



# Temple Emanu-El Connections

Tishrei - Cheshvan, 5781 • V. 85 No. 2

October 2020

## October Service Schedule

### Friday, October 2

6:00 PM Zoom Erev Shabbat & Sukkot Experience

### Friday, October 9

6:00 PM Zoom Erev Shabbat & Simchat Torah Experience

### Saturday, October 10

9:00 AM Zoom Live Yizkor Service

### Friday, October 16

7:00 PM Streamed Erev Shabbat Service

### Friday, October 23

6:00 PM Zoom Live Sisterhood Kabbalat Shabbat

### Friday, October 30

6:00 PM Zoom Live Shabbat at Home Experience with Clergy

Please tune in to Rabbi's Weekly Update Videos, released every Tuesday, to stay up to date on Temple events and happenings.



## Zoom Erev Shabbat and Sukkot Experience

Friday  
October 2

6:00 PM

Join our clergy in celebrating Sukkot at home with the Mini Sukkah kit you received in your High Holy Day Gift Bag!



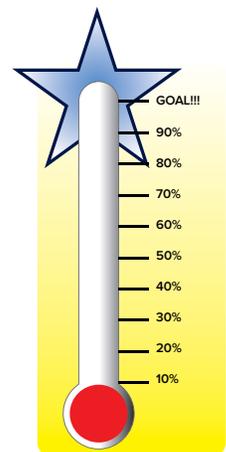
## Zoom Erev Shabbat and Simchat Torah Experience

Friday  
October 9

Ready for Simchat Torah? We have special guests reading the Torah this year! Don't forget to decorate & show us your flag that was in your High Holy Day Gift Bag.

*Shana Tovah!* We hope that you joined us for the High Holy Days this year and were able to hear from Temple Emanu-El President, Steve Krandel, about the importance of the Annual Campaign this year. Our campaign this year started on Erev Rosh Hashanah, and ends on December 31st. Our goal this year is \$100,000.

This is your chance to make a difference in your community and congregation. This Annual Campaign is especially critical this year as we look for ways to safely provide education for our Preschool students with PPE and other safety measures, as well as keeping programming and planning available for you via Zoom. Please go to our website at <https://www.templeseanose.org/annualcampaign> to learn more and make a donation. We thank you for your support and look forward to welcoming everyone back to Temple Emanu-El as soon as it is safe to do so.



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408-292-0939

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# From the President



## L'Shanah Tovah!

I'm Steve Krandel and I'm honored to serve as President of Temple Emanu-El's Board of Trustees for this year and next.

What a difference a year makes! Last year on Erev Rosh Hashanah, I had the privilege of speaking you from the Bimah about our 2020 project. I breathed a big sigh of relief when that was over. I figured

I was off the hook for addressing the congregation for a long time. Enter Karma. By the time the year ended, Andrew Weinberg was trying to get me on the list of future presidents as part of a 10 to 12-year succession plan. By February, I had volunteered to be first on that list. So, here we are.

Normally, a first-year president talks about his/her journey to becoming president of the congregation and why he/she is the right person for the job. I always wondered why this was important. But, over the last several years, I've grown to realize that it's about humanizing the role and helping to create personal connections. While many of you know my story, I'm certain that many of you don't. I will give you the very abbreviated version. You see, I've been a member of Temple Emanu-El for over 58 years. My parents were married here by Rabbi Gitin and didn't know many people at their own wedding. But that's a story for another day. My sister, Lori and I both went through Religious School and learned so much from teachers like Rosalie Gitin, Betty Rinsler and Michelle Gabriel. We sang in Phylis Omel's junior choir and were active in the youth group. I joined on my own in 1984 after college, and ultimately raised my family here.

I was fortunate enough to have the 2 best examples of how to be a mensch anyone could ask for: my parents Ruth and Bob Krandel. They were truly pillars of the Jewish Community. To say they were dedicated to the Temple would be a huge understatement. They were generous with their time, their ideas, and ultimately with their money. When you needed something done, you called Ruth Krandel and it got done. My dad was the leader who seemed to have an innate idea of how to run an organization like this and how to get people involved. On the surface he seemed like a really nice guy with a terrific sense of humor. Actually, he was a master at how to use humor as a leadership tool and had a unique ability to bring people together. I was fortunate to serve as Treasurer while each of them was President of the temple and learned a great deal about how to do this job.

I served under 7 other Temple Presidents including Dan Lee, Steve Greenberg, Laura Danoff-Robinson, Mike Cahn, Barry Cohen, Jeff Hoffman, Andrew Weinberg and Deborah Zimmer. Each one of these dedicated leaders handled this

role differently. I'll use what I learned from each of them as I navigate the next couple of years. I know I can count on them for guidance when I go off course.

