
In Response to the Pulse Orlando Shooting

by Rabbi Dev Noily



In the early hours of June 12, as we celebrated Shavu'ot, a massacre was erupting at Latin Night at Pulse in Orlando. Scores of mostly young Latinx queer people were brutally killed. Even

more are surviving with lives and bodies and spirits shattered. Yet more who love them are forever scarred by the violence and hatred. And a sacred space has been desecrated, profaned, and rendered unapproachable. And with it, all of the similar sacred spaces, all over the world, where queer people, and especially queer people of color, have found celebration, safety, community, and dignity.

As I struggled to find my footing in the wake of the shooting, the words of Vincent Cervantes helped me to understand one piece of the magnitude of what has been lost. I'm sharing a long excerpt from his writing here because of how important it has been for me to listen to the voices of queer Latinx people during this time. And because among those voices, Vincent Cervantes is addressing a place of deep intersection between his sacred spaces as a gay Latino man and the kind of sacred space we are, and aspire to be, as Kehilla.

When I came out as gay, I found community and safety in Latin@ queer spaces. Through the rhythmic sounds of cumbia, merengue, reggaeton, and hip-hop that roused the core of my inner brown being, I found a space where I could dance through the traumatic history of growing up as femme brown boy, isolated in the borderlands between being called "joto" and "maricón" on one end and living in a white man's world on the other. It was through Latin@ queer spaces that I came into my own critical understanding of my embodied reality—living at the intersections of racial and sexual minority.

These experiences became a springboard for critical engagement as I began to develop a theological vocabulary to describe what happens in

those spaces. I learned to love myself. I learned to be a healer in my community.

Surely, gay nightclubs become religious spaces amidst the communitas of queer bodies inhabiting space together in kinship, but our people, Latin@s and Latin Americans, have a long history of creating ceremonial centers when our own homes became violent landscapes.

And just so, Latin@ queer spaces were always spaces of healing—migratory spaces we journeyed to, to be in solidarity with one another in our shared pain and suffering, but also in our shared joy and triumph.

We anointed one another with affirmation and laughter. We created fellowship and communion—because too many of us had traversed dangerous landscapes just to get there in the first place. The Spirit lived and carried through each and every one of us. We emerged from the shadows we worshipped in to survive and to be storytellers about our journeys. These are our sacred spaces.

I watch the media tripping over how to describe this tragedy, anxiously going back and forth between "terrorism" and "hate crime." (When many of us know, all too well, that it is "terrorism" when the victims are white Americans—otherwise it's simply a "hate crime." But, then again, it can only be a hate crime if the perpetrators are white Americans, otherwise it's "terrorism.")

Somehow the story is more easily told when we don't have to talk about race—because no one knows how to talk about when people of color attack other people of color. But when reports refer to an attack on a "gay nightclub," the truth about the violence that happens to queer and trans people of color is avoided.

When thinking about the theological significance of these spaces for queer people, to not talk about racial experience is to fold black and brown bodies into a history we have been consistently been excluded from. And more than that, these are
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Executively Speaking: A New Database!

by Michael Saxe-Taller, Executive Director



There are behind-the-scenes systems that allow complex community organizations like Kehilla to run effectively and efficiently. In this day and age, it is crucial to have a well-functioning database. Over the years, Kehilla has continued to develop and grow in spite of not having such a database, but those times are ending.

I am excited to report that as of June 1, we have a new Salesforce database! This is the result of the hard work of Kehilla's Managing Director, Beth Bittle, the wise guidance of congregant Michael Myers and a generous donation from one of our congregants. We hired a consultant, Sarah Gill, and she has been building a database tailored specifically to our needs. We will, over the next 3-6 months, continue to develop and expand the database into a system that should dramatically improve our administrative functioning in many areas.

The results we expect include:

- **An improved, integrated membership and registration process.** You recently received an email inviting you to renew your membership and, in some cases, register for Kehilla School. We now have one form that is used for membership renewals, new memberships and religious school registrations. The form will combine all fees and allow you to set up your

desired payment plan. We will also be able to automatically update your contact information into the database.

- **More attention to congregants' financial needs.** The database will allow us to have more streamlined financial processes including more systematic invoicing.

- **More effective administration of Kehilla School and the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Program.** We will now be able to more smoothly integrate functions such as registration, billing, and administration with our database.

- **More accurate information on Kehilla members and others who are connected to the Kehilla community.** We will be better able to track a wide variety of details, ranging from what adult education classes people attend, to family Yartzeits (loved ones' date of death) and Bar/Bat Mitzvah dates, to records of members' contributions to Kehilla. As well, the information we receive will itself be more accurate. All of this will allow us to respond more efficiently to your many needs.

The transition to the new database is complex and time and labor intensive. Its new capabilities will require us to change some of our forms, methods and procedures. We expect things to be easier in the long run, but change takes getting to used to. We ask for your continuing assistance and patience with the process.

We think the results will be worth it!



A Love Note to My Kehilla

My heart is full with gratitude and love for the past 11 years we've shared together. Huge thanks to everyone who came out on June 3rd to celebrate my

first decade-plus—your shower of blessings and appreciations truly touched my heart. Your singing of the Heart Opener nigun truly rocked my soul. I first shared that melody with you when my abba (dad) died a year and a half ago. As the waves of melody washed over me, I felt his love and presence surrounding me. I felt the inextricable connection between all of us.

