *Streams on YouTube.*

YAP SHABBAT

Fridays, Oct. 21, Nov. 18, Dec. 16

8 pm: Dinner; 8:30 pm: Service

Our third-Friday late Shabbat is led by Cantor Toby Glaser for young adults in their 20s and 30s. *Followed by a dessert oneg and drinks. In-person service. No streaming option.*

SATURDAY MORNINGS

9:15 am: Torah Study on Zoom

Discuss the weekly Torah portion with Sherith Israel clergy, congregants and guests.

S'lichot, Sukkot and Simchat Torah

S'LICHOT

Saturday, Sept. 17, 7:30 pm

Enjoy Havdalah, music and text study to prepare for the High Holidays with our clergy and the community. Service concludes with a ceremonial changing of the Torah mantles. *Streams on YouTube.*

SHABBAT SUKKOT

Friday, Oct. 14

5:30 pm: Yizkor

6 pm: Kabbalat Shabbat

Celebrate Sukkot with our clergy team leading a special musical program. Gather after services to schmooze in our cozy sukkah where you can shake the lulav and etrog. In-person event. *Services stream on YouTube.*

SIMCHAT TORAH WITH STUDIO

Sunday, Oct. 16, 11 am

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

Chanukah

CANDLE LIGHTINGS

Dec. 18–22 and 24–25, 6 pm on Zoom

Join us for short nightly online candle-lighting services celebrating Chanukah where we showcase the work of our lay-led committees, groups and volunteers.

CHANUKAH SHABBAT

Friday, Dec. 23, 6 pm

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

Conversations from the Front Lines

Join community leaders for our ongoing series of online discussions and interviews on topics of current interest. See your Under the Dome email for upcoming discussions.

REPARATIONS FOR AFRICAN-AMERICANS—A JEWISH VIEW

Wednesday, Sept. 7, 5 pm

Christina Jefferson and Rabbi Aryeh Bernstein

African-American reparations is one of the critical social justice issues of our times. Aryeh Bernstein, the author of "The Torah Case for Reparations," and CSI board member Christina Jefferson will discuss the Jewish view of reparations.

COMMUNITY TEACH-IN ON REPARATIONS

Sunday, Sept. 18, 2 pm

In person, Sanctuary

Learn about becoming an ally for African-Americans in California and San Francisco. Speakers include California Secretary of State Dr. Shirley Weber; Eric McDonnell; and Rev. Amos Brown. *Co-hosted by the Black-Jewish Unity Coalition, Sherith Israel, and Third Baptist Church. Registration information in Under the Dome.*

Sounds of the Sanctuary Concerts

JOEY WEISENBERG

Sunday, Oct. 30

3 pm: Master Class

7 pm: Concert

Musician-composer, creative ba'al t'filah (prayer leader), award-winning author and master teacher Joey Weisenberg cherishes the imperfectly beautiful music of people singing together. Joey composes new niggunim that have moved and inspired thousands. His master classes have enabled students worldwide to study Jewish song. *Tickets: \$36.*

NEFESH MOUNTAIN

Saturday, Dec. 10, 7 pm

Nefesh Mountain has been hailed as one of today's formative boundary pushing Bluegrass/Americana bands. They're among the first to truly give voice to, and openly represent, Jewish-American culture, tradition, values and spirituality in the world of American roots music. *Tickets: \$36.*

Groups and Classes

ADULT INTERMEDIATE HEBREW

Noa Levy

Sundays, beginning Oct. 30

1–2 pm on Zoom

Advanced beginners are invited to focus on reading and deeply understanding prayers from the Siddur. *Information: Noa Levy, noalevy8@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.*

Remember Reflect Return

Three Sunday mornings
during Elul
Sept. 11, 18 and 25, 10 am

Deepen your preparation for the High Holidays with this three-session class exploring the themes of remembering, reflecting and returning. Led by our clergy and psychologist Susan Borkin, who will be our guide to journaling, guided meditation and bringing a Jewish perspective to walking a labyrinth. Join us for this unique and innovative program! *Registration information in Under the Dome.*

Sept. 11: Remember—What was most important this year? What did I learn? We will use journaling and guided meditation to look back at the past year.

