Let’s Celebrate!

This season is a time for reflection, taking stock of our lives and giving thanks. While this last year has been more challenging than any of us could have imagined, there is still so much to be thankful for. We are thrilled to announce that we will be celebrating two long-standing community traditions in person this season.

**Interfaith Thanksgiving Service**

**Thursday, Nov. 18, 7:00 PM**
**In Person & Zoom**

The beautiful Los Gatos Interfaith Thanksgiving Service, with clergy and lay leaders from local congregations, will be held at the Church of Latter Day Saints at 15985 Rose Ave, Los Gatos, and also on Zoom. The theme this year is... *Gratitude*. As in past years, music from different faith traditions will be sung throughout the service, including songs from our own Shir Hadash Choir.

The Los Gatos Interfaith Council has chosen Jewish Family Services for this year’s Thanksgiving Charity.

Take a break from house cleaning and meal preparation the week of Thanksgiving, and join us in person or on Zoom. This service is open to the entire community and is sponsored by the Los Gatos Interfaith Clergy Group, which meets regularly to discuss local issues and coordinates joint service projects throughout the year.

**Family Chanukah Shabbat Service**

**Friday, Dec. 3, 7:00 PM**
**In Person & Live-Stream**

Another tradition we are thankful to bring back in person this year is the Congregational Family Chanukah Shabbat service. Rabbi Gottlieb, Rabbi Schwartz, Cantor Felder-Levy, and Lay Musician Mark Allen will lead us for this upbeat and joyful service.

We invite everyone to bring your own menorah and candles so that we can all kindle the festival lights together. Imagine the synagogue filled with menorahs (chanukiyot), each with seven candles for the sixth night, the lights dotting the sanctuary as we join together to shine bright. After the service we will have delicious pre-plated sufganiyot for all to nosh on!

This year, we hope you are able to celebrate Thanksgiving and Chanukah with your Shir Hadash community. Together, we create more light and more joy.
"I was overwhelmed with emotion, not just because it was a new school year or because of our new students, but because we were in person."

FROM RABBI PJ SCHWARTZ

In Person Again!

When people ask me why I became a rabbi, my answer to them is simple: the Jewish community has been the only place in which I have truly felt like I have belonged, and I want others to feel like they belong in the Jewish community as well. This is true in all that I do: when I lead tefillah for our Kulanu students, work with B’nai Mitzvah students on their speeches, teach Confirmation, lead Torah study, officiate life cycles, and lead us in Shabbat worship. It is a sacred task that I take seriously, and I know that it is the foundation of who I am as a rabbi.

This type of rabbinate is likely one of the reasons why I was drawn to Congregation Shir Hadash. We take pride in the fact that we are a relational congregation that strives to reach all of its congregants and engage them in ways that they connect with most. And, as I speak with prospective members, I always share with them how you welcomed Michelle and me with open arms when we arrived, and how confident I am that we do the same for all of our new members.

We made the conscious decision this year to veer away from our usual tradition of welcoming our new students in our education program on Erev Sukkot, and opted to hold this ritual on the first day of Kulanu. I was overwhelmed with emotion, not just because it was a new school year or because of our new students, but because we were in person. Parents wrapped their children in tallitot as we welcomed them into our community and bestowed upon them a blessing. We all sang the words of Shehecheyanu as we celebrated the start of a new school year and our new students. It was that moment when we were not simply creating a sense of belonging, but we were fostering a sense of becoming: becoming a sacred community, kehilah kedoshah, one filled with joy and connection.

It has been so wonderful to see our congregation as a whole become again. Keep an eye out for our in-person Chanukah celebration on December 3 as we rekindle the lights of our chanukiyot and bring light onto the world. Know that we are always keeping safety in mind as we hold in-person programming. We would love to see you again when you are comfortable, and hope you can continue to join us from home until you do.
Legacy Shabbat
Friday, November 19, 7:00 PM
In Person & **shv**

A legacy is often defined by what someone has left after they died, both monetarily and by who they were as a person. What happens if we begin to look at our lives as the legacies that we create now? This Shabbat, we will hear from members of our congregation and hear their stories of why belonging to a synagogue community is an important part of their legacy. When we return to the synagogues that we grew up in, what drives us to join that same synagogue, a legacy that our parents created for us and that we now pass on to our children? And the endowments that we created in the name of a loved one, allowing many of us to enjoy the gifts of that legacy.

