Kehilla’s Deepening Sanctuary Work in Our Season of Liberation
by Rabbi Dev Noily

As we gather to celebrate Pesach this year Kehilla is taking the next step on our path as a Sanctuary congregation. As our Board took its vote on March 28, I felt an electric connection with our ancestors, ancient and recent. I felt them smiling on us with love.

Once on a spring night with a luminous full moon our ancestors fled the familiar oppression of Mitzrayim and rushed into an uncertain flight in search of freedom. They were pursued by armed authorities and chased across the desert. They traversed a body of water that became the boundary between slavery and freedom, between life and death. Their journey has been compared to the current migratory path of so many people seeking refuge across the Rio Grande in the U.S., fleeing intolerable violence and hardship in Central America, the Caribbean and Africa—is an expression and extension of the privileging and normalizing of whiteness in the United States.

For many of us, the incremental creeping of authoritarian tactics, laws, and judicial rulings bears a terrifying resemblance to the incremental, creeping criminalization of Jews under Nazi authority. We carry in our hearts the memory of those whose lives were saved because someone took a risk to help them, and the memory of those whose lives were lost because not enough people were willing to take those risks.

For over two years now, a growing number of people at Kehilla have been working with undocumented immigrants and refugees in our community. They serve on accompaniment teams to help new immigrants navigate our complex systems, they organize the Let Our People Go monthly protests at the West County Detention Facility, they offer temporary housing to immigrants and refugees in their homes, [continued on page 2]
Kehilla’s Deepening Sanctuary Work in Our Season of Liberation
[continued from page 1]

they show up at deportation hearings and bond hearings, they raise money to help immigrant families with expenses, they are part of rapid response teams who show up when ICE is conducting raids, and they teach other people how to do what they do. Well over 100 Kehilla members, including many children and youth, are engaged in one or more of these actions.

Kehilla first declared itself a Sanctuary congregation in the 1980s. In November 2016, the Board passed a resolution to reaffirm our commitment to being a Sanctuary congregation. That resolution included a commitment to explore offering physical sanctuary to people by temporarily housing them in our building. Since then, the Sanctuary Subcommittee of Kehilla’s Immigration Committee has been working to untangle the many complex issues involved in offering our hospitality to immigrants.

In July 2017, Kehilla’s board began a serious consideration of offering physical sanctuary. After nine months of investigation, research and deliberation, and with the full support of Kehilla’s Spiritual Leaders and Executive Director, on March 28 the Kehilla Board of Trustees voted its approval for offering physical sanctuary in our building. The Board’s vote clears the way for a community process to move forward. That process will include community conversations and feedback (both with the Kehilla School community and the general Kehilla community), development of guidelines and policies for hosting people, and preparation of the physical space. Please see next page for details on our first community conversations coming in May.

This is a big and important step for us. It allows us to honor our ancestors and to live into our values in new and deep ways. It allows us to leverage our privilege in owning a building, being a majority white community in Piedmont, being a religious institution, and having many members with resources to share. It allows us to explore with our children the power of community, solidarity with people facing injustice, and the interconnectedness of all humanity. It allows us to experience our fears of risk and loss and of people we don’t know, and to grow our edges around hospitality, generosity and spiritual audacity. It allows us to learn from people who are enduring hardships and challenges that most of us have never had to face. It allows us to strengthen our connections to the growing network of resistance to oppression and authoritarianism.

May this season bring sparks of liberation to us all, as we build our Sanctuary together.

In the Kol Kehilla this month:

Save the Date: Sanctuary Shabbat.........................3
The Jewish Roots of Kehilla’s Values.......................5
2 Recent Blows Against Immigrants in Detention...7
Liturgically Traditional and Radically Inclusive
Kabbalat Shabbat: the Why and How....................9
ICE Raid In My Neighborhood.............................11
Miriam Smolover’s Chanting CD Release Party........12
An Interview with Congregants: Lea Delson..........14
April Events Listing.............................................16
Clergy & Staff Directory.....................................18

Kol Kehilla 2
Save the Date: Sanctuary Shabbat
Morning Service Followed by Lunch and Community Conversation

May 12<sup>th</sup> 10am-3:30pm

Kehilla has been a sanctuary synagogue since the 1980’s. In November of 2016 the Kehilla Board passed a resolution reaffirming this commitment. Kehilla members have been deeply involved in the many aspects of sanctuary work outlined in the resolution. However, one action item was left to consider more fully: to explore the feasibility of offering Kehilla’s space as a physical sanctuary for people facing deportation or as a temporary shelter for families that our accompaniment teams are assisting.

