

# Kehilla in Transition



process was initiated at Rabbi David's request, and is being carefully shepherded by the Kehilla Board of Trustees and Executive Director, in collaboration with Rabbi David.

When the Board promoted Rabbi Dev to Associate Rabbi two and a half years ago, it was with the intent that Rabbi Dev grow into the senior role as Rabbi David became ready to reduce his role. Rabbi David has supported and mentored her throughout this period, in keeping with Kehilla's tradition of shared spiritual leadership. As Rabbi David begins this transition, Rabbi Dev will step into new roles and rabbinic responsibilities, accordingly.

Rabbis David and Burt, the Board, and the entire spiritual leadership enthusiastically embrace Rabbi Dev as the right person to take up the mantle of Kehilla's spiritual leadership, as we continue to work toward our vision of a Jewish spiritual community that helps bend the arc of history toward justice. At its August 2015 retreat, the Board gave a unanimous vote of affirmation, agreeing to move ahead with a gradual increase in Rabbi Dev's responsibilities during the current and subsequent fiscal years. Rabbi Dev will assume the senior rabbinical role beginning in July 2017.

*Please keep reading to find out how you can be engaged in building this next chapter in Kehilla's history.*

## A Milestone in Kehilla's Religious Leadership

*From Board Co-Chairs Barbara Petterson and Nancy Feinstein*

## Announcing an Important Transition

Our community has the good fortune to have many spiritual leaders, including our three rabbis: Founding Rabbi Burt Jacobson, Community Rabbi David J. Cooper, and Associate Rabbi Dev Noily. We are writing to inform you of a significant change underway for our rabbinic leadership.

Rabbi David has realized his dream of helping to grow Kehilla into a strong and vital community and he is now ready let go of primary spiritual leadership of Kehilla, while still remaining actively engaged. Over the next two years, Rabbi David's role will change and his hours will be reduced as he steps into a new phase of his life and work with Kehilla. This transition

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From the Board of Trustees

Kehilla Community Synagogue  
1300 Grand Avenue  
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## Catalyzing Community Building

These transitions will touch our whole community. Therefore, we want to use this time as an opportunity for us—as a community—to take stock of our riches and be strategic in the face of the upcoming change. We urge you to consider this a chance to strengthen our engagement with each other. Our goal is to create an ongoing environment that allows our spiritual leadership to best serve the community and its many different voices. These next few pages describe our plans.

## Transition Team

The Board has created a temporary transition team to convene community discussions, from now until early December, that will help inform this transition. We anticipate that we will issue additional information throughout the transition to keep congregants up to date via *Kol Kehilla* and the weekly emails sent out to members. The temporary transition team consists of Executive Director Michael Saxe-Taller, Board members Barbara Petterson and Karen Cohn, Richard Speigman (active in the Economic Justice Committee), Ralph Silber (Chair of the Greening Committee), and Naomi Tucker (a member of the Executive Director Search and Transition Teams and the former Youth Education Committee).

## Plans for Kehilla School Leadership

*From Michael Saxe-Taller, Executive Director*

In my role as Executive Director, I am working with Kehilla School Director, Rabbi Dev, and new administrative assistant, Natalie Boskin, to assure strong leadership for the school during this transition. Rabbi Dev will continue in her role as School Director through the remainder of the 2015-2016 school year and possibly longer. School parents will be invited to a meeting—to be scheduled prior to school pick-up time—so that they can ask questions about the transition and offer their input on how we can continue strong leadership for the school moving forward.



## Your Input Needed:

*From the Transition Team*

The Transition Team has reserved the time between the end of Sukkot and the beginning of Chanukah to

engage our community in conversations about the opportunities these transitions present to us as a congregation. *Please think about these questions as we prepare together to make these transitions successful:*

**Q1:** What do you appreciate about the current relationships among our rabbis and the varied aspects of our community life?

**Q2:** What you are most interested in preserving, prioritizing, or changing about the role of our senior rabbi?

**Q3:** How can our rabbis best support you and your family during this transition period?

**Q4:** How might you become engaged in supporting this transition?

## How to Give Input

Here are several ways that you can give input to the Board and Transition Team:

- 1. ATTEND A COMMUNITY MEETING:** The transition team will host two community meetings, one on a weeknight and one on a Sunday, open to all congregants who wish to participate. One or more of our Rabbis may join us in these conversations.

*Meeting dates and times will be announced via email to members.*

- 2. INVITE US TO YOUR GROUP MEETING:** In addition to the

meeting to be held for families involved with Kehilla School, we can meet with groups involved in different aspects of Kehilla's life. Please invite us to any grouping of congregants that would like to discuss this transition, be it a chavurah or a committee.

3. **WRITE US A NOTE OR EMAIL:**  
The best way to contact us is at this newly-established email address: **TransitionTeam@kehillasynagogue.org**
4. **ONE-ON-ONE:** Let us know if you would like to have a one-on-one conversation.