This new year is anything but normal. I guess I'm the first president to address the congregation on video. I know I'm the first to be doing this wearing a tie and shorts. But you'll have to take my word for that.

In the next week or so, you will receive an email with a copy of an article, "A Year Without a Synagogue", written by 2 rabbis from northern California. I really like the tone of their article, so I want to share some of their words....

"Synagogues are extensions of our homes where Jewish life is marked and celebrated. Synagogues are the people who show up at your door with a meal, the phone calls when you have lost someone you loved, the rabbi who is there to listen. For our children, synagogues are the place where they are nurtured and loved without the pressures of secular school. Synagogues are where we grapple with big ideas. They are a place for identity experimentation and self-expression. A place where ethics are upheld, and love and kindness prevail. Through our synagogues the world is healed. Synagogues bring families together to honor sacred time. During hard times, they are where we learn to handle challenges and where resilience is built."

"Jewish synagogue life is not here to add additional work or stress to one's life. It is here to be a place that holds emotion, whether joyful or disappointing. Yes, it takes commitment. Those commitments come in the form of time, money, energy, and emotional investment. Ideally, what one gets out of belonging to a synagogue can't be measured by any standard metric. It can only be measured in feelings of love, community, and connection to each other and to the Divine (or to something greater than ourselves)."

Let's talk about our annual campaign. I know it's everybody's least favorite topic at High Holidays, but it's a topic that must be covered. Last year we were just short of our goal. But we expected that as we were working on the 2020 campaign as well. This year, we are upping our goal to \$100,000. I can't emphasize how important this campaign is to our finances. There are lots of unknowns because of Covid, but we do know that there has been a direct impact on our pre-school. Enrollment is picking up, but a revenue shortfall is simply unavoidable. The money raised by this campaign allows us to keep our staff properly paid and covers the ever-rising cost of health insurance and other benefits. It allows us to provide better programming for you. It allows us to have a safer environment for our pre-school and Religious school. This will help us be fully prepared for when we open back

*continued on page 3*

# Thank you

to all of our  
High Holy Days  
Volunteers!

## HHD Gift Bag Packers & Delivery Volunteers



Hana Anderson	Byron Lilly
Rafi Bendahan	Nancy Lindley
Barbara & Mort Berlant	Meg McRoberts
Jessica Blitchok	Jeremy Meltzer
Ron Blumstein	Marc Pawliger
Sherry Cohen	Quinn Phan
Eric Fox	Cherie Ravel
Rebeca Frederick	Jessica Rom
Elizabeth Friend	Fagie Rosen
Elisa Gerston	Harriet Saltzman
Jamie Gold	Gia Schneider
Ariela Guadamos	Marvin Schwab
Kim Jackman	Lonna Smith
Jerry and Gayle Jacobs	Joanna Snyder
Dan Lee	Joshua Tucker
Randy Levinson	Liz Shivell and Deborah Zimmer

## Service Participants

### Erev Rosh Hashanah

Candle Lighting	<b>Fagie Rosen</b>
V'ahavta	<b>Shaina Cohen</b>

### Rosh Hashanah Day

V'ahavta	<b>MacEnzie Blue</b>
Torah Blessings	<b>Deborah Zimmer</b> (Immediate past president)
Haftarah Blessings	<b>Raya Magat</b>
Haftarah	<b>Sid Rosenberg z"l</b>

### Kol Nidre

Candle Lighting	<b>Cheriel Magat</b>
V'ahavta	<b>Noralee Zwick</b>

### Yom Kippur Day

V'ahavta	<b>Malaka Osias</b>
Torah Blessings	<b>Andrew Weinberg</b> (Past President)
Haftarah & Blessings	<b>Rachel Levy</b>

### Visual T'filah

**Penni Henry**

### Virtual Choir

<b>Shannon Brown</b>	<b>Cheriel Magat</b>
<b>Rebecca Frederick</b>	<b>Beverly Mendel</b>
<b>Rachel Levy</b>	<b>David Schwartz</b>
<b>Byron Lilly</b>	<b>Philip Schwarz</b>

### Musical Interlude

Piano: **Deborah Davis**  
Piano: **Dr. Richard Sogg**

### Mazeltones

<b>Naomi Brown</b> (madricha)	<b>Lily Karp</b>
<b>MacEnzie Blue</b>	<b>Malaka Osias</b>
<b>Jo Kao-Sussman</b>	<b>Jordyn Rose</b>
<b>Ayla Karp</b>	<b>Dara Turchin</b>
	<b>Eden Turchin</b>

### Ritual Committee

**Jonathan Avila**  
**Mort Berlant**  
**Shannon Brown**  
**Maggie Cant**  
**Cantor Amanda Edmondson**  
**Branden Frederick**  
**David Goldberg**  
**Rabbi Dana Magat**  
**Neil Mendel**  
**Julie Moore**  
**Melenie Pearson**

# Tikkun Olam – Black Lives Matter

Our handsome son Josh stood on the bimah, wrapped in his Talit for the first time, chanting Tzedek Tzedek Tirdof: justice, justice shall you pursue. His D'var about showing compassion towards people of every race and religion had me beaming with pride. It was not only his flawless Hebrew (I'm still kvelling four years later) but also pride that my husband and I had chosen to immerse him in a Jewish education at Temple Emanu-El where these important values and ethics were nurtured.