The Kehilla Immigration Committee, Spiritual Leaders and Board have been researching and discussing this option for over a year---and we now invite the congregation to join us in a day of learning and discussion of this topic. The morning will begin with a Shabbat service on the theme of sanctuary. After lunch there will be information sessions, listening circles and Q&A—including inspiring guest speakers both morning and afternoon. Childcare and programming will be available throughout the day.

And specifically for Kehilla School parents! The Kehilla Immigration Committee will hold information sessions on sanctuary on May 10<sup>th</sup> from 4pm-4:30pm and 5:30pm-6pm.

Answers to frequently asked questions about sanctuary and more information on the May 12<sup>th</sup> event and Kehilla’s exploration of sanctuary will be available in the May Kol Kehilla. We encourage everyone to read the materials and join us for a truly exciting day. There will be additional opportunities throughout May to ask for more clarifications and to find out how to get involved. For any outstanding questions contact: ImmigrationCommitteeChairs@kehillasynagogue.org

For news on congregations that have recently declared sanctuary, visit the Save the Date article on the home page of our website, under News & Announcements

Kehilla’s board, staff, spiritual leaders and committee chairs invite you to join us for:

Kehilla’s Annual Community Meeting

Wednesday, May 16, in Kehilla’s Sanctuary
6:45pm – Schmoozing and Snacks
7:00–9:15pm - Congregational Gathering

Learn about the state of the congregation, share our successes, appreciate our congregational leadership and think about our hopes and goals for the coming year. And toss in some fun, music and food as well!

Any questions? Contact Michael Saxe-Taller at Michael@kehillasynagogue.org or 510-547-2424 x101.
Stand Together CoCo

On March 1, a new immigration hotline to report ICE activity or to seek assistance for someone detained by ICE was launched to serve Contra Costa County residents: 925-900-5151. The hotline is part of a deportation defense initiative called Stand Together CoCo. OCO is one of a coalition of nonprofits that manages the program, led by Catholic Charities of the East Bay and the Contra Costa County Office of the Public Defender.

The similar hotline number for Alameda County is 510-241-4011.

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**Adult Education Course: 700 Benches: Teshuvah**

Come and learn about the origins of teshuvah - relational repair!

Mondays, April 9 - May 14, 7pm

April 9, 16 and 23 at Kehilla, April 30, May 7 and May 14 at Chochmat HaLev

$130 for members of Kehilla or Chochmat $160 general ~ no one turned away for inability to pay.

We’ll study the original texts in their original languages, Hebrew and Aramaic. While all texts are studied in the original Hebrew/Aramaic, no prior text experience is necessary. If you’re willing to try, we’ll help you to learn!

You belong here if:

- You want to study Talmud in a multi-level, student-centered, queer-positive space;
- You know the Hebrew alef-bet and can sound out words;
- You’re up for learning in traditional Yeshiva style, with a study partner/hevruta. We’ll help people with similar text skills to pair up, or you can register with a study partner if you already have one.
- You can commit to all six sessions. Each week builds on the work of the previous week, and it will be hard to catch up and participate fully if you miss a week.

**REGISTRATION**

[https://kehilla.wufoo.com/forms/700-benches-teshuvah/](https://kehilla.wufoo.com/forms/700-benches-teshuvah/)
The Jewish Roots of Kehilla’s Values: Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, Part 3
by Rabbi Burt Jacobson

As important as social justice was to my teacher, Abraham Joshua Heschel, he would not have labeled himself a “political activist.” He saw his activism as spiritual practice: He wrote that

... for many of us the march from Selma to Montgomery was about protest and prayer. Legs are not lips and walking is not kneeling. And yet our legs uttered songs. Even without words, our march was worship. I felt my legs were praying.