Please join us as we hear from members of the congregation about how the legacies created for us and the legacies that we create can be a part of our lives today.

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**November Services**

| FRI 5 | 7:00 pm | Shabbat B’Yachad (Together)—In Person Outdoors |
| SAT 6 | 9:00 am | Torah Study **zoom** |
| SAT 6 | 10:30 am | Bat Mitzvah of Danica Beck—In Person & **shv** |
| SAT 6 | 10:30 am | Shir Shabbat Service **zoom** |
| FRI 12 | 7:00 pm | Shabbat Service—In Person & **shv** |
| SAT 13 | 9:00 am | Torah Study **zoom** |
| SAT 13 | 9:00 am | Shir Shabbat, Jr.—In Person Outdoors |
| SAT 13 | 10:30 am | Shir Shabbat Service **zoom** |
| THU 18 | 7:00 pm | Los Gatos Interfaith Thanksgiving Service—LDS Church & **zoom** |
| FRI 19 | 7:00 pm | Legacy Shabbat Service—In Person & **shv** |
| SAT 20 | 9:00 am | Torah Study **zoom** |
| SAT 20 | 10:30 am | Shir Shabbat Service **zoom** |
| SAT 20 | 10:30 am | Bar Mitzvah of Daniel Bernard—In Person & **shv** |
| FRI 26 | 7:00 pm | Shabbat Service—In Person & **shv** |
| SAT 27 | 10:30 am | Shir Shabbat Service **zoom** |

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**December Services**

| FRI 3 | 7:00 pm | Congregational Hanukkah Shabbat—In Person & **shv** |
| SAT 4 | 9:00 am | Torah Study **zoom** |
| SAT 4 | 10:30 am | Shir Shabbat Service **zoom** |
| FRI 10 | 7:00 pm | Shabbat Service—In Person & **shv** |
| SAT 11 | 9:00 am | Torah Study **zoom** |
| SAT 11 | 9:00 am | Shir Shabbat, Jr.—In Person Outdoors |
| SAT 11 | 10:30 am | Shir Shabbat Service **zoom** |
| FRI 17 | 7:00 pm | Shabbat Service—In Person & **shv** |
| SAT 18 | 9:00 am | Torah Study **zoom** |
| SAT 18 | 10:30 am | Shir Shabbat Service **zoom** |
| FRI 24 | 5:00 pm | Shabbat Service **zoom** |
| SAT 25 | 10:30 am | No Torah Study |
| FRI 31 | 5:00 pm | Shabbat Service **zoom** |

**Zoom** Live via Zoom. Sign up at shirhadash.org/calendar. **shv** Live-stream on Shir Hadash TV at shirhadash.org/live.
**Book Discussion:**
**What is God’s Name?**

**Sunday, November 7, 9:30 AM [Zoom]**

Rabbi Mark Sameth will discuss his book *The Name*, which was the subject of the much-discussed *New York Times* op-ed “Is God Transgender?”

The Hebrew name of God, written in the Torah as YHWH, has not been uttered in public for over two thousand years. The God of ancient Israel—universally referred to in the masculine today—was understood by its earliest worshipers to be a dual-gendered, male-female deity. So argues Rabbi Semeth in *The Name*. Needless to say, this is no small claim. Rabbi Sameth traces the name to the late Bronze Age and argues that it was expressed *Hu-Hi*—Hebrew for “He-She.” Among Jewish mystics, we learn, this has long been an open secret.

Rabbi Sameth has been named by *The Forward* as “one of America’s most inspiring rabbis.” His work represents a solution to the two-thousand-year-old mystery, and fundamentally challenges our concept of God. Noted scholar and author, Rabbi Lawrence Kushner, has said about *The Name*, “this may just be the most interesting thing written about God since the Jews figured out there was only One.”