Yes, justice is a Jewish value. Black Lives Matter is a Jewish values statement. I am not speaking here about the organization, which admittedly has made problematic statements about Israel. Rather, I am talking about a movement that addresses the fundamental rights of Black and Brown people to live in a society where they have equal access to all opportunities, such as education, housing, employment and, safety.

Yes, the Union for Reform Judaism has taken a firm and outspoken position on the Black Lives Matter movement. "As Reform Jews committed to the spirit of this teaching, we say unequivocally, Black Lives Matter." The URJ insists that we must all "commit to a human and civil rights movement, working to end systemic racism against Black people and white supremacy" which includes looking at the ways that we have contributed to racism as individuals and as a movement. We are told to "move beyond allyship and commit to long-term solutions both internally in ourselves, our own organization, and externally in our communities to disrupt and dismantle white supremacy."

I encourage you to read the URJ's full statement at <https://urj.org/press-room/reform-jewish-leadership-statement-black-lives-matter-jewish-value>.

Yes, Jews have also faced extraordinary persecution throughout history. But just as a firefighter pours his or her efforts into saving the house that is on fire rather than spreading the water on all the houses in the neighborhood, we have a moral obligation as Jews to focus attention on the people whose lives are most at risk. Just as it is insulting to many of us to hear people respond to stories of the Holocaust with "well, lots of people have faced mass murder in many places", it is dismissive and insulting to respond by saying all lives matter. Black people in our country are not treated as though their lives matter. When we say "all lives matter", it is true, but it is a way of deflecting attention from the raging flames of racism that are causing Black people to be targeted by the police.

Yes, there are many wonderful police officers who put their lives at risk daily to protect their communities. Our Temple office has developed good relationships with the local police department, and our mostly White congregation deeply appreciates their presence outside services. Nevertheless, many people in the Black community, which includes Black Jews, often do not feel that same sense of safety when they see the police.

While many of our congregants view the police as cherished protectors, many Black parents regularly fear that their child will not survive an interaction with the police. Horrifically, a Black man is nearly three times more

likely to be killed by the police than a White man. The news is full of brutal attacks on Blacks by the police. For more information see Every town's article on Gun Violence by Police at <https://everytown.org/issues/gun-violence-by-police/>. The myriad of ways that Blacks are subjected to systemic racism in housing, employment, education, health care, etc. would require much more space.

Yes, with the Rabbi's support and guidance, our congregation has already begun to take steps forward in our anti-Racism work. As I write this,

I know we will be privileged to hear powerful and moving statements from a panel of Black congregants during Rosh Hashanah. As Chair of the Tikkun Olam committee, I led a book group of congregants reading and discussing Kendi's book "How to Be An Anti-Racist" over the course of six weeks. The Tikkun Olam committee has engaged in learning about voter suppression, and reached out to low propensity voters in Texas. I took a four week URJ sponsored class on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, which trained me to start a DEI working group at Emanu-El. I also attended a JCRC workshop on Diversity along with our Board President and several other congregants. This is just the beginning of a commitment to continue working on these issues. Please feel free to reach out to me if you are interested in being a part of this crucial work at: [socialaction@templesanjose.org](mailto:socialaction@templesanjose.org)

As I stood on the bimah of Temple Emanu-El myself, becoming an adult Bat Mitzvah, I chanted the exquisite line from Torah often repeated during the healing portion of our services: El na refa na la, please God, please heal her. I wish for that healing for my country, as we work together as Jews to heal from the plague of racism. I hope and pray and work for the day when we live in a country where it is indeed clear that Black Lives Matter.

*Sharon Genkin, Tikkun Olam Chair*

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**Nevertheless, many people in the Black community, which includes Black Jews, often do not feel that same sense of safety when they see the police.**

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# Religious School



## Religious School is BACK!!

Sunday October 4 is our opening day of Religious School and Beit No'ar classes. Although we will meet via Zoom, we will be able to again learn together, schmooze together, pray together, and connect with others after such a long layoff (last day of classes was back in mid-May). With all the turmoil and unrest in the country, and after such a long, hot smoke-

filled summer, I am anxiously awaiting the return of our students to the TEE learning community.