On the heels of the Orlando massacre, with my own fear unhinged, I sense the magnificent blessing of being alive and the awesome challenges ahead. I see people all around me who want to feel deeply, think creatively, act courageously, and as a Jewish community, be agents of healing and change. I'm grateful for the countless ways I've been inspired, supported, and grown by the leadership, wisdom and

kindness of so many of you. It's an honor to be in the flow of collaborating, praying, change making, learning, and life-cycling together. As we nurture one another and the life-breath of our community, we renew Judaism and restore some humanity and spirit to the world at large, reaching for connection and justice and peace.

I want to send an extra dose of love and gratitude to those who make my day-to-day work possible-- my amazing Colleagues on Staff, our Board of Directors, my fellow Musical Prayer Leaders and Spiritual Leaders, the Spiritual Life Practices Committee, the Glitter Kehilla leadership, our Chevra Kadisha, the Chesed Committee, our Kehilla School and B'nei Mitzvah teachers, all our Tikkun Olam activists, and amazing Volunteers. Your dedication, caring, and generosity weave an extraordinary web that I treasure with all my being.

With love and blessings,
Hazzan Shulamit



On the Origins of Kehilla

by Rabbi Burt Jacobson

Note: This is the fourth of a series of personal essays that I am publishing in Kol Kehilla. In each article I will share the origins of one

*of the ideals and/or values that motivated me to start Kehilla. The essays are adapted from the manuscript of the book I am in the process of completing, tentatively titled **There is Only One Love: The Ba'al Shem Tov in the Modern World.***

Israel and Palestine

I visited Israel in 1968, soon after the Six Day War. At the time I knew nothing at all about the claims of Palestinian Arabs to the Land of Israel. I believed that the Arabs were cruel and unfeeling toward Jews, and I assumed that in the recent war Israel had been attacked, had beaten back its foes, and had occupied biblically-mandated territories that would now be included in its borders.

During that visit a friend took me to meet Aryeh Lova Eliav (1921-2010), a member of Prime Minister Golda Meir's cabinet. Eliav was a mainstream Labor Zionist. He had been the captain of one of the ships that had illegally brought Jews from Europe to Palestine during World War II. When my friend and I sat in his living room, though, Eliav paced the room nervously. He had just returned from a fact-finding mission in the West Bank and Gaza, commissioned by the Prime Minister herself. He told us about the long-term danger of occupying the West Bank and Gaza. The situation of the Arabs living there was dire and potentially explosive. Eliav told us that he was in contact with King Hussein of Jordan, who was willing to incorporate the West Bank into Jordan. But Golda Meir wanted to hold on to the "liberated territories" and she would not allow Eliav to negotiate with Hussein. I was shocked as I listened to Eliav's assessment of the situation, and I didn't quite know what to make of what he was saying.

By the time I read Eliav's book, *Land of the Hart* in San Francisco a few years later, I felt betrayed and enraged. Eliav was the first mainstream Israeli politician to admit that there was truth in the Palestinian Arab narrative about what had occurred in 1948 and 1967. And now Israeli military forces were cruelly subjugating an entire population. Eliav wrote that the only righteous solution would be the creation of a Palestinian state alongside Israel. Yes, of course, I thought. But as I read the book, I became more and more furious. Why had I learned nothing about the Palestinian narrative in my Seminary history classes?

Had our people continued to exist for so many millennia and survived the Holocaust only to oppress another people as we had been oppressed?

At the same time, however, I felt disloyal and guilty, for I had been taught to stand by Israel, the only hope for the Jewish people after the Holocaust. At the time I contemplated the possibility of becoming a public advocate for a two-state solution, but I felt quite ambivalent about taking a position that seemingly opposed the interests of the Jewish people. Nor did I want to be demonized by my fellow Jews. But the Jewish conscience I had been raised with required me to stand up for the truth regardless of the consequences. I lived with this internal conflict for many years. My reflections on the history of Zionism, Israel and the Palestinians certainly contributed to the sense of alienation from Judaism and the Jewish people that I experienced during that period of my life.

In the early 1970s I discovered that the great Jewish philosopher and Zionist, Martin Buber, had stood for Jewish-Arab cooperation all through his long life. Buber firmly believed that Jews returning to the land of their forbears ought to behave in a just and moral way toward those who had been living in the land for centuries. The Jewish people should "take part in the redemption of the world" by being "a nation which establishes truth and justice in its institutions and activities." In 1925, Buber joined with other Jewish intellectuals to form Brit Shalom, an organization which sought peaceful coexistence between Arabs and Jews through the creation of a bi-national state where Jews and Arabs would have equal rights. Buber also proposed the formation of a federation of Middle Eastern countries that would link the Jewish state with its neighbors. After the Israeli War for Independence in 1948, Buber argued that Israel should take steps to ease the plight of the Arab refugees. Until the year of his death, Buber continued to press for a massive Israeli initiative to solve the Arab refugee problem, and he protested the military rule that denied Israel's Arabs their basic rights as free citizens.