Like his friend, Martin Luther King, Jr., Heschel’s activism came out of his religious understanding, a worldview that came directly from the attitude of spiritual audacity demonstrated by the biblical prophets. And this, in turn, was inspired by Heschel’s core connection with God, which manifested so deeply in his prayer life. Let me share a personal reminiscence with you that comes from my student days at the Jewish Theological Seminary.

It was the evening of Simchat Torah, the holy day of rejoicing with the Torah, and I was celebrating together with my fellow students and members of the Seminary faculty. As the special ritual began, worshippers took all of the scrolls of the Torah from the ark at the front of the synagogue and carried them around the auditorium in seven joyful processions, accompanied by ritual chant. Between each of these hakafot (processions) the entire congregation would sing and dance ecstatically with the Torah.

I remember the Vice-Chancellor standing at the microphone, facilitating the hakafot. The hour was late, and he kept looking at his watch. When the dancers failed to stop he spoke into the microphone: “Okay, we have to go on now... please sit down... please sit down...” The dancers, lost in their exaltation, were oblivious to his words. A few minutes later the Vice-Chancellor repeated his request, this time with more urgency.

I watched Abraham Heschel holding a Torah in his arms. He was not dancing but rather swaying with it as if he were cradling a baby. His eyes were closed, his face on fire, and it seemed to me at that moment that he was truly free in God.

Heschel seldom wrote memoir, nor did he compose his books and essays in the first person. Nevertheless, when I read Heschel’s books I can clearly sense my teacher’s own personal experiences in his descriptions of the inner spiritual life of the person devoted to the Spirit. In one memorable passage Heschel describes prayer as self-surrender, an immersion in God. One feels touched by the waters, he writes, drowned in the sea of mercy. In another place he writes,

Prayer is spiritual ecstasy. It is as if all our vital thoughts in fierce ardor would burst the mind to stream toward God. A keen single force draws our yearning for the utmost out of the seclusion of the soul. We try to see our visions in His light, to feel our life as His affair...

This is the kind of divine-centered ecstasy that we aim for in Jewish Renewal prayer. Heschel criticized liberal American synagogues because of the lack of experiences of exaltation, and he sought the spiritual renewal of Jewish worship. In this way Heschel is in part responsible for the kind of radical innovations in worship brought by Reb Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, the major founder of Jewish Renewal. Reb Zalman saw Heschel as a major mentor, and both men came from Hasidic backgrounds in Poland. You can witness these innovations at Kehilla services. [continued on page 6]
Nonetheless, as Heschel makes clear, for the truly spiritual person ecstasy and joy are by no means limited to the hour of prayer. He writes,

*Our goal should be to live life in radical amazement . . . get up in the morning and look at the world in a way that takes nothing for granted. Everything is phenomenal; everything is incredible; never treat life casually. To be spiritual is to be amazed.*

In one of his books, Abraham Joshua Heschel wrote that

* . . . inner freedom is spiritual ecstasy, the state of being beyond all interests and selfishness. Inner freedom is a miracle of the soul.

It is in passages such as these that one senses the indelible imprint of the Ba’al Shem Tov on Heschel’s inner life. Like the founder of Hasidism, Heschel sought, in the words of Shai Held, “to reorient human life away from self-centeredness and toward God-centeredness. This . . . is the animating passion of everything that he wrote and taught.”