Our teachers are ready to provide an enriching experience for all of their students. This will include both time in "class", as well as involvement in *Chuggim* (electives). On Sunday, we would normally have gathered under the canopy of our Temple's Sukkah, shaking the *lulav* and *Eetrog*. Although we cannot gather in person, we will do our best to recreate the feeling of togetherness within the temporary walls of the Zoom platform.

So it is time to break out of the summer-long rut and return to the safe space called TEE Religious School. I look forward to seeing all family members join us on Sunday October 4 to celebrate the opening of the school year.

*Chag Sameach!*

*Phil Hankin, MAJE, Director of Education*

# Sisterhood

Sisterhood continues to engage our TEE women with virtual activities. We hope you take a moment to open up your Evite and join us for one or all of our events. Please know that all women are welcome. Thank you to our members who graciously sent in donations above the requested \$36 and our life members who sent 1 donations. Thank you to Marjie Blickman, Ester Burton, Mary Cohen, Joan Fox, Eleanor Gerstley, Dr. Bobbye Gorenberg, Arlene Greenberg, JoAnn Shank, Nancy Weintraub, and Janet Wood.

August 11 was our first Sisterhood Virtual Bingo. We designed our own Bingo boards with Sisterhood facts. Players were able to create and randomize their own board. A fun way to get to know our Sisterhood auxiliary, Women of Reform Judaism, and our members. A select number of prizes had to be mailed out so we quickly realized that gift cards were easier to mail.

September 22 was our second Bingo night and players won a variety of gift cards; Baskin Robbins, Trader Joes, Target, Amazon, Willow Street Pizza, Starbucks, and Peet's coffee.

Hope you will join us this month. We have several gift cards to give away!! Congratulations to Debra Wanamaker who won our door prize of a \$25 Amazon card! Be sure to join us and you will be entered in the door prize drawing at the end of the Bingo game.

Thank you to our Mask-a-teers who are volunteering to sew masks for our local soup kitchens so our families in need can go through the grab and go lines safely by wearing a donated and reusable cloth mask. Remember to save the date for our October Zoom virtual events.

Sunday, October 18, 2020

## Rosh Chodesh with Cantor Edmondson

Virtual Zoom Event at 12:30 PM

Join us we celebrate Rosh Chodesh by ringing in the new month of Cheshvan. Although Cheshvan is often referred to as "Mar Cheshvan," or *bitter Cheshvan* because there are no holidays.

## Join Us For Our Virtual Sisterhood Shabbat

Friday, October 23, 2020 at 7:00 PM

Interested in learning about Women of Reform Judaism? Join us at the FREE virtual convention to learn more.

## The 2020 WRJ Pacific District Convention

October 24-25, 2020

The Convention theme is: "One Vision, Many Voices." Let us dream (*nachalom*) and then begin (*v'nat'chil*) to build the future we desire. Register at <https://www.wrjpacific.org/2020-registration.html>

Sunday, November 1, 2020

## Virtual Donor Lunch and Volunteer Awards Recognition

1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Celebrating 100 years of TEE Sisterhood!

If you would like to volunteer or want to know more about Sisterhood, please email [sisterhood@templesanjose.org](mailto:sisterhood@templesanjose.org)

*Judy Levy Co-President  
Beverly Mendel Co-President*



# Preschool

There are many things in life that normally I would say are predictable, the sun will come out, the stars will shine and the world of preschool will always be a grand adventure! As we finished up our first month of the new school year we have had many things that are the same and of course in this year of 2020 many things are different. The kids enjoyed getting into their new classrooms and beginning the adventure of preschool with new friends, messy projects, story time and so much more. At the same time things are different because they are no longer mixing with other rooms and we are unable to enjoy having Rabbi and Cantor on a weekly basis for a while. I am in awe of how well our little friends have handled the changes and how happy they are to simply be together. As we celebrated the month with lessons on Fall, Rosh Hashanah, and even Yom Kippur I was reminded that as crazy as things are feeling right now between the pandemic, the fires, the strange weather we had for most of the month and just the changes in our world right now the important things in life such as the laughter and smiles of children will always remain.

*Barbara Smead, Director of Early Childhood Education*  
[Barbara@templesanjose.org](mailto:Barbara@templesanjose.org)



# From the President

*continued from page 2*

up. You all will have annual campaign card in your High Holy Day bag. You can either send that card in, call the office to make your pledge, or visit that Annual Campaign page on our website. The campaign runs now thru the end of January.

2020 has been a very strange year. I'd like to say we can see the light at the end of the tunnel. Until we do see that light, please know that the board and the staff are working hard to create an experience that, while different, still gives the sense of community and family that we all crave. You will be hearing more about what we have planned over the coming weeks. The problems we have to solve are different than anything we have experienced before. You already know how great our staff is. We also have fantastic Board of Trustees. Together, we are taking the challenge head on and continuing to move forward. The result will be synagogue that is stronger, safer and more resilient than ever.