One of my most important motivations in starting Kehilla Community Synagogue had to do with the Middle East. Buber's stance gave me the courage I needed to take a public stance in regard to the Israel/Palestine issue, but I knew at the time that no synagogue would consider hiring me as their rabbi with the views that I held. I felt that there should be at least one synagogue in the world that stood for justice for the Palestinians and security for Israel.

The Kehilla Annual Retreat

Friday, July 1 - Sunday, July 3



**Join us as we celebrate Shabbat and renew our spirits
in the beauty of nature!**

**This year we return to Bort Meadow at Chabot Regional Park in Oakland.
Come for the day or stay for the weekend!**

Friday, July 1, 4:30 pm to dark

Camping: Folks wishing to camp on Friday should arrive at Bort Meadow ready to set up their tents and with all their gear needed. Kehilla will provide challah, wine and candles for Shabbat blessings. Dinner is potluck or you can register to contribute to a pizza delivery. We will have a short Friday night service with Rabbi David. Camping is at the edges of the open meadow with pit toilets and drinkable water. Breakfast may be organized among campers. Be sure to contact Anna Martin at acmjp@yahoo.com if you are camping. Camping is also available on Saturday night. You must register on our website at www.kehillasynagogue.org.

Saturday, July 2 (all times are approximate)

Up to 9:00 am: Campers collaborate to provide themselves breakfast
9:00 – 10:00 am: Arrive and set up chairs for Shabbat morning service
9:45: Torah Study
10:15: Gather for Shabbat Service
10:30 – 12:30: Shabbat Service in the Redwoods! Children’s activities!
12:30 – 1:30: Lunch
1:30 – 4:00: Activities: Play-shops and Learn-shops (no “Work”shops on Shabbat!); Children’s Activities
5:30 – 7:00: Dinner & S’mores
7:00 – Dusk: The Amazing, Amusing Kehilla Talent Show concluding with Havdalah
Dusk (8:45ish) Campfire and Campsongs

Sunday July 3

Campers have breakfast and pack up, have closing circle, and are out by 11 am.

*We ask everyone to help out at the retreat. You can sign up now to get your favorite volunteer role or sign up at the retreat. To volunteer, visit <http://tinyurl.com/retreatvolunteer>.

TO LEARN MORE AND REGISTER: Visit: www.kehillasynagogue.org

Come Assist in Hanging July's Retrospective Art Show

Friday, July 8, 1:00-3:00pm

Have you been looking for a way to become more engaged in Kehilla but perhaps have limited time? Here's an idea.

The Art Gallery Committee is looking for two able-bodied folks to help us hang our upcoming annual retrospective show of artists who have been featured in shows of the past year. While we have a strong curator in place, we could use help physically hanging the images where the curator requests.

We anticipate the work will take no more than two hours and you get to be part of creating beauty and fostering community at Kehilla. What can be better than that?

If interested and available, please contact the Art Gallery Committee at: kehillaart@gmail.com. And for those of you who are interested in assisting in future art shows, but can't make this date, please email the committee. Your participation is greatly welcomed and appreciated. Thanks.

Fireside Room

Friday Night Peace Walk with Rabbi David and OCO

Friday, July 8, 6:30pm

This is an easy opportunity to really be part of the movement for peace in our own community led Oakland Community Organizations' Ceasefire campaign. Rabbi David would like to have at least 10 Kehilla folk join him. The campaign is many-sided including the training and mobilization of neighborhood peace interveners, the retraining of police, and a weekly peace walk with local congregations to support a "culture of peace and healing" in neighborhoods at risk

Rabbi David reports that he has done this seven or eight times and it is an especially nice way to meet people from across the spectrum of Oakland communities. Last time he met folks from City Team who knew Kehilla because of their attendance at AA in our building. Take advantage of this lovely way to help bring peace on a Shabbat evening.

Meet at First Mt. Sinai Church, 1970 86th Ave. For information, call 510-606-5064.

Book Discussion Group

All Kehilla members are welcome to join us for our customary meetings on the second Monday of the month at 7pm in the Fireside Room.

Monday, July 11, 7pm

The Nightingale

by Kristin Hannah

Viann and Isabelle have always been close despite their differences. Younger, bolder sister Isabelle lives in Paris while Viann lives a quiet and content life in the French countryside with her husband Antoine and their daughter. When World War II strikes and Antoine is sent off to fight, Viann and Isabelle's father sends Isabelle to help her older sister cope. As the war progresses, it's not only the sisters' relationship that is tested, but also their strength and their individual senses of right and wrong. With life as they know it changing in unbelievably horrific ways, Viann and Isabelle will find themselves facing frightening situations and responding in ways they never thought possible as bravery and resistance take different forms in each of their actions.

Monday, August 8, 7pm

Can't We Talk about Something More Pleasant?

A Memoir

by Roz Chast

In her first memoir, Roz Chast brings her signature wit to the topic of aging parents. Spanning the last several years of their lives and told through four-color cartoons, family photos, and documents, and a narrative as rife with laughs as it is with tears, Chast's memoir is both comfort and comic relief for anyone experiencing the life-altering loss of elderly parents. An amazing portrait of two lives at their end and an only child coping as best she can, *Can't We Talk about Something More Pleasant* will show the full range of Roz Chast's talent as cartoonist and storyteller.