Sept. 18: Reflect—What in my life needs to be different? What can Judaism teach me about change? Led by our clergy, we will integrate Jewish texts and writings to explore the nature of change.

Sept. 25: Return—What do I want to do differently this year? What are my goals? We will use a labyrinth walk as an integrative tool to clarify new directions and goals for the coming year.

High Holidays

Join Rabbi Jessica Graf, Cantor Toby Glaser, rabbinic intern George Altshuler and music director Jonathan Dimmock for our traditionally festive High Holiday services. We look forward to seeing you in person under the dome in our historic sanctuary unless health circumstances mandate a change in plans.

EREV ROSH HASHANAH

Sunday, Sept. 25

5 pm: Family service (kids 0-9)

6 pm: Congregational dinner, Newman Hall

7:30 pm: Evening service

ROSH HASHANAH MORNING

Monday, Sept. 26

10 am: Service

EREV YOM KIPPUR

Tuesday, Oct. 4

7:30 pm: Kol Nidre

YOM KIPPUR

Wednesday, Oct. 5

10 am: Morning service

1 pm: Afternoon programs:

Please check the service flyer for a full list

2:30 pm: Healing service led by Ruth Auerbach and Shira Shore, featuring piano accompaniment by Jonathan Dimmock.

3:30 pm: Afternoon service (Mincha)

Additional Holiday Observances and Events

S'LICHOT

Saturday, Sept. 17, 7:30 pm

Havdalah, music and text study in preparation for the High Holidays with Rabbi Jessica Graf and Cantor Toby Glaser. Services conclude with the ceremonial changing of our Torah mantles.

TASHLICH

Tuesday, Sept. 26, 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

Community gathering and picnic lunch

Saturday, Oct. 1, 10 am

Rodeo Beach

Join us on an exhilarating, pebble-covered beach just three miles northwest of the Golden Gate with youth-oriented activities. Led by our clergy and youth program director. *Bring your own lunch and enjoy the sunshine (prepare for wind) at an oceanside picnic.*

JEWISH BOOK CLUB

Mondays, monthly, 4 pm on Zoom

September 19: *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*

by Betty Smith

October 24: *People Love Dead Jews*

by Dara Horn

November 28: *The Last Kings of Shanghai*

by Jonathan Kaufman

January 9: *Violins of Hope: Violins of the Holocaust* by James Grymes

January 30: *The World to Come*

by Dara Horn

Information: Julie House, juliehousesf@gmail.com

Volunteer Opportunities

HIGH HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE

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. *Information: Natalie Connell, nconnell@sherithisrael.org.*

HAMOTZI & CHICKEN SOUPERS

Newman Hall

HaMotzi: Every Sunday

9:30 am-12:30 pm

Chicken Soupers: Monthly

Sundays, noon-3 pm, Sept. 11, Oct. 2, Nov. 6, Dec. 4

Each week, HaMotzi volunteers prepare healthy meals for two San Francisco shelters. Chicken Soupers cook and deliver meals for clients of Jewish

Family and Children's Services monthly. Donations of homemade baked goods are encouraged. *Information: Nancy Sheftel-Gomes, hamotzi@sherithisrael.org, to arrange a volunteer shift, shop, pick up donations, cook or deliver food.*

NOTE: Winter Shelter Volunteer Dates: Dec. 20, 21 and 22

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.*

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.*

JEWISH COALITION FOR LITERACY ONLINE TUTOR TRAINING

Tuesday, Sept. 20 or

Thursday, Oct. 27, 3:30 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@jrcr.org.*

Expecting Parents and Sherith Littles

EXPECTING JEWISHLY

Rabbinic Intern George Altshuler

Thursday, Sept. 8, 7:30-8:30 pm

Are you or is someone you know about to enter the beautiful, holy, challenging and awesome life phase of parenthood? Join about-to-be rabbi/about-to-be dad George Altshuler for a laid-back gathering with other expectant parents. *Information: galtshuler@sherithisrael.org.*

PARENT & CHILD CLASSES

Wednesdays, Sept. 14-Dec. 14

10:15-11:45 am

\$108 for 12 classes or

\$80 for an 8-class card

Alternate Saturdays, Sept. 10-Dec. 17

10:30 am-12:30 pm

\$72 for 9 classes or \$50 for a 5-class card

Hosted by Sherith Israel preschool director Carolyn Mulcahy, with music by Cantor Toby Glaser and Melita Silberstein. Play, sing, dance and make new friends! Bring a friend for one free drop-in class. *Ages two and under. Non-CSI members welcome.*

Creating a thriving, diverse community

PROFILE: JUDIE AND HOWARD WEXLER

Among Sherith Israel's many dedicated volunteers, Judie and Howard Wexler stand out. In great part, their professional backgrounds and personal commitments are helping CSI create a thriving, diverse community.