Remember, we don't belong to Temple Emanu-El. Temple Emanu-El belongs to us. It's our extend home and community and it's our responsibility to provide for its future.

I want to wish you all a happy, safe, and healthy New Year.

*I'Shana Tovah!*



## ✧ Ritual Committee ✧

We are in the season of the most sublime transition in the Jewish festival cycle. We are traveling from the mental to the physical. We have just passed through the introspective self-reflection of Yom Kippur, spending all day fasting and reciting pensive prayers and meditations, only to emerge spiritually transformed. The spiritual journey complete, we now embark upon the strenuous labor of constructing a sukkah.

On Yom Kippur, we repent. Sitting, standing, we pray, we meditate, we fast, we listen, we speak, we chant. We push aside our worldly commitments and dedicate our day to turning round and round our memories, our decisions, our thoughts. We beseech the Eternal that the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts are acceptable. We seek forgiveness, pardon, and atonement, and desire to be sealed in the Book of Life for a good year.

As the day of atonement draws to a close, we recite the words of Havdalah. We peel away the cocoon of our thoughts, rise from our seat, break from our fast, and ebb back into the world like sunlight's return in an eclipse ending, the moon sliding past the sun.

Five days later, we shall dwell in booths, that our generation may know that the Children of Israel were made to dwell in booths when the Eternal brought them out of the land of Egypt. The booths -- the sukkot -- must be built in the interval. They must be temporary structures of about two-and-a-half walls, with a roof that provides shade, yet still lets the occupants see the stars above.

There is no experience so diametrically contrasting to praying on Yom Kippur as constructing a sukkah. Building the booth, we're outside, as a team, working with our hands, driving nails into lumber, shouting instructions, sharing tools and supplies, making something. On Yom Kippur, we atone. The day after, we create.

In this season of Sukkot, we are commanded to rejoice. God hallows us with mitzvot, commanding us to dwell in the sukkah. Commanding us to take up the lulav. The Sovereign has kept us alive, sustained us, and brought us to this day. We gather, we share meals, we celebrate.

Our spirits repair themselves on Yom Kippur. Our bodies, on Sukkot. We have made it to the new year.

*Branden Frederick, Ritual Committee Chair*



### Those we have lost in years past

**October 2** | Harold Aronoff, Lee Chandler, Genia Cintz, Paul Davis, Dee Erlichman, Samuel Fishelberg, Paul Greebler, Louis Harkavy, Murray Hirsch, Irving Jacobs, Florence Kristal, Grace Hirsch Laevsky, Jacob Levin, Jack Levine, Lee Levine, Jack Markus, Herbert Matties, Jacob S. Mehlman, Abram Merzlyak, Esther Reiser, David L. Reiser, Harry Rubenstein, Charles Rubin, Irwin Rusnak, Alexandra Sargent, Edna Schaar, Nellie Schier, Frances Schulman, Vivian Sessions, Ronald Sherman, Mildred Shev, Louis Silverman, Besse Slonaker, Jennie Solomon, Anita Sommer, Kurt Weinberg, Sara Widman, Virginia Williams, Sheila Wills, Bill Winter

**October 9** | Abraham Abelson, Fanny Elka Abelson, Rose W. Aronoff, Charlotte Axelrod, Jean Barsky, Anna Berman, Sharon Chastain, Bernard Delman, Kenneth Douglas, Eugene Foxman, Henry Frank, Ellen Sue Freiberg, Sydney Friedman, Katherine Gold, Isaac Goldstein, Jack Graff, Rick Hoffman, David Jackel, Dolores Jaffe, Jason Jurman, Marian I Kaplan, Marian Kaplan, Fanny Katz, Louis Landman, Maggie Larsen, Jonathan Lotman, Sol Manning, Lillie Mehr, Meta Mendel, Ruth Mendel, Alfred Morris, Abe Ofsaiof, Gussie Panikoff, Gertrude Rott, Lily Shulman, Loren Siegel, Sophie Silverstein, Edna Taber, Bernice Testa, Helen Wallach, Marilyn Zeliinsky, Cathy Zimmer

**October 18** | Benjamin Aronowitz, Ben Avrech, Charles Broder, Zelda Brust, Bayla Bryman, Harold Chusid, Mark Emanuel, Max Feldman, Lena Fink, Milton Fox, George Friedman, Stuart A. Holstein, Jerald W. Hunter, Henny Just, Mollie Kadish, Estelle Kramer, Minnie Levine, Leon Livchitz, Joel Loren, Alan Loth, Joe Marchick, Anna Myerfeld, Morris Myers, Adele Panikoff, Israel Port, Sydney Resnick, John Reznikov, Reva Rothenberg, Moritz Golden Roy, Dr. David G. Roy, Jack Rubenstein, Arthur Schimek, Molly Schutte, Jane Schwartz, Perla Sciupac, Jonathan Sievers, David Silen, Boomi Silverman, Arthur Spector, Rita Stoner, Cecil Weintraub, Gertrude Wolff, Ruth Zenverv