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**L’dor Vador: An Intergenerational LGBTQ + Shabbat Potluck**

*Friday, April 20th, 7:30 pm in the Fireside Room*

Join Glitter Kehilla for this special opportunity to build bridges across generations, break bread, and engage in intentional conversation to foster the exchange of knowledge and strength between all generations of our queer Jewish communities. Bring a veggie potluck dish to share. *While we love our allies, this event is specifically for LGBTQ+ people to build community with each other.*

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**April Book Discussion Group: The Undoing Project by Michael Lewis**

*Monday, April 9, 7-8:30pm*

Forty years ago, Israeli psychologists Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky wrote a series of breathtakingly original papers that invented the field of behavioral economics. One of the greatest partnerships in the history of science, Kahneman and Tversky’s extraordinary friendship incited a revolution in Big Data studies, advanced evidence-based medicine led to a new approach to government regulation, and made much of Michael Lewis’s own work possible. In The Undoing Project, Lewis shows how their Nobel Prize–winning theory of the mind altered our perception of reality

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.
Two Recent Blows Against Immigrants in Detention
by Sam Davis and Julie Litwin

CIVIC Visitation Terminated

On March 5, 2018 the Contra Costa County Sheriff’s Office stopped volunteers from the organization Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement (CIVIC) from visiting immigrants detained at the West County Detention Facility (WCDF) in Richmond. Since 2011 CIVIC, a national organization working to end the isolation and abuse of people in ICE detention, has provided a free hotline to detainees and volunteers that visit the center weekly to help connect those inside with crucial legal services and to facilitate communications with families, friends and support systems on the outside. CIVIC believes that the abrupt termination of the hotline and visitation program occurred in retaliation for CIVIC’s reporting of complaints by 27 women incarcerated at WCDF about poor conditions and abuses in the facility. This action was taken the day prior to Jeff Sessions’ visit to California to file suit against California’s sanctuary laws, including AB103, a bill that CIVIC helped to draft, which provides for monitoring of detention facilities by the California Attorney General. Kehilla joined a host of congregations and organizations signing on to a letter from the ACLU protesting the termination of CIVIC’s programs. Meanwhile, many of those in detention at WCDF have lost an important avenue to connect with legal assistance and with loved ones outside.

Supreme Court Decision Slashes Bond Hearings for Detainees

In a heartbreaking development for one of the families that Immigration Committee members have been accompanying, Rafael Tolento was deported on March 13th. Several Kehilla members accompanied his family to immigration court on February 27th. His lawyer and family fully expected that he would be granted bond that day and would be released to his family while he continued to pursue his case. However, that very morning, the Supreme Court issued a disastrous decision in a case called Jennings v. Rodriguez. Instead of being released on bond, Rafael and his family were told by the judge that this type of bond hearing was no longer an option and that she no longer had jurisdiction.

As background, ICE detentions in the US have grown precipitously over time. Due to the backlog of cases, many detainees are held for a year to several years before their cases are heard. These are civil, not criminal cases, and the individuals being detained are not being punished for any crime and do not have a right to a attorney. Once given the chance to be heard, many of those detained ultimately win their cases, but it is extremely painful for them to endure the prolonged time and conditions of detention and for their families to survive without them. Prior to the recent Supreme Court decision, ICE was required to provide a bond hearing to a large group of detainees who met certain criteria every 6 months. On February 27th the Supreme Court ruled that the current statutes actually do not permit bond hearings for these detainees. [continued on page 8]
Two Recent Blows Against Immigrants in Detention
[continued from page 7]

The result of the 

Jennings v. Rodriguez
decision for Rafael, and for thousands of
immigrant detainees like him across the U.S., is
that they no longer have any right to a bond
hearing and can be held indefinitely. In a rare
move, Justice Breyer read part of his dissent
from the bench, pointing out that "...[in] the
words of the Declaration of Independence, all
men and women have 'certain unalienable
Rights,' and that among them is the right to
liberty," which this decision denies indefinitely
to immigrants imprisoned by ICE.

Dispirited by having already spent six
months behind bars, Rafael chose to be
voluntarily deported back to Mexico.

For more information about the Kehilla
Immigration Committee’s monthly protests at
the West County Detention Facility, visit
https://www.facebook.com/letourpeoplego/.

For more information about the Kehilla
Immigration Committee, contact
ImmigrationCommitteeChairs@
kehillasynagogue.org

Let Our People Go!