Judie is Sherith Israel's new president, bringing experience from a career as a sociologist, professor, educational consultant, provost and university president to a position that necessitates listening, learning and leadership. Her background provides both theoretical and applied knowledge of organizations, invaluable to her new role at Sherith Israel.

Howard has brought to Sherith Israel his decades of experience as a land-use business attorney while simultaneously serving on multiple nonprofit boards. Howard has chaired the committee on trustees for the past 15 years. He has a knack for encouraging people to offer CSI their expertise and skills. Howard's knowledge of board governance and land-use law has been integral to Sherith Israel's long-term strategic plan, its current committee structure and its successful \$16 million seismic retrofit.

Together, Judie and Howard embody the essence of *hineini*, "here I am," the powerful and profound biblical intention of being present, available and ready to serve. "Judaism pushes me to think about how I impact the world in a

positive way," Judie says. Adds Howard: "The two essences of Judaism to me are the *Sh'ma* and *tikkun olam*, making the world a better place."

Although Judie and Howard are long-time Sherith Israel members, Judie embraces her presidency as if she is a newcomer. "It is important to not assume that my years as a congregant and trustee automatically mean that I know what is needed," Judie reflects. "In asking questions of others, I can test my assumptions in light of what they tell me. As I have learned more deeply about our programs and the commitment of our leaders, both professional and lay, I have been inspired anew. This is a very special community."

Judie began her three-year term last May with a listening tour, meeting with clergy, staff, trustees and congregants. Making sense of a variety of views is a skill she honed as president of the California Institute of Integral Studies, the San Francisco-based university she led until retiring in 2021. "Running a university, you're dealing with all kinds of people, sometimes with radically diverse primary interests, who see things in different ways and hold different goals," Judie says. "It's about bringing people together to arrive at common goals and collaborative decisions."

Howard also is a strong community advocate. He has served as a founding trustee of both the Jewish Vocational Service and the San Francisco Day School as well as president of the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency Commission and the Lick-Wilmerding High School board. Howard also served on both the Sherith Israel and Jewish Community Relations Council boards and has received Sherith's Ner Tamid award.

The Wexler family illustrates the evolution of Reform Judaism toward a more diverse and inclusive community. What it means to be Jewish now is a world apart from the Jewish worlds that Judie and Howard knew growing up—Judie in Brooklyn and Queens, Howard in Millbrae and Hillsborough.

Howard's family helped found two Peninsula synagogues: Temple Beth El in San Mateo and Peninsula Temple Sholom in Burlingame. Says Judie, "In my lived experience as a child and teen, everybody around me was Jewish. That made for a comfortable, comforting community. It was also more homogenous than I really liked."

Judie and Howard met in San Francisco in the early 1970s. Both were active in the movement to get Jews out of the former Soviet Union. **Robyn** and **Matthew**, born in that decade, grew up in secular, progressive San Francisco. They both married non-Jews. Matthew's wife **Laura** has Cuban heritage; they live in Marin with their children, **Matteo** and **Cruz**. Robyn's husband **Yang Bing** is a native of Beijing, where the couple are raising their children, **Ethan** and **Zachary**.

"My family reflects the future of the changing Jewish community," Judie says. "In the Bay Area's over-65 generation, seven percent are Jews of color. Among 18-to-34-year-olds, it's about one-third Jews of color."

Adds Judie: "I think a lot about how we prepare Sherith Israel for a changing population and people who have a lot of options for their time, who are dealing with a much higher level of stress. Sherith Israel has offered me the space to participate in different ways at different times. This community offers all of us a lot of ways to express who we are as Jews, to be involved, to make a difference, to participate, and to connect with people." ■



EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE: Howard Wexler has played many key roles at Sherith Israel, including 15 years as chair of the committee on trustees. Judie is excited about her new tenure as president of CSI's board of trustees, to which she brings great experience as retired president of the California Institute of Integral Studies.