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**Objects Tell Stories:**
**Treasures of the New-York Historical Society**

**Tuesday, November 9, 11:30 AM**

Founded in 1804, the New-York Historical Society is New York’s oldest museum, with collections that cover four centuries of American history and art. Hear the stories behind some of our most treasured historical pieces in this interactive virtual presentation. Among the highlights: the camp bed that George Washington slept on at Valley Forge; the silver Tiffany & Co. controller handle that was used on the maiden voyage of the NYC subway in 1903; the Hudson River School paintings of Thomas Cole and Frederic E. Church; and John James Audubon’s preparatory watercolors for *The Birds of America*.

**Spielberg!**
**A FilmShul Program**

**Tuesday, December 14, 11:30 AM**

FilmShul runs informative, engaging, and fun presentations on Hollywood and the Jewish American Experience. All programs are curated by noted film historians Irv Slifkin and Laurence Lerman. One of the most commercially successful directors of all time, Steven Spielberg is the creator of such beloved modern classics as *Jaws, Close Encounters of the Third Kind, E.T.*, and the *Indiana Jones* and *Jurassic Park* series. We examine the life and career of the grand storyteller, with a particular focus on his upbringing as an Orthodox Jew and his later Jewish re-awakening, which yielded such vital works as *Schindler's List* and *Munich*. His interests have also inspired the creation of the Shoah Foundation and Righteous Persons Foundation, which make Jewish history and tradition more accessible to all.

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**Thinking About Good & Evil**

**Monday, December 6, 6:30 PM [Zoom]**

Join Rabbi Schwartz for the final sessions of the series. Missed the first two? No problem—the classes are all separate sessions and do not build upon one another.

The problem of evil and seemingly inexplicable suffering not only poses a major challenge to the belief in a moral God but also to religion in general. What do changes in our understanding of the problem of evil reveal about changes in our understanding of ourselves, of our place in the world, and human agency? We will examine some of the most salient Jewish ideas about why innocent people seem to suffer, why evil individuals seem to prosper, and God’s role in such matters of (in)justice, from antiquity to the present.

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**Office & ECC Closures**

November 25 & 26
December 24 & 31
GET READY FOR CHANUKAH

Gift Shop Pop Up

Sunday, November 14, 9:30 AM-12:30 PM

Good news for all Chanukah shoppers! The Women of Shir Hadash Gift Shop is hosting a pop up so everyone can shop safely for the holidays. Tables set up outdoors (we will have heat lamps to keep you warm) will be filled with a wide variety of menorahs, candles, cards, books, and other gift items for the holiday season. Why go anywhere else when you can go shopping at Shir Hadash? Invite your family and friends to come by to shop and schmooze as this day of holiday shopping is open to everyone!

PRODUCTS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle: Ideas for Holiday Gifts that Make a Difference

Sunday, Nov. 14, 10:30 AM-12:00 PM  zoom

In 2019, Californians threw away 6.7 pounds of trash every day, more than 2200 pounds every year, more than the weight of a subcompact car. These individual results are more than double the state’s 2020 goal of 2.7 pounds per person per day.

Join the Sustainability Committee to learn how you can reduce the amount of trash disposed of each day with a focus on replacing single-use plastics and more. New products are becoming available every day. This fun program will focus on ways to “reduce, reuse and recycle.”

• Learn how long it takes items to bio-degrade.
• Alissa Klar will share products for each room in the home to replace single-use plastics. Have a favorite product? Have it available to share. We want to hear your ideas.
• Learn about the “virtual closet” and resources to shape your clothes purchases. Are you already a user of Thredup, Poshmark, Rent the Runway? Share your experience.
• Share your favorite products or activities to reduce, reuse, recycle.
• Find out about resources to help you with your shopping.

Our display of products to replace single-use plastics was a hit at the Back-to-Campus event. Join us to find out what you missed and more!

WOMEN’S STUDY GROUP

From Resilience to Renewal, Led By Rabbi Lisa Levenberg

Thursdays, Nov. 18 & Dec. 16, 12:00 PM

In each session of “Resilience to Renewal,” we focus on a different aspect of growth that can come from successfully coping with life-altering events. This year, the Women’s Study Group is going to explore the limits of “resilience” and look toward “renewal.” We will delve into Jewish texts and values for insight into how we can nourish ourselves and each other. Each month will be a stand-alone session that considers a different facet of our tradition: Torah, prayer, history, poetry, humor, music, and more!