**October 23** | Sylvia Braude, Estelle Cantor, Carol Chusid, Aaron Dorfman, Celia Edelstein, Abram P. Epstein, Anita Faverman, David A. Feldman, Jim Fenner, Sharon Gold, Charles Gold, Pearl Goldstein, Charles Greenberg, Monroe J. Hartfield, Mollie Herman, Harry Hirsh, Beverlee R. Holstein, Simon Indianer, Mary Katz, Max Kivetz, Lena Koss, Minnie Lackner, Virginia Lee, Bernice Lehman, Lionel Leiter, Leah Leizerbaum, Sadye Lewis, Elizabeth Lieberman, Shulamith Lubin, Sidney Marsh, Alfred Mayer, Paulette Michel, Mike Molack, Ralph Muslin, Monty Myers, Dorothy Osiel, Max Polsky, Bernard Richman, Max Rosenthal, William Schneiderman, Herman Schwab, Stanley Shine, Bernard Smulyan, Rosalie Sogolow, Sam Spinner, Marc G. Terziev, Albert Tidwell, Clara Webb-Nord, Franciska Weinberg, Barnett Weinstein, Joseph Wolff

**October 30** | Hilda Altman, Ben Berman, Shirley Boyers, Laura Bruckheimer, Lena Erlichman Cannell, Gertrude Carmely, Nettie Chatoff, Felix Costa, Theresa H. Epstein, Jean Claire Farber, Michael Feinman, Geraldine Kahn Feldman, Flora Fishoff, Teresa Forman, Henry (Hank) Frederick, Grace Freiberg, Andrea Gabbert, Hyman Garshon, Adrian Gaynor, Melvin Grant, Joan Hammer, Edward Hochman, Peter Hubert, Peter Hubert, Joseph Jacobson, Jennie Juroff, Lowell King, Ida Kragen, Leon Lagier, Don W. MacDonald, Morton Marks, Margaret Miller, Claudine Morris, Claudine Morris, George Marvin Nathan, Herbert J. Nayman, Dr. Morris Oransz, Sofia Oransz, Mildred Polgar, Jacob Pollack, Edith Port, Frances K. Powell, Frances K. Powell, Stuart Press, Louis Richards, Ben Roth, Molly Schneiderman, Anita Stransky Schwarz, Bessie Schwarz, Lita Smolin Segal-Katz, Nancy Snyder, Homer Sobel, Max Sokolov, Emil Sonnberger, Bernard Spillman, Gary Van Dyck, Mitchell Wolfson, Rose Woron



# My Take on Torah

## Ki Tavo

### “Just do the right thing”

The Parasha for this week is Ki Tavo from Deuteronomy. Not being a Torah scholar, which is an understatement, I had to search out the passage to get acquainted with it. In a nutshell, Ki Tavo is this:

After wandering for 40 years in the desert, the Israelites are about to enter, or more appropriately stated, invade, the land God had promised them. God, speaking through his interpreter, Moses, tells the people the following:

He, or She, reminds the Israelites of their history thus far - that they went to Egypt and after being treated well, were enslaved and treated harshly. That He led them out of Egypt with “a mighty hand” and brought them to this place He has given to them, a land “flowing with milk and honey.” The Israelites are then given instructions to follow, reinforcing the commandments that had been given to them in the desert. Included was the order to tithe a tenth of their yields to the Levite who could not produce for themselves, the stranger, the fatherless and the widowed. God then very explicitly tells them that they will be rewarded for obeying these laws, affirming that they are his chosen people, that they would be set high above all the nations in fame and glory and, in short, their lives would be just splendid. However, if they didn’t obey, some very terrible things would happen to them, and I mean TERRIBLE. This list is far longer, including, famine, extraordinary plagues and diseases, etc.; when I got to the part about them eating their young, I practically had to run screaming from the room. And, if these things weren’t terrible enough, God tells them He will enjoy seeing this. Now, I am not the only person who has had trouble with this passage.

However, after my initial freak out, I was able to step back and reframe the story with a more contemporary sensibility. While the God of the Torah was very transactional in his relationship with the Jewish people, I, personally, do not believe in such a God. So, what does this parasha tell us.... basically, and simply, to do the right thing. But, why the need to remind us of our history of the escape from Egypt and the Commandments already given to us? Perhaps because the Israelites were at a place of great change and opportunity. Perhaps the reminder was needed as they were embarking on this new part of their history, so that they would behave in a morally and ethically appropriate way. In short, the Israelites were at an “inflection point,” a geometric term referencing a turning point on a curve. But the term can also be applied to how

a society behaves and changes. And we need some major changes now. Money and power is in the hands of the very few who don’t seem to care much about democracy, the environment, or the health and well-being of the rest. There is a frightening rise in authoritarianism. While politics has always been a dirty game, it seems even dirtier. It is not the first time our country has found itself at such a point. The Great Depression of the 1930’s comes readily to mind. It demanded a radical change and those changes

brought a more ethical and compassionate country that served the needs of not just the wealthy and powerful. Now, I am not particularly naive or prone to hyperbole and I know there are those who will disagree, but I truly believe we are at such a point now and that, without a radical adjustment to the direction we are going, it could be too late to change course. So, what does this have to do with Ki Tavo....