If Sherith Israel had a middle name, it would be Generosity. When the scope of Russia's invasion of Ukraine became clear, CSI stepped up. First, there was an April 11 Conversation from the Front Line with the founders of Lev Echad, an Israeli NGO that does leadership development in Israel and Ukraine and supports Ukrainian refugees. Immediately after the talk, **David** and **Ellen Newman** suggested a quick email campaign to support the work. **Rabbi Jessica Graf** jumped on board, and **Talia Banarie**, director of member engagement, kept tabs on the flurry of activity. The campaign raised more than \$10,300 in just a month, thanks to our generous donors...

Then our amazing musical director **Jonathan Dimmock** pulled out all the stops, recruiting friends and colleagues from around the musical world for a May 9 Concert of Compassion supporting HIAS, Nova Ukraine and World Central Kitchen. Is Jonathan connected? Guest artists included **Frederica von Stade**, members of the San Francisco Symphony and Bay Brass. Ukraine's Consul General **Dmytro Kushneruk** spoke. The moving and beautiful concert raised more than \$105,000. *Yasher koach*, Jonathan...

This summer **Rabbi Jessica Graf** met former CSI Cantor **David Frommer** in New York City. Still at West Point, he sends warm regards back to CSI... **Nancy Sheftel-Gomes** and **Augie Gomes** hosted their granddaughters and a friend this summer. **Satya** was a counselor at SFJCC and Camp Bechol Lashon, where **Naima** was a camper...

Natalie Connell reports that there is a puzzle-piece thief in the youth group, and **Labe Lounge** is running out of table space for all of the incomplete puzzles. The SITY Leadership Board is investigating...

Our Gold Rush Gala at the Randall Museum on May 7 raised more than \$20,000, according to event co-chair **Cece Kaufman**. Hundreds of CSI congregants, from kids to **Cantor Martin Feldman** and his wife **Nancy**, danced, sang, celebrated Havdalah, schmoozed and noshed. Kudos to Cece and her co-chair **Maacah Marah**, and their posse of volunteers: cookie bakers **Sarah Mars**, **Valerie Jahan**, **Ruth Auerbach**, **Nancy Sheftel-Gomes**, **Judy Pelzner** and **Sarah Pelzner**; wine donor **Sean Dodge**; stargazing concierge **Jeffrey Silverman**; and Hills of Eternity for sponsoring The Last Call Bar, with bartenders **Ben Ruhs** and **Susan Solomon**. Many thanks to our amazing staff **Gordon**, **Corey**, **Zack** and **Estuardo** for making it all work...

CSI in the news: The *J.* featured two of our HaMotzi volunteers **Sylvia Benjamin** and **Ruth Temkin** for its August 19 cover story, "Healing the World Through Social Action," which surveys programs from synagogues around the bay. **Nancy Sheftel-Gomes** was our eloquent spokesperson... Rabbinic intern **George Altshuler** was profiled in the *J.*'s June 24 issue about coming home to his childhood synagogue for his last year of rabbinic training. Be sure to check out his bar mitzvah photo... The *San Francisco Chronicle* reports that **Rick Shelton** and **Joseph Amster** returned to Lotta's Fountain to reprise their roles as Lola Montez and Emperor Norton to commemorate the 1906 earthquake last April...

Congrats to **Matthew Levin** for his new job as director of Jewish student life and young adults for Jewish Nevada, the Silver State's Jewish federation... And mazel tov to Studio teacher **Chloé Erdan**, returning for her seventh year. She just completed her master's in speech language pathology... Meanwhile, **Kaitlin Wahl** begins a master's program in social work at SF State this fall...

And *yasher koach* to our teens heading to college: **Otto Handler** will study theater and political science at Skidmore College; **Nora Herndon-Lazer** with plans to major in political science with a possible double major in journalism at Brandeis University; **Sylvia Benjamin** will study health sciences at Temple University; **Jacob Spiegel** is joining **Jake Himmelstein**, **Clay Bell** and **David Milberg** at UC Berkeley, majoring in materials engineering and bioengineering...