For more information, please contact Jan at janherzog@gmail.com. Neither of these books are from the Jewish Library so please look in the library or obtain from your independent book store.

Fireside Room

Annual Retrospective Art Show Reception

Saturday, July 16, 5:00-8:00pm



Kehilla is honored to present a group show of Kehilla artists: Nancy Feinstein, Susan Freundlich, Revital Katznelson, Helayne Waldman and Rob Kavet. Nabeela Sajjad and Lubna Achikzai will be facilitating the inclusion of artists from our exhibit last year from the Islamic Art Exhibit.

All of the artists exhibited will be from our 2014-15 year shows.

Light refreshments will be served. We hope you will join us!

Fireside Room

Oakland A's Jewish Heritage Night

Tuesday, August 9, 7pm

Join Kehilla for a special night of baseball at the Oakland A's 6th annual Jewish Heritage night!

- Exclusive A's Jewish Heritage Night blanket
Falafel sandwich and non-alcoholic beverage
- Special pregame festivities and performances
Free Parking Tuesday

The deadline to order tickets is July 15.

Cost: \$28 per person. To purchase tickets, send check payable to Kehilla and indicate that it is for A's Jewish Heritage Night, or order online at <http://kehillasynagogue.org/event/oakland-as-jewish-heritage-night-2016/>

PLEASE NOTE that there will be no hard copy tickets. Your name will be at the box office. The name of the person picking up your tickets at the box office must be given to us in advance, either on your check, or with your online order, and that person must bring an I.D. with them when they pick up the tickets.

Questions? Contact Sasha@kehillasynagogue.org, or (510) 547-2424 x100.

Artist Reception for Richard Miles

Sunday, August 7, 3:00-6:00pm



Long-time Kehilla members Richard Miles and Michelle Roland have spent the past 4+ years living in Tanzania. While Michelle's been working hard running the CDC program, Richard has been gallivanting about with a camera. He is excited to present a showing of the resultant images. As this chapter of their life comes to a close and before they head off to a new adventure in Botswana, you are invited to come explore the Indian Ocean, mystical Zanzibar, landscapes from the Serengeti and other national parks, see some of Tanzania's amazing wildlife and of course, its people. Images will be available for sale and a portion of proceeds supports Kehilla's annual fund.

This image, "One Tree" was taken in the Serengeti, and is emblematic of the incredible open and empty plains, where one can look unfettered from horizon to horizon. Unless one is surrounded by 10,000 wildebeests and zebras during the annual migration, but that's another story. Richard's show will run through September 4th.

Upstairs Classroom at Kehilla

A Report from the the Economic Justice Committee, the Accompaniment Teams and the Immigration Committee

Kehilla's Accompaniment Teams

Last year at Kehilla's Passover Seder, Reverend Deborah Lee of the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity (IM4HI) spoke about the thousands of undocumented minors and young families fleeing poverty and violence in their own countries and arriving in the US seeking protection and safety. The Nueva Esperanza project of IM4HI was established by faith groups and other organizations to respond to the enormous needs and challenges that these minors and families face when they first arrive here. Nueva Esperanza organizes and trains accompaniment teams to be matched with newly arrived families to help provide practical and emotional support as they begin to get settled in their new home.

After hearing Reverend Lee speak, several Kehilla members were inspired to organize a team, and two more Kehilla teams formed in the following months. Below are reports from the three teams.

Report from Kehilla Nueva Esperanza Accompaniment Team (NEAT) #1, submitted by Carol Rothman

Kehilla Team #1, known as the Paz (peace) team, has been working with two teenagers and their families since June 2015. Both families are from Guatemala and are Mam, an indigenous people with a long history of oppression. The two youth assigned to our team primarily speak Mam, with Spanish as their second language, and have now both learned some English as their third language. We primarily communicate in Spanish.

Over the course of the past year our team has assisted the youth and their families with school and health care enrollment, utilizing food banks, food stamps, and provided many opportunities for them to earn money working in our gardens and homes and those of our neighbors, friends, and fellow Kehilla Synagogue members. Both teens have worked to help make the Kehilla yard a drought-tolerant garden space. Our team also worked with the school of one young woman to set up ongoing family case management services. We have also supported other family members with obtaining needed legal assistance regarding their immigration status. Recently, new young family members have made the dangerous journey unaccompanied to Oakland, and

we are assisting them with some of their needs as well. Both of our teens have said that they are glad to live in Oakland now where they can be outside of their houses without the level of danger they experienced in Guatemala.

In addition to practical/material support, we have acted as extended family in joining the families to celebrate holidays and birthdays. We have also provided experiences of parties in parks and first time excursions to the redwoods and to see the ocean. Team member Ellen has assisted them in sketching their experiences in nature. It is lovely to feel connected with these warm, loving young people and their families and to share their joy when experiencing nature, music and friendship.