In November, the discussion will center on how the close relationships in our lives can actually become stronger and deeper as a result of surviving difficulty. Even while some voices clamor for a “return to normal,” can we reject the idea of mandatory busy-ness and instead continue to focus on and prioritize the relationships that matter most?

In December, we will discuss how many people emerge from traumatic challenges with a deepened sense of altruism and compassion for others. We will see examples of women from Jewish history who used their own painful pasts as a platform to change the lives of others.

LET’S SAVE LIVES

Blood Drive

Sunday, Nov. 7, 9:00 AM-2:00 PM, Oneg Room

Individuals in our community continue to have a need for blood. There are still lives that need saving.

Schedule an appointment online today! Please visit hadash.link/giveblood. We are requiring that all donors be vaccinated.

Please be assured that SBC is taking extra precautions so as to ensure the continued health of donors—in particular, increased distancing between donors as well as extreme sanitation procedures at donation locations.

Participate at our drive and get a $10 Starbucks eCard as a thank-you for saving lives.

For more information, call 888-723-7831 or visit stanfordbloodcenter.org.
SALTY in Action

Have you heard about SALTY? SALTY is Shir Hadash’s group for all teens in grades 7–12! Every month the board organizes a fun event that incorporates a Jewish value or moral. Previous examples include ice skating, mini golf, game nights, movie nights, social action events, and more! In September we ran a Rosh Hashanah SALTY Youth Program event for our teens! The main message of this event was the question, “Are Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah more similar or more different?” Each attendee discussed, debated, and mixed and matched aspects of RH vs. YK to try and find our personal answers to this question.

We are excited to host mostly in-person events this fall as COVID regulations allow. All of our events will be posted on the temple calendar for pre-registration. You can also visit our SALTY page for more about what we do. We can’t wait to see your teen at our next event!

You can also find us on Instagram: @sh.salty!

Affinity Groups

By now we hope that you have heard about our new Shir Hadash Affinity Groups. Maybe you have already signed up and maybe you have no idea what this is referring to. Well, here is the concept! These Affinity Groups are small groups, 12 or fewer members, they will meet once a month for six months and they’re run by you. A handful of members have been working hard to come up with our fabulous first batch of offerings. Check them out on the temple web page at shirhadash.org/affinitygroups.

If one of these groups piques your interest sign-up and make the commitment to join a group and meet new people. We’re asking members to commit to attending all 6 sessions and we recommend that you step outside your comfort zone and not sign up with friends or leaders you already know.

If these are not for you, don’t be dismayed, there will be a new batch of offerings in a few months. If there is something you would be interested in leading, we want to hear from you. If you have questions or comments, email shanda@shirhadash.org.

Embrace-a-Family with Jewish Family Services of Silicon Valley

November 18–December 15

Once again, Congregation Shir Hadash is partnering with Jewish Family Services of Silicon Valley to fulfill the Chanukah and holiday wishes of families and seniors who would otherwise go without gifts. Again this year, to maintain the safety of JFS staff, volunteers, and clients during Covid 19, Shir Hadash is partnering to promote an online virtual dreidel board. The link for the board will be made available on the CSH website beginning November 18.

Last year, JFS was thrilled with our partnership and JFS clients were so very grateful for their gifts. This year has presented continued health challenges yet as a community we can and will make this holiday season as bright with your generous support. Here’s how the program will work: claim a dreidel wish from the board and make the monetary contribution for the gift. You’ll receive a letter of thanks from JFS and JFS will ensure that the gift goes to the designated individual. Through your participation with Embrace a Family, you will most certainly bring joy and cheer to a very appreciative individual or family this year! We will publish the link to the dreidel board in In Tune as soon as it becomes live.

Wise Sons Delicatessen Chanukah Pop Up

Pre-Order by 9:00 AM, Friday, Dec. 3

Pick-Up: Sunday, Dec. 5, 2:30 PM–4:00 PM In Front of Sanctuary

San Francisco’s Wise Sons is doing it all this year for Chanukah—challah, latkes with housemade apple sauce, roasted brisket, matzah ball soup, sufganiyot, and more. And the best part is it will all be available for contactless pickup at our own Shir Hadash main parking lot.