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**Ki Tavo, looked at from this perspective teaches us simply to do the right thing especially during times when our morals and ethics are being challenged.**

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In the book, Judaism and Justice, the Jewish Passion to Repair the World, Rabbi Sidney Schwarz, asks the question “How Central is God?” He advises that, in the modern era, surveys show that of all the segments of American population, Jews are most likely to doubt the existence of God. He writes that, in Deuteronomy,, there is a passage that seems to suggest that “the interpretation of the Torah is within reach of every member of the Children of Israel” (page 57) and that the laws are to be judged “less by their origin than by what they mean and what they can bring to the world” (page 58). I believe this to be true; it explains the Jewish passion to repair the world. It explains why Jews are overly represented in certain professions such as social work and certain movements such as civil rights and workers’ rights. It explains the Jewish passion to do the right thing. And while all Jews are not good people and do not strive to do good in the world, many do. Ki Tavo, looked at from this perspective teaches us simply to do the right thing especially during times when our morals and ethics are being challenged. Our democracy, our environment and the future of our children and our children’s children are depending on us.

*Ginny Hoffman, d’var for Board*

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Ginny and her family have been members of Temple Emanu-El for almost 20 years and have grandchildren who are currently at TEPS. Ginny has been part of everything from Ritual Committee, to choir member to cooking for the diaspora dinners. When not at Temple Emanu-El, Ginny love to hike, read and knit/crochet.

This list includes contributions made on or between 08/15/2020-09/22/2020.

## Thank You for Your Generous Contributions

### 20/20 Project

Deborah Davis, *in memory of Richard G Davis*  
 Bette Emanuel, *in memory of Eva Emanuel*  
 Bette Emanuel, *in memory of Rebecca Decker, daughter of Janis Decker*  
 Morton & Marilyn Leiter, *in memory of Lionel Leiter*  
 Carol Thailer, *in memory of my beloved daughter Lisa Thailer Wiviott*

### Cantor's Discretionary Fund

Deborah Zimmer & Elizabeth Shivell, *in honor of the birth of Jonas Edmondson*

### Endowment Fund

Ruth & Robert Fox, *in honor of the birthday of Joan Fox*  
 Deborah Zimmer & Elizabeth Shivell, *in memory of Burt Epstein*  
 Deborah Zimmer & Elizabeth Shivell, *in honor of the birth of Milo Housman*  
 Deborah Zimmer & Elizabeth Shivell

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 Dr. R. Henry & Jean Richards, *in memory of Sam Spinner*  
 Joanna & David Snyder

Jaclyn Thimmavajjula, *Shana Tova for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur Services*

Henry & Debra Watkins  
 Stephen Wernick, *in memory of Jill Wernick*  
 Janet Wood  
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### JoAnne Salman-Tehrani Homeless Fund

Morton & Barbara Berlant, *to help alleviate hunger in our community*  
 Judith Jurman Omens Cemetery Beautification Fund  
 Jyl & David Jurman, *in memory of Judith Lynn Jurman Omens*  
 Jyl & David Jurman, *in memory of Daniel Heath Pollack*  
 Jyl & David Jurman, *in memory of Jason William Jurman*  
 Rubin & Arlene Jurman, *in memory of Judith Jurman Omens*  
 Rubin & Arlene Jurman, *in memory of Jason William Jurman*  
 Wanda Pollack & Michael Pollack and Family, *in memory of Daniel Pollack*

### Prayerbook Fund

Dr. & Mrs. Lawrence Ross, *in memory of John Reznikov*

### Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Dr. Allan & Judith Bernstein, *in memory of Ruth Bernstein*  
 Dr. Allan & Judith Bernstein, *in memory of Nathan Primack*  
 Bette Emanuel, *in memory of Mark Emanuel*  
 Bette Emanuel, *in memory of Rose Woron*  
 Eugene & Marilyn Handloff, *in appreciation of the beautifully produced online High Holy Days services*  
 The Henry's, *in appreciation of Rabbi and Cantor for an amazing and special Rosh Hashanah and Rabbi, Karen, Kat and Katorah for such a heartfelt and open discussion about Black Lives and what happens when we "remain silent".*  
 Gordon Schneiderman, *in memory of Molly Schneiderman*  
 Mark & Lynette Tannen, *in memory of Bernard Smulyan*  
 Deborah Zimmer & Elizabeth Shivell, *in honor of interfaith leadership in times of COVID*