The education office and CSI library had a major overhaul this July. Education director **Jonathan Emanuel** thanks volunteers **Cece Kaufman**, **Christina Jefferson**, **Valerie Jahan** and our teen team for making the space clean, organized and ready for the new Studio school year...

Carolyn Mulcahy is boarding two dwarf lion-head rabbits given to the preschool, a white one named Ziva (Hebrew for brilliance) and a multi-colored one named Raya (Hebrew for friend). She's become so attached to the bunnies that she's not sure she'll bring them to school full time. Both are female, in case **Gordon Gladstone** is worried about the preschool being overrun...

"A synagogue is a Jewish place of worship," claims *Stars Insider*. Who knew? That's the intro to a story trustee **Alan Mirviss** found featuring images from two dozen historic synagogues from around the world, including ours. It's well worth a quick online search to find Sherith Israel—the youngest of the bunch—and definitely the prettiest... ■

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

EDUCATION DIRECTOR JONATHAN EMANUEL

LEADING TOGETHER

“Don’t step in front of me I may not follow, don’t step behind me I may not lead. Just walk beside me and be my friend and together we will walk in the path of Hashem.”

I learned this interpretation of Isaiah 2:4 at summer camp as a young child in Berkeley, California. It always stuck with me and helped inform my own approach to Jewish life and community. We have leaders and followers, but in Judaism, leadership is for all. We walk beside each other and lead together, reflecting the unity of our people and approach to communal life.

Leadership is a central theme in Judaism. Although the Torah is full of leaders whom we are to look up to and emulate, we find many different archetypes for leaders in the Bible. Abraham and Sara lead with hospitality. Jacob with wisdom. Joseph with dream interpretation. Miriam with music and dancing. Moses, or “Big Mo” as I like to call him, is a reluctant leader who only succeeds in partnership with others. His brother Aaron helps him speak to the people. His father-in-law Yitro—not an Israelite, but a Midianite—wants him to delegate more to judges and tribal leaders, which he does. Yitro is worried Moses will fail and be overwhelmed if he does it all himself!

We can’t each carry the weight of the world, or even that of our families, communities and ourselves, without help from and partnership with others. That’s what community is all about. It has never been more clear than after our two years of pandemic isolation that our connections to one another are essential for a meaningful life.

It is with this philosophy that we move forward in the leadership of our education programs at Sherith Israel. Yes, I have

been hired to be a “leader” of education, but I know I can’t do this without support and partnership from all of you. Sherith Israel is an incredibly warm and caring community that truly understands the value and spirit of being together.

Nowhere is this more clear than with our teens, who have shown us all what it is to be in a community. I have never seen a synagogue where teens show up all summer long to help the programs and be with one another! They are a model community of support, and they know it. The Madrichim program, which is run by teens who are “at home” with their Judaism, are the “experts” on what it is to be an active Jew in 21st-century San Francisco. That expertise will spread down to all of our students and families, as they bring their love for community, Judaism and one another back home. I am confident that this style of communal leadership is infectious—in a very good way!

It is this value of communal leadership that we are spreading through synagogue learning programs. How can we all be leaders in the world and support one another in partnership? How can our community be the change we want to see in the world?

Our goal is to make all of our students, regardless of age, leaders in the world. We are training our children to lead by example, to lead through love, to lead through song, through prayer and through Torah. We are leading through the arts, through debate, drama and, of course, humor. And lastly, we are leading through relationships. How we connect to one another is an example of how we want to see ourselves in the world. We are leaders together, and we will lead the San Francisco Jewish community into the next, important phase of our history. ■



CONCERT OF COMPASSION: On May 9, the sanctuary was full of song and heartfelt prayers for Ukraine. Above, **Jonathan Dimmock**, **Rabbi Jessica Graf** and Consul General of Ukraine **Dmytro Kushneruk**. See *News Nosh* for more about the evening.



TIKKUN OLAM CORNER

CSI CLIMATE ACTION TEAM

The Sherith Israel community has yet another way to put our Jewish values into action. Earlier this year, the CSI climate action team (CAT) began engaging with national and state-wide advocacy groups to add a Jewish voice to the need to combat climate change and promote environmental justice.