*When you leave an email message, please let us know how to get back to you, and potential dates and times to meet.*



## A Note from Rabbi David

*Dear Kehilla members and friends,*

Over the last two years, I have been mulling over what is good for me and what is good for Kehilla in regard to my service to the shul as the congregational rabbi. Frankly, I

am beginning to feel my age, and that connects right up to my feeling that it's time to pass Kehilla's rabbinic leadership to a younger generation. I have been a member of Kehilla since its founding and I will be a member of the shul for the rest of my life. I have served as a spiritual leader in one capacity or another throughout our existence and as community rabbi since 1999.

In Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi's book, *From Ageing to Sageing*, he taught that it is a spiritual necessity to age consciously and prepare how to be meaningfully effective at our individual callings at each stage of our lives. Applying his wisdom to my own life, I realize that my service as head rabbi at Kehilla has almost run its course and that I have a bunch of things that I want to do in my remaining decades (I hope) that would be better accomplished without the obligations of being a full-time rabbi. So I have decided that I would like to transition to a different level of responsibility in the shul as of July 2017.

During the period when we only had an interim executive director, I could not think of taking this step – adding any instability to our leadership. But now, I feel so much freer to make a transition because the synagogue is better off financially and Executive Director Michael Saxe-Taller has shown himself to be a capable leader and a guide for Kehilla, and he will be with us for years to come

One thing that sets my mind at ease is Rabbi Dev's continuing commitment to serve Kehilla. She has proven to be an effective spiritual leader and visionary. And also, our spiritual and musical

leaders with Hazzan Shulamit will continue to serve as our bima team.



After this transition, I will continue as a congregant and as a spiritual leader and will regard myself as an "Active Rabbi Emeritus," i.e. not retired, still active, but taking a back seat. I will, as my time allows, be available for pastoral work, service leadership on Shabbat and holidays, officiating Bar/Bat Mitzvah services, and other life-cycle observances as needed. I also plan to be active in Kehilla's social action and adult education.

I love Kehilla. I love the maturity and commitment of our members. I have been privileged to serve a caring, activist and beloved community. I regard myself as the world's luckiest rabbi. The 18 years I will have served have largely defined my life's purpose, and I believe I am a better person because of the necessity to shoulder the responsibilities of service to Kehilla.

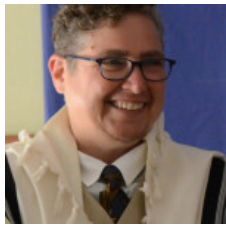
*With Ahava (love)  
and with Shalom (peace),  
--Rabbi David*

## Appreciation

Given the magnitude of Rabbi David's contribution to our community, many of us will want to express our appreciation to Rabbi David. Feel free to acknowledge this news with Rabbi David, and just be aware that he may not be able to respond to you in a timely manner if he receives many such messages.

# (Re-) Introducing Rabbi Dev

Here's a snapshot of what Rabbi Dev has been up to over the past few years. We'll be hearing more, as the transition proceeds, about Rabbi Dev's vision and hopes for Kehilla's future.



Rabbi Dev Noily has spent a lifetime living and learning at the

intersections of justice building and spiritual practice, and is thrilled to have found a home with Kehilla. Dev was ordained in 2009 by the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Philadelphia. Dev returned home to the Bay Area to serve as a hospital chaplain at Alta Bates, and came to Kehilla in 2010 as the part-time director of Kehilla School. In 2013, Rabbi Dev became Kehilla's full-time Associate Rabbi, in addition to being Kehilla School Director.

Since coming to Kehilla, Rabbi Dev has brought exciting innovations to our community, including a three-year partnership between Kehilla School and Urban Adamah, and Pop-up Shabbat, our

collaboration with the Bites off Broadway food truck festival. Rabbi Dev has created lively davening experiences for kids and their grownups through regular Family Shabbats (with Musical Prayer Leader Beth Dickinson) and Family High Holy Days (with Beth, Jenna Stover-Kemp and Lior Ben-Hur).

Rabbi Dev facilitated a restructuring of Kehilla's Spiritual Leadership team to deepen the team's capacity for both shared spiritual leadership and smooth operation. Rabbi Dev served on the committee that gave rise to our fabulous Glitter Kehilla, and serves on the Legacy Committee, building Kehilla's financial future. To support adults in ongoing learning and spiritual practice, Rabbi Dev started Kehilla's thriving meditation group, created a new program for people exploring conversion to Judaism (with Spiritual Leader Sharon Grodin), and teaches a series of classes that offer

intimate access to the life-giving ancient wisdom in Jewish texts like Torah, Talmud and midrash.

Rabbi Dev was one of twenty North American rabbis chosen in 2013 for the inaugural cohort of the Clergy Leadership Incubator, a two-year leadership program that recognizes and supports innovative early-career rabbis. Beyond Kehilla, Rabbi Dev teaches LGBTQ inclusion to rabbinical students at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, and to chaplains of all faiths at Alta Bates/Summit Medical Center. Dev is a member of the Rabbinical Council of Jewish Voice for Peace, and is an advisor for Reframing Israel, Rabbi Laurie Zimmerman's groundbreaking new grade school level curriculum on Israel/Palestine.

Dev makes a family with theater artist Sara Felder and their teenage son, Jesse Lev, in Oakland.

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