Report from Kehilla Nueva Esperanza Accompaniment Team #2, submitted by Julie Litwin

Our second Kehilla team was established in December 2015. We attended a NEAT training and were assigned a family. The family had recently arrived from Honduras after a grueling two-month journey. According to a recent article in the *New York Times Magazine*, "Honduras is among the poorest and most violent countries in Latin America," and the hometown of this particular family "is ranked as the city with the highest homicide rate in the world for the last four years" (Mogelson 96). The city is almost entirely controlled by gangs.

The family we were paired with is comprised of a mom and her 16, 14, 12 and 6-year-old daughters. They arrived in Oakland and were fortunately able to move in with extended family, albeit in very crowded living quarters. We initially tried to be useful to the family in ways such as helping the girls with enrollment in their respective schools and showing them how to get there by bus. We connected the family with the Alameda County Food Bank, went with them to sign up for the health care benefits they were eligible for, helped them to procure legal services for their asylum case, accompanied them to an initial court hearing, introduced them to the resources at their local library and gathered donations of clothing and bedding for them.

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Report from Kehilla Nueva Esperanza Accompaniment Team #2 [continued]

We attended a street fair in the Fruitvale area with the family, went with them to a NEAT dinner and had a birthday party for two of the girls at the carousel at Tilden Park. We helped the mom to find some work, including the opportunity to clean the Kehilla kitchen before our Passover Seder. She was able to learn a bit about the holiday and sample some of our Passover dishes as a bonus. Currently, we are looking into activities that the girls can participate in over the summer and ESL classes for the mom. The family's asylum case will be heard soon. We are VERY hopeful that the hearing will go well. It has been an honor to get to know this family and to experience their resilience and courage, despite the huge challenges in their lives.

Breaking news: The family won their asylum case on June 22nd! It was a very emotional occasion. We are all thrilled!

Reference: Mogelson Luke. "Purgatory." *New York Times Magazine*. December 13, 2015.

Report from Kehilla Nueva Esperanza Accompaniment Team #3, submitted by Karen Rachels

Team 3 began meeting in March 2016 in preparation for supporting a family. In May, six of our seven-person team attended the monthly vigil at the West Contra Costa County Detention Center in Richmond. The vigil takes place on Saturdays at a time when families of detainees are visiting their loved ones. The mother of our family spoke at the vigil about her situation, and our team members spent some time with her after the vigil. She is from El Salvador and has five children, ages 13, 9, 7, 3, and 18 months. The seven-year-old is newly diagnosed with cancer and has been in the hospital for several long stints recently. The mother's partner was deported, which resulted in the loss of the home they shared with the children. The mother and the children need permanent housing. They are currently staying in an Oakland shelter for homeless immigrant families. Members of the team have supported the family by visiting the seven-year-old in the hospital, reading to her in English and Spanish, providing crayons and paper, and bringing food and clothing for the mother and some of the other children. We are just beginning to build relationships with each member of the family,

which will help provide consistent support over time. The team is planning to help find camps for the children over the summer, transportation for various family purposes, and to assist with other needs, such as finding counseling support.

This update is a joint effort of the Kehilla Economic Justice Committee (EJC), the three Kehilla accompaniment teams and the newly formed Kehilla Immigration Committee. Please see the accompanying announcement about ways Kehilla members can help.

The EJC has long been working on issues related to immigration. At our last retreat we again identified immigration as a key concern for the committee. We are currently approaching issues in terms of a three-prong strategy: direct service; solidarity/showing up; and transformational organizing. Three members of the EJC are on the third accompaniment team providing direct service to our family. The EJC also works on many other issues, housing being the other major priority. In addition to direct service, we are also engaged with support/solidarity such as attending the monthly vigil and transformational organizing by working on immigrant rights issues in conjunction with the East Bay Interfaith Immigration Coalition (EBIIC) and Oakland Community Organizations. (OCO). If you are interested in the EJC, please contact Mandy Bratt at mandybratt2002@aol.com or 510-798-4865.

The Kehilla Immigration Committee

The Kehilla Immigration Committee is for those who are involved in, hope to be involved in, or care deeply about any aspect of immigration-related work or refugee support. The purpose of the committee is to provide mutual support and to facilitate communication among ourselves and with all of Kehilla. We have created two email lists, one for those who would like to participate in the committee and one for those who would like to share or receive information about immigration or refugee support events and actions. We do not anticipate a high volume of emails on either of these lists. If you would like to be on one or both of these lists, or if you would like more information about the committee or the accompaniment teams, please contact Julie Litwin and Frances Kreimer at ImmigrationCommitteeChairs@kehillasynagogue.org.

[See ways to help the immigrant families on next page.]

Ways to Help the Immigrant Families Kehilla Teams Are Accompanying

The Kehilla teams that are accompanying immigrant and refugee families have identified the following needs:

1. A small fund of \$250 to provide clothing for the family of Team #3. We are asking for small donations between \$5 and \$20 as there may be more requests in the future. If there is money left over, it will be used for other families. Please make your check out to Laura Finkler and send it to her at 4329 Rettig Avenue, Oakland, CA 94602. If you want to make a larger donation or wish a tax-deductible receipt, please make the check out to Kehilla Community Synagogue and mail it to 1300 Grand Avenue, Piedmont, CA, 94610 and be sure to write in the memo line: NEAT, or include a note that it is for NEAT (Nueva Esperanza Accompaniment Teams).
2. Transportation for various needs of the families: to and from medical appointments, possibly to summer camps, and other needs as they arise. You do not have to be a member of a team; you can just be available to drive on a schedule determined by you and the team. If interested, please email Karen Rachels, karenrachels@gmail.com.
3. If you want more information about the accompaniment teams, please read the article in this edition of Kol Kehila.