On the national level, CAT has teamed up with Dayenu, a national organization that brings Jewish values to climate policy advocacy and works with major investment institutions to disinvest from fossil fuels. Last spring, CSI's Dayenu Circle participated in a Dayenu Passover Fossil Fuel Rally in San Francisco to encourage the investment company BlackRock to honor its divestment pledge. In August, our Dayenu Circle joined a successful campaign to lobby Congress to pass the Inflation Reduction Act. Sherith Israel is one of more than 80 Dayenu Circles across the country.

In California, CAT is working with the California Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC-CA). Our members were instrumental in RAC-CA's decision this summer to adopt climate change as the focus of a multi-year California legislative advocacy campaign, Climate Tzedek. In June, more than 30 Sherith Israel members attended the kickoff event for the campaign, led by RAC-CA's state organizer and former CSI rabbi **Julie Saxe-Taller**. According to **Bill Shore** and **Helaine Weinstein**, CSI's liaisons to the Climate Tzedek campaign, CAT members lobbied successfully on behalf of two bills. SB 260 (mandating greenhouse gas disclosures by large corporations) passed out of the Senate and is now in the Assembly, and AB 2316 (to encourage the development of community-based solar energy systems) passed out of the Assembly and is now in the Senate. The Climate Tzedek campaign continues to work to ensure that the bills pass and are signed by the governor.

Locally, CAT is investigating a variety of climate-related city programs, including tree planting, energy conservation aimed at low-income residents, solar jobs training and low-income solar installation programs, water conservation, water recycling and desalination.

Closer to home, CAT assessed how our sanctuary stacked up in terms of sustainability. Headed by **Bill Alschuler**, CAT members interviewed executive director **Gordon Gladstone** and congregants **Charlie Stern**, **Alan Mirviss** and **Van Hart**. After a dome-to-dungeon building tour, CAT identified two significant projects, each completed as part of the 2010-2017 retrofit. We replaced all our incandescent bulbs with LEDs. In the sanctuary alone, this amounted to roughly 1,100 bulbs, with annual savings of about \$7,000. CSI also installed 106 solar photovoltaic collectors on the synagogue roof, which produce operating savings of more than \$20,000 yearly.

CAT is also sponsoring community educational programs on climate issues. The first event, on August 25, presented the film *Climate Refugees*. Bill Alschuler hosted a discussion with filmmaker **Justin Hogan**.

To get involved in Sherith Israel's climate action efforts, contact CAT co-chairs Carol Kingsley, 415-759-1338 or cking55643@aol.com; or Nancy Sheftel-Gomes, nsheftelgomes@gmail.com.

CSI GET OUT THE VOTE 2022

Midterm elections are coming soon. Once again CSI is teaming up with Reclaim our Vote, a non-partisan campaign, to reach minority voters in states that have made voting more difficult. In 2020, we made a difference; we sent out more than 20,000 postcards and made thousands of phone calls. We hope to surpass that effort in 2022. **Steve Garber** will head our postcard brigade, **Mary Kemp** will coordinate text messaging, and **David Newman** will help volunteers with phone banking. Whatever you do to get involved, you are doing the mitzvah of empowering voters to take control of their political lives. Contact Steve Garber, slg0pge@yahoo.com; Mary Kemp, mariaeliza17@gmail.com; or David Newman, davidmnewman@earthlink.net.

JEWISH COALITION FOR LITERACY

Since so many children have experienced severe academic and social disruptions during the Covid pandemic, JCL needs volunteer reading tutors more than ever. Please join Sherith Israel's volunteers for this deeply meaningful and critically important Tikkun Olam opportunity. One hour a week will change a child's life—and your own!

Online training sessions will be held on Tuesday, September 20, and Thursday, October 20, 3:30–5:30 pm (choose one). To register: jclread.org/sign-up. Information: Janet Parker, 415.350.0780 or jparkersf@gmail.com.

CHESED COMMITTEE

The Chesed Committee has recently connected with ReCares.org, which collects and distributes no longer needed, gently used medical equipment and unused healthcare supplies in San Francisco, Oakland and Marin County. **Ron Laupheimer**, the committee's program coordinator, reports that he recently brought in some items to ReCares in San Francisco that **Laura Olson** had donated, and they were gone before he left the building. To donate items or learn how to obtain needed equipment or supplies, look at the ReCares website or contact Ron Laupheimer, ronald.laupheimer@gmail.com. ■



HERE COMES THE SUN: CSI's 106 solar collectors help the environment and save \$20,000 a year.