Items will be pre-sold and pre-paid, so all you have to do is drive up and someone will hand you a bag full of deliciousness! To order your holiday meal, please click here to order. If you have any questions about the food, please contact Wise Sons directly.
Rabbinic Transition Committee Update

By Rich Pickard

We received a nice compliment from Rabbi Hirsch of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR.) Many congregations would have reacted differently if their interim rabbi asked to be relieved of his contractual obligations midway through an 18-month term. They would have been quite unhappy and unable to move forward effectively. That was not Congregation Shir Hadash’s attitude. She said something to the effect of: “You did what was right for your interim rabbi. You did not complain; you just took action to move forward in the best way that you possibly could. That made us at the CCAR want to find someone good to be your transitional rabbi for the next nine months.” We at Shir Hadash were very pleased that the CCAR suggested—and we were able to make an agreement with—Rabbi Danny Gottlieb to be our transitional rabbi, on a part-time basis, until our new settled rabbi is chosen and begins her/his term on July 1, 2022. Lay leadership, clergy, and the congregation all were able to move forward effectively!

Congregation Shir Hadash should be proud! We have a very strong Cantor, Devorah Felder-Levy, and Rabbi Educator, PJ Schwartz, who assumed the Bimah duties during the High Holy Days, led Sukkot and Simchat Torah celebrations and carried on our weekly Shabbat prayers without missing a beat. Pastoral care is being provided. The office staff, led by Gary Geller and Cindy Weinberg, continued their wonderful work to enable us to function well as a synagogue. Our newly revamped Religious School Kulanu program, led by Rabbi Schwartz, is off to a wonderful start with a new, exciting curriculum. The Early Childhood Center, led by Janet Cannon, continued its exemplary functioning to educate and care for our youngest students. Choir, Men’s Club, Sisterhood, Adult Ed, Social Action activities among many others continue. Lay leadership is assisting with many of these activities. The board of directors and our Finance Committee have us operating smoothly with an admirable financial position thanks in great part to government assistance available during the pandemic. The strong foundation that has been built over the past 40 years is permitting us to thrive despite our unexpected difficulties. We have a lot to kvell about!

Our interim rabbi committee recommended, and the board accepted, Rabbi Danny Gottlieb to be our transitional rabbi until June 30, 2022. The committee will continue to assist Rabbi Gottlieb to do the best job that he can as our transitional rabbi during his tenure.

Our Settled Rabbi Search Committee (SRSC) posted our application with the CCAR, resulting in ten resumes from qualified rabbis being received, as of the writing of this article. The SRSC is proceeding with four of the ten rabbis as of this writing. The candidates all look good and these four look especially good. In addition, the SRSC received word that many congregations used this application not as a job description the way that Congregation Shir Hadash did initially, but as a marketing tool. CSH submitted a marketized version of its application on October 18. That resubmission will be re-posted at the top of the CCAR’s applications, and we hope the new content will attract even more qualified applicants to apply to CSH for our settled rabbi position.

Our real estate committee put together some form agreements so that we can be ready if needed to raise funds from temple investors to assist the new settled senior rabbi and his/her family to break into the Silicon Valley housing market in a manner appropriate for a senior rabbi of Shir Hadash. More on this later if it becomes necessary to use these plans. This will depend on who is chosen to become our new settled senior rabbi and if they need housing assistance from the Temple community to become properly settled near us.

The benchmarking committee continues to interview young families. We expect to complete this work relatively soon, and then, the benchmarking committee’s work will likely be complete.

The engagement committee is preparing to introduce Rabbi Gottlieb to the congregation. This will likely be scaled down from the numerous meetings we had to introduce Rabbi Riter—as of now, we expect no more than five meetings specifically called to introduce Rabbi Gottlieb to all members who wish to meet him. Of course, members may meet Rabbi Gottlieb at other regular meetings/services that you both attend.

We will try to continue to communicate in each edition of The Notes where we are in the rabbinic transition process. If, in the meantime, you have any questions regarding the processes that we are undertaking, or suggestions for us, please contact Rich Pickard, 408-307-1285 or richpickard27@gmail.com.
Please visit www.shirhadash.org for the full calendar.
Live via Zoom. Sign up at shirhadash.org/calendar.
Live-stream on Shir Hadash TV at shirhadash.org/live.