Call for Kehilla Members to Submit Artwork

The Art Gallery Committee invites all Kehilla members to submit artwork for a show that reflects the High Holiday's theme of *Immigrants. Refugees. Longing. Home*. Any one or combination of these prompts reflects the theme for this art show. We hope you'll submit a piece of your work to be part of the High Holidays experience.

Artwork will be displayed in the Fireside Room, and if additional space is needed, we will show it in other areas of our Synagogue. We will make every effort to display all pieces submitted. However, we can only accommodate two dimensional pieces, with a maximum size of approx. 30"x 30." All work must come ready to hang with a wire or a hook on the back. People are welcome to submit more than one piece, but depending on the response we get, we may not be able to use more than one.

Please keep in mind that the Fireside Room is used for worship by us and others in the community. It is also used for children's classes, and as a space for yoga and meditation. Therefore, we hope to create a show that will augment these activities. And, of course, we desire work of artistic quality and integrity.

Please submit images of your work and its size to kehillaart@gmail.com by August 15, 2016. (The sooner you can let us know your intent to submit a piece, even if you don't yet have an image to share, the better. It will help the Art Gallery Committee in our planning.) We look forward to sharing the High Holidays with you through this venue.

Thank you for your interest,
The Art Gallery Committee

An Interview with Glitter Kehilla Leader Maya Brodkey

by Bill Lazarus

[Editor's Note: We will from time to time be publishing interviews with Kehilla members. If you know of a member who you think would be a good interview subject, please let us know! Contact Sasha at sasha@kehillasynagogue.org or (510) 547-2424 x100.]



Maya Brodkey, a leader in Glitter Kehilla, thinks of herself as Glitter's protective Jewish mom, and of Glitter as an aged-based group "radically welcoming and deeply grounded in Jewish values and traditions." Maya helps organize many of Glitter's events which attract people ranging from 19 to 35 years with widely divergent

backgrounds and orientations — from Conservadox to secular, alienated to committed, Queer to Straight, and with the categories not always mutually exclusive.

"The official line," she says, "is we are a group of young radical adults in their 20s and 30s, creating space for our peers."

The physical space is commonly at Kehilla, though gatherings also take place elsewhere. "Sometimes we do Shabbat at peoples' homes, sometime it's Havdalah at the Lake."

Like Kehilla broadly, Maya finds her Judaism in pursuing social and economic justice and "agitating for social action." She thinks of Glitter Kehilla as a vehicle for fostering community as well as justice and "fabulosity".

Maya, age 26, takes it step by step. "I was very resistant to giving up my proud badge of being an unaffiliated Jew," she says, noting that she only officially became a member of Kehilla late this May.

Glitter Kehilla has loosely existed for about 5 years, and Maya was introduced to it through Talya Husbands-Hankin, her mentor, and a key Glitter Kehilla leader. "We're creating a space where folks can explore and re-engage in Judaism in a way that doesn't feel threatening ... very Jewish but accessible and welcoming."

Maya is one of the six official leaders of the Glitterati, the whimsical descriptor used by some older Kehilla members. She has been involved in Glitter Kehilla leadership for about 1.5 years. "All of our leadership is Queer, though we have a ton of straight people who come to our events," she says. "I lead

some of the rituals and events, and plan for them. I'm like the protective Jewish mom of the group."

She also is an organizer. She can't count the number of events she helped to put on. Glitter's seder held this year at Kehilla drew 60. A core group of about 30 attend many events.

"We're trying to build a community that feels comfortable and welcoming to young people who are not very Jewishly engaged."

"If you don't have kids and you are not observant, how do you do Jewish?"

For those who tend to political involvement, there's the Jeremiah Fellowship with Bend the Arc, or Jewish Voice for Peace, Maya notes. Glitter Kehilla tends more toward the spiritual, but as with the umbrella Kehilla community, spirituality is commonly mixed with activism.

"For me, being radically Jewish involves a commitment to Jewish values that goes beyond 'we're doing this because of l'dor va dor. ... I think of Jewish values as my impetus to action, pushing me to do the right thing, take the right course of action and move toward tikkun olam." Maya thinks of three great Jews as sources of inspiration — Jonas Salk, Abraham Joshua Heschel, and Emma Goldman.

Maya grew up in Santa Cruz in a Reform congregation. Her mother, though not Jewish, has a progressive religious streak and works in education policy in Oakland. Her father lives in Santa Cruz where he teaches middle school. The extended family is very Jewishly involved.

Maya attended Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. She moved to the East Bay with her partner five years ago, taking a job as a LGBTQ community organizer with the San Francisco office of Keshet for three years. She went on to further study at Mills to get her teaching credential and now is busy applying for jobs, planning to teach high school history.