BIRTHS

Isaac Filiba, child of Michelle Filiba and Matthew Feldman

Otto Marmor Arruda, child of Andrew Arruda and Meghan Marmor

Lila Antonia Bloom, child of Zac Bloom and Kristina Bruehl

Lila Loeb-Barahona, child of Lea Loeb and George Barahona

Jay Abraham Greenwald, child of Elliot Greenwald and Hilary Fleischer and grandchild of Steven Greenwald and Rochelle Alpert

Ruby London Colyer, child of Tyler Colyer and Emily London and grandchild of Robert Colyer and Pearl Freeman

BABY NAMINGS

Otto Marmor Arruda, child of Andrew Arruda and Meghan Marmor

Joan Delamer Morrison Hunt, child of Jonathan Hunt and Elizabeth Morrison

Jay Abraham Greenwald, child of Elliot Greenwald and Hilary Fleischer and grandchild of Steven Greenwald and Rochelle Alpert

B MITZVAHS

Tali Makstman, child of Gabriella and Michael Makstman

ENGAGEMENTS

Jeremy Frick and Jill Rosenberg, child of Gayle and Art (z"l) Rosenberg

WEDDINGS

Tyler Colyer and Emily London

Linda Wagner and Richard Felton

NEW MEMBERS

Talia Arnon and Ryan Barlow

Gloria Rogan

Jonathan Rose and Emily Hancock

Julia Cinnamon

May the memory of the righteous be for a blessing.

Shoshana Chana Asher

Diana Schor, aunt of Felicia Cleper-Borkovi

Aubrey Yawitz, father of Joanne Yawitz Farkas and father-in-law of Gabe Farkas

Ruth Reznikoff, mother of Laura Olson and mother-in-law of Stephen Olson

Rabbi Martin Weiner, husband of Karen Weiner and brother of Stephen Weiner and brother-in-law of Norm Dito

Tina "T.J." Feldman, sister of Mike Feldman and sister-in-law of Rachel Breuer

Mary Gorman, mother of Tom Gorman and mother-in-law of Elena Gorman

Carolyn Reznikoff, sister of Laura Olson and sister-in-law of Stephen Olson

Mally Cleper, mother of Felicia (Mihai) Cleper-Borkovi, Aviva (Hery) Litman-Cleper; grandmother of Tonyanna, Arlen (Gillian) and Julia

Claire Schoenfeld, mother of Gordie and David (Tina) Nathan; stepmother of Michael (Betsy), Jeffrey (Matt Holbein), and Gary (Joanie) Schoenfeld; sister of Robert (Barbara) Schwartz; and their families.

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



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JUNE CELEBRATIONS—GRADUATION AND PRIDE WEEK: CSI celebrated our graduating high school seniors, here with teachers and mentors (from left): Natalie Connell, Nora Herndon-Lazerwith, Rabbi Abby Phelps, Noah Linder, Kaitlin Wahl, Sylvia Benjamin, Ryan Macomber and Rabbi Jessica Graf.

A week later the congregation celebrated Pride Shabbat with moving stories about feeling at home in our community. (From left) Rich Weissman, Kaitlin Wahl, Jonathan Dimmock, Monica Levin and Nancy Igdaloff. Steve Weiner and Norm Dito (not pictured) lit the Shabbat candles.



TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME: CSI and San Francisco Giants fans at Oracle Park on Jewish Heritage Night. Accompanying **Rabbi Jessica** and **Jonathan Graf** were **Jerry Hurwitz** and **Susan Borkin**, **Bill** and **Shira Shore**, **Lucas** and **Katie Zier**, **Thomas** and **Elena Gorman**, **Gayle** and **Jill Rosenberg** and **Jeremy Frick**, **Jonathan Emanuel**, **George Altshuler** and **Howard** and **Judie Wexler**.