### Religious School Fund

E. Gerald & Gail Jacobs, *in honor of Rachel Hernandez, daughter of Jerry & Gail Jacobs, being named San Joaquin County 2020 Teacher of the Year*

### Scholar in Residence Fund

Maggie and Robert Cant, *in memory of Thomas Ivy*  
 Robert and Maggie Cant, *in memory of Alfred Mayer*

### Susan C. Blickman Arts and Crafts Fund

Abe Livchitz, *in memory of Mo Livchitz*

If you would like to make a contribution, visit [www.templeсанjose.org](http://www.templeсанjose.org)

# Brotherhood

Temple Emanu-El Brotherhood continues to meet, serve, and socialize within the bounds of the shelter-in-place. Join our next planning meeting on **Sunday, October 11 at 9:00** via Zoom (email [brotherhood@templesanjose.org](mailto:brotherhood@templesanjose.org) for the link). While the bagels may be virtual, the camaraderie is real.

Save the date of **December 23** for the Brotherhood Blood Drive in collaboration with the Abrahamic Alliance International. Blood donation is vitally important even at the

best of times, and unfortunately blood donations are especially scarce right now, so please participate if you are able.

*L'Shana Tovah Umetukah!*

*Branden Frederick  
on behalf of the TEE Brotherhood*




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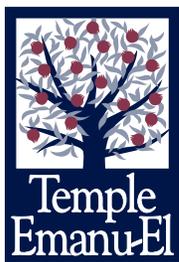
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If you would like to advertise in Temple Emanu-El's *Connections* contact Oliver Housman at [oliver@templesanjose.org](mailto:oliver@templesanjose.org).

# OCTOBER 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4 9:45 AM First Day of Religious School 11:45 AM Beit Noar	5	6 12:00 PM Zoom Chat with the Rabbi 7:00 PM Board Meeting	7	8 12:00 PM Zoom TV/Film Discussion 7:00 PM TEE Hosted forum on Prop 16 & 17	9 6:00 PM Zoom Erev Shabbat and Sukkot Experience	10 9:00 AM Zoom Live Yizkor Service
11 9:00 AM Brotherhood Meeting 9:45 AM Religious School 10:00 AM Sisterhood Board Meeting 11:45 AM Beit Noar	12	13	14 12:00 PM Zoom Lunch & Learn 7:00 PM Zoom Town Hall Meeting	15	16 7:00 PM Streamed Erev Shabbat Service	17
18 9:45 AM Religious School 10:30 AM Sisterhood Meeting 11:45 AM Beit Noar 12:30 PM Zoom Rosh Chodesh	19	20 12:00 PM Zoom Chat with the Rabbi	21	22	23 6:30 PM Zoom Live Sisterhood Kabbalat Shabbat	24
25 9:45 AM Religious School 10:00 AM Online Sisterhood Board Meeting 11:45 AM Beit Noar	26	27 12:00 PM Zoom Chat with the Rabbi 7:00 PM Online Sisterhood Bingo 7:00 PM Zoom Introduction to Judaism	28 12:00 PM Zoom Lunch & Learn	29 12:00 PM Zoom TV/Film Discussion	30 6:30 PM Zoom Live Shabbat At Home Experience with Clergy	31



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**Amanda Edmondson** | Cantor – cantoramanda@templesanjose.org  
**Joseph Gitin, D.D. (z"l)** | Rabbi Emeritus

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**Jessica Blitchok** | Endowment Committee – endowment@templesanjose.org  
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Making a contribution to one of Temple Emanu-El's many funds is a wonderful way to honor your friends and family. You may make contributions in honor of a birth, a birthday, brit milah, baby naming, Bar/Bat Mitzvah, confirmation, graduation, engagement, wedding, anniversary, promotion, new home, special occasion or just because. You may also make contributions for get-well wishes, condolences, remembrances and yahrzeits.

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Shank-Rockman Family Sound System Fund  
Scholar in Residence Fund

## Community Funds

Accompaniment Fund  
Facilities for the Aged Fund (Chai House)  
JoAnne Salman-Tehrani Homeless Fund

## Other Tribute Opportunities

\$36 - Prayerbook Tribute  
\$218/\$500/\$750 - Tree of Life Leaf/small/large rock  
\$500 - Sanctuary Chair Plaque  
\$750 - Memorial Plaque (in sanctuary foyer)

## Opportunities in Levin Learning Center

\$5,000 - Stair Plaque  
\$10,000 - Library Column Dedication  
\$25,000 - Room Dedication

**Contact the Admin team for additional opportunities.**