Meanwhile, she focuses on making Kehilla to be a radically welcoming and engaging place for her peers.

"There are so many ways to be radically Jewish. I feel like radical Judaism is a practice of living that has real world implications and is grounded in Jewish values, whether religious or secular."

Of course, there's also that other elemental good that brings folks together. "There are a lot of snacks at our meetings," Maya notes. "Otherwise, you can't have a meeting."

In Response to the Pulse Orlando Shooting

[continued from p. 1]

are our ceremonial centers. These are our places of worship.

To not talk about the fact that this occurred during “Latin Night” is to deny the necessity of queer of color spaces. It is to deny queer of color magic. When queer of color spaces have been reduced to “special nights” to be celebrated in white-dominated spaces, we have to name that sacred geography. Because for many of us, these are the only spaces our community has where we can heal our hurts.

For some of us—queer, Latinx, both—The Pulse was filled with our people. People who are used to being targets because of how we look, or whom we love, or the pronouns we use, or what our names are. We need to name the racism, homophobia, and transphobia that pervade our society, and we need the queerness and brownness of the victims to be seen and acknowledged.

For some of us, The Pulse was filled with people we ally up to, whose struggles for liberation and justice are close to our hearts. We are standing with them and letting them know that they are not alone, that we will stay by their side for as long as it takes. And we are challenging ourselves to understand more deeply what being real allies demands of us—in both our internal work and in our commitment to action and advocacy.

For some of us, reports of the shooter’s religious and family background raised the specter of an Islamophobic backlash. We are saying out loud, again, that it is unconscionable to associate the shooter’s actions with Islam or with other Muslim people and communities. We are showing our Muslim siblings that we have their backs, and we’re looking out for them.

For some of us, the constant repetition in the media that this tragedy was “the deadliest mass

shooting in U.S. history” cut deeply as another assault on the lives and histories of Native Americans and African Americans, whose people have been ravaged by mass killings throughout U.S. history. We are again lifting up the narratives of communities whose stories have too long been marginalized in dominant U.S. culture and media.

We will continue to respond, individually and as a community, to all that is unfolding in the wake of this tragedy. Please be in touch with me or other Kehilla Spiritual Leaders if you’d like to have a conversation or spiritual counseling in response to the shooting. May the sacred space of our Kehilla be a source of energy, clarity, love and support as we walk this mourner’s path toward healing and justice.

Places to donate:

[Zebra Coalition, Orlando](http://zebrayouth.org/) (<http://zebrayouth.org/>)

[Equality Florida fund for families](https://www.gofundme.com/PulseVictimsFund) of Pulse shooting victims
(<https://www.gofundme.com/PulseVictimsFund>)

[The Center Orlando and other Central Florida LGBTQ organizations’ support fund](https://www.gofundme.com/29bubytqhttps://www.gofundme.com/29bubytq)

(<https://www.gofundme.com/29bubytqhttps://www.gofundme.com/29bubytq>)

Articles to read:

Vincent Cervantes, [Sacred Geography: A Queer Latino Theological Response to Orlando](#)

L.A. Times, [Worst Mass shootings in U.S. History](#)

[Kat Tanaka Okopnik, In Whitewashing the Pulse Shooting, We Dehumanize the Victims](#)

Sonja Mackenzie, [Tips for Talking with Children About the Shooting in Orlando](#)

Thank you for Your Generosity

ANNUAL FUND

Nancy Feinstein and Glenn Shor in honor of
Marjorie Cox

Ruth and Jay Koch

Sherry Novick and Bob Roden

Barbara Petterson and David Lee in honor of our
spiritual leaders and our departing Board
members, Nancy Feinstein, Lynn Bravewomon,
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Barbara Petterson and David Lee in honor of this
wonderful community that sustains us

Amy Shutkin and Bob Olken

Social Activists Chavurah is Meeting

A Shabbat potluck dinner Chavurah of social activists (however you define this for yourself) has been meeting the third Friday of each month from 7-9:30pm at various members' houses. Kehilla members welcome.

For more information contact Kehilla member Norma Mark at 510-843-6082 or normamark@aol.com.

Kehilla Community Synagogue
1300 Grand Avenue (at Fairview)
Piedmont, CA 94610
(510) 547-2424

Please come fragrance-free to all Kehilla events,
for the health of people with respiratory conditions
and chemical sensitivities.

July 2016

Fri, July 1, **No Service at Kehilla**, but there will be an informal Shabbat Service with Rabbi David at Bort Meadow for those camping overnight. Our next Kabbalat Shabbat with Hazzan Shulamit and Debbie Fier is August 5.

Sat, July 2, 10:30am. **Retreat Shabbat Service** (see announcement on p. 4 about all the retreat activities.)

Mon., July 4. **Kehilla offices closed.**

Tues., July 5, 7:30pm. **Middle East Peace Committee Meeting.** Back Classroom, main floor.

Wed., July 6, 7:50am. **Morning Meditation Sit** with Rabbi Dev. In the Fireside Room (enter through the Patio entrance on Fairview). Doors open at 7:50 a.m., short teaching at 7:55 a.m., silent sit from 8:00 - 8:30, mourner's kaddish and announcements at 8:30.