Welcoming fresh leadership

NEW CSI BOARD MEMBERS ADD PASSION, EXPERIENCE

At our Annual Meeting in May, after outgoing board president **Lindsay Braunig** passed the gavel to new president **Judie Wexler**, **Sherith Israel** unanimously elected four new members to our Board of Trustees. **Andy Denmark**, **Alicia Kletter**, **Maacah Marah** and **Lida Morgenstein** bring a wealth of life and Jewish experience to **Sherith Israel**'s lay leadership.

Andy Denmark

Andy and his wife, **Yuka Hachiuma**, have been married for 18 years and have been members of **Sherith Israel** since 2010. They live in San Francisco with their children **Kai** (14), who became b. mitzvah in May of 2021, and **Mia** (10). **Andy** loves volunteering for **HaMotzi**. He was active in the Early Childhood Education program and recently served on the search committee for CSI's new educator.

Andy grew up in New York City and lived there until he and **Yuka** moved to San Francisco in 2001. He holds a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering and a master's degree in computer science from Columbia University. He is a co-founder and the chief technology officer of **Chairish, Inc.**, an online marketplace for high-end home furnishings and décor, where he is responsible for software development and technical operations.

Alicia Kletter

Alicia's Jewish journey began in 2005 when she and then-fiancé **Evan Kletter** visited **Sherith Israel** to meet with **Rabbi Larry Raphael** (z"l) about getting married. She began conversion studies after a trip to Israel in 2007 confirmed that she wanted to live her life as a Jew. The conversion process culminated a mere week before the birth of their first child, **Moses**. This led to her attendance at her first bris—her son's—followed two years later by a baby-naming for their daughter, **Talia**. In April, **Moses** became b. mitzvah.

Alicia has been a family nurse practitioner since 2004 and is a former emergency room nurse. She has specialized in addiction medicine with a focus on treating pregnant women with substance-use disorders. She earned a doctorate in nursing (DNP) and graduated in May as a psychiatric mental-health nurse practitioner.

Maacah Marah

Maacah grew up in Berkeley. She became bat mitzvah at Oakland's Temple Sinai and spent summers at Jewish camps in Northern and Southern California. **Maacah** spent a year studying in Israel in both high school and college. After graduating from Mills College, she worked in the San Francisco office of the Union for Reform Judaism. **Maacah** earned a master's degree in development sociology from Cornell University and has worked in nonprofit fundraising and public health. She served on the board of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, Southern California.

Maacah and her husband, **Steve Weston**, joined **Sherith Israel** in 2012. Their son, **Asher**, became b. mitzvah in 2019, and their daughter, **Sigal**, will become b. mitzvah in 2023. Both children are involved with Studio, **Sherith Israel**'s religious education program, and **Asher** is a member of the youth group. **Maacah** is part of the inclusion committee and the anti-racism reading group, and volunteers with **HaMotzi** on Sunday mornings. She was the co-chair of this year's wildly successful Gold Rush Gala.

Lida Morgenstein

This is **Lida**'s second tour of duty on the CSI board. She was a trustee in the 2000's, serving on the early childhood committee and as chair of the membership committee. She was also a member of the strategic planning task force in 2006–07.

Lida grew up near Boston and moved to San Francisco after college in search of a new adventure. She married **David Morgenstein**, a San Francisco native, in 1999. While supporting their daughters **Nina** and **Orly** on their Jewish journeys, **Lida** studied with a cohort of adult b. mitzvah students and was called to the Torah in 2007.

Lida has been a guest trainer for Jewish Vocational Service and has produced holiday events for JCCSF. She also helped her mother, **Ruth Kagan**, share her Kindertransport story with school programs and Yom HaShoah events. ■



PASSING THE GAVEL: Incoming congregational president **Judie Wexler** (left) accepts the symbol of her new office from outgoing president **Lindsay Braunig**.



SHERITH ISRAEL

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5783 / 2022

High Holidays

at SHERITH ISRAEL



These High Holidays, we also turn back to each other.

ROSH HASHANAH

Sunday evening, Sept. 25, and Monday, Sept. 26

YOM KIPPUR

Tuesday evening (Kol Nidre), Oct. 4, and Wednesday, Oct. 5

Streaming on YouTube also available to members and ticket buyers.

See your mail, email and sherithisrael.org for the complete schedule of services and activities.