Fri., July 8, 6:30pm. **Friday Night Peace Walk with Rabbi David and OCO.** This is an easy opportunity to really be part of the movement for peace in our own community led Oakland Community Organizations' Ceasefire campaign. Rabbi David would like to have at least 10 Kehilla folk join him. The campaign is many-sided including the training and mobilization of neighborhood peace interveners, the retraining of police, and a weekly peace walk with local congregations to support a "culture of peace and healing" in neighborhoods at risk. Rabbi David reports that he has done this seven or eight times and it is an especially nice way to meet people from across the spectrum of Oakland communities. Last time he met folks from City Team who knew Kehilla because of their attendance at AA in our building. Take advantage of this lovely way to help bring peace on a Shabbat evening.

Meet at First Mt. Sinai Church, 1970 86th Ave. For info, call 510-606-5064.

Sat., July 9, 10am. **Shabbat Service and Adrienne Mermin becoming Bat Mitzvah** with Rabbi Dev, Hazzan Shulamit, and Amira Mizrahi. Join us as we celebrate Shabbat and Adrienne's simcha. Kiddush provided by Adrienne's parents, Ted Mermin & Claudia Polsky.

Mon., July 11, 7pm. **Book Discussion Group.** We will discuss *The Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah. All members are welcome. Fireside Room. (See p. 5 for details.)

Tues., July 12. **Movie Night at Kehilla: Havana Curveball.** Dinner: 6:30pm, Movie at 7pm. **For Kehilla School Families with Students Entering 6th, 7th or 8th grade in the 2016-17 school year.** Pizza will be provided for dinner. Please bring a drink, dessert, or salad to share. Sliding scale of \$5-\$10 per family. Social Hall.

Wed., July 13, 7:50am **Morning Meditation Sit** with Rabbi Dev. In the Fireside Room (enter through the Patio entrance on Fairview). Doors open at 7:50 a.m., short teaching at 7:55 a.m., silent sit from 8:00 - 8:30, mourner's kaddish and announcements at 8:30.

Fri., July 15, **NO SHABBAT SERVICE THIS EVENING.** Our next Kabbalat Shabbat with Hazzan Shulamit and Debbie Fier is August 5.

Sat., July 16, 10:00am, **Shabbat Service and Lev Gordon-Feierabend becoming Bar Mitzvah** with Rabbis David & Dev, Julie Nesnansky and Debbie Fier. Join us as we celebrate Shabbat and Lev's simcha. Kiddush provided by Lev's parents, Amy Gordon and Steve Feierabend.

Sat., July 16, 5-7pm. **Annual Retrospective Art Show Reception.** Featuring artists who have exhibited their work from Sept 2014 - June 2015: Kehilla members Nancy Feinstein, Susan Freundlich and Helayne Waldman/Rob Kavet, as well as artists from the Islamic Cultural Center (works chosen by Nabeela Sajjad) and

photography by Revital Katznelson. The exhibit will open on July 8. Fireside Room. (See announcement, p. 6.)

Wed., July 20, 7:50am **Morning Meditation Sit** with Rabbi Dev. In the Fireside Room (enter through the Patio entrance on Fairview). Doors open at 7:50 a.m., short teaching at 7:55 a.m., silent sit from 8:00 - 8:30, mourner's kaddish and announcements at 8:30.

Wed., July 20, 7pm. **Economic Justice Committee Meeting.** Fireside Room.

Thurs., July 21, 12:30pm. **Art Committee Meeting.** Fireside Room.

Fri., July 22, 6:30pm, **Tot Shabbat**, For children up to 5 years old (or older if they enjoy it) and their grown-ups. Led by Jen Miriam Kantor, Alon Altman and Jen's puppet friends. Please bring a vegetarian potluck dish. In the Social Hall.

Sat., July 23, 10am. **Shabbat Service and Ella Leifer becoming Bat Mitzvah** with Sandra Razieli, Julie Nesnansky and Debbie Fier. Join us as we celebrate

Shabbat and Ella's simcha. Kiddush provided by Ella's parents, Diane Leifer and David Leifer.

Tues., June 26 6:45pm. (Dinner at 6:15) **Board of Trustees Meeting.** All are welcome. Fireside Room.

Wed., July 27, 7:50am **Morning Meditation Sit** with Rabbi Dev. In the Fireside Room (enter through the Patio entrance on Fairview). Doors open at 7:50 a.m., short teaching at 7:55 a.m., silent sit from 8:00 - 8:30, mourner's kaddish and announcements at 8:30.

Wed., July 27, 7pm. **Immigration Committee Meeting.** Fireside Room.

Fri., July 29. **NO SHABBAT SERVICE** on the fifth Friday of the month. Our next Kabbalat Shabbat with Hazzan Shulamit and Debbie Fier is August 5.

Sat. July 30, 10:00am, **Shabbat Service and Ava Korican-Barlay becoming Bat Mitzvah** with Rabbis David & Dev, Hazzan Shulamit and Debbie Fier. Join us as we celebrate Shabbat and Ava's simcha. Kiddush provided by Ava's parents, Leah Korican and Brian Barlay.

Kehilla Community Synagogue

Please use the following number for all staff: (510) 547-2424

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