Come stand with your community against the inhuman treatment of immigrants, refugees, and
prisoners of all kinds—show up at the next Let Our People Go protest, organized by Kehilla's
Immigration Committee at the Richmond jail, aka West County Detention Facility, where at any
moment, 200 immigrants are being held by ICE, and those who can't make bail before trial are
experiencing the same destructive loss of loved ones, jobs, and freedom. Protests happen every
second Sunday of each month from 11:00 to noon at the WCDF, 5555 Giant Hwy, Richmond, CA
94806. The next actions fall on April 8 and on May 13th (Mother's Day).

Dear Kehilla community,

We are very excited to announce that the 2018 Bar/Bat Mitzvah cohort's ceremonies begin in April!
You are invited to join us at the following shabbat morning services as these amazing 7th graders become
Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Some of us may feel a little hesitant about coming to a shabbat service when a young person
we do not know personally is becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Please be assured that having Kehilla community
members present brings immense joy and liveliness to the service, which is greatly appreciated by the family
and their young person. Furthermore, from the pride that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah families show while joining in
the Kehilla community aliyah to the Torah to the joyful way that the students dance with that day’s celebrant
after they have finished chanting from the Torah, the power of these services reaches all who attend.

Please note that these services begin at 10am and please attend these (and all) services fragrance free.

The following shabbat morning services will include the following young people becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

April 14- Devon Bowyer
April 21- Satya Zamudio
Liturgically Traditional and Radically Inclusive Kabbalat Shabbat:
The Why and How
by Rabbinic Intern SAM Luckey

For a long time, several Kehilla members have hungered for a more liturgically traditional service, for various reasons. People are different and like to pray in different ways. Some people are familiar with this kind of service from other communities or from childhood experiences, and it feels homey. Others are learning it for the first time and bring curiosity about how Judaism is expressed in prayer in diverse ways. Still others are hungry for more Hebrew, which may be familiar to them or a project of learning, a growing edge. For Victoria Alcoset, a long-time Kehilla member, as a mixed heritage person it is important to her to find a point of entry to any Jewish community. She learned the traditional liturgy visiting other Jewish communities around the Bay Area back when she was studying for adult B’nei Mitzvah and Kehilla’s main service was on Friday nights—we didn’t have services many Saturday mornings. She says “While I find Kehilla services deeply prayerful and communally satisfying, traditional davenen (Jewish prayer) gives me a passport wherever I go within Ashkenazi circles; it’s important to me to keep up my practice in that style as a common denominator with people who might not instantly recognize me as their own. And I sometimes think that for people who have converted to Judaism in other communities it can also be comforting to encounter a familiar service.”

Kehilla founders, spiritual leaders and community members have done a brilliant job adapting the traditional Jewish liturgy to make prayer services that are accessible, meaningful, connective, and reflective of our progressive values. By adding a different kind of service, Frances Kreimer, Talya Husbands-Hankin, and I want to diversify our service options. I believe that it is directly because of the work of the founding generation wrestling with and adapting the texts of the liturgy that a newer generation feels safe to go back to some of the source texts. We are excited to meet them on our own terms and develop our own relationships to them. I am full of gratitude for the deeply thoughtful and creative work of all those who contributed to Kehilla’s siddurim/prayer books, and to Kehilla’s distinct prayer style. Thank you!

The character of the liturgically traditional prayer service is different from the typical Kehilla service. We move through the whole text of the Kabbalat Shabbat and Ma’ariv (the evening service) liturgies, songful and in Hebrew. I love the way it feels collective, a group experience of singing and chanting with only light guidance from the bima. I feel a strong momentum gather as one prayer or song flows into the next, as our voices blend and our singing builds in energy and passion. Victoria describes her experience: “The vibration from singing and chanting opens a different realm of consciousness that helps me access the openness of my heart.”

You may be wondering, ‘since this prayer service happens in other synagogues, why is it different or important to offer it at Kehilla?’ Good question! Most places with liturgically traditional Jewish prayer have more conservative politics, especially concerning Zionism, exclusiveness around boundaries of who counts as Jewish, and heterosexism. It is a very rare combination to have this kind of prayer service and have Kehilla’s progressive politics and radical inclusiveness. For example, I am not counted as Jewish by the Conservative Movement since my mother is not Jewish and I haven’t converted, so when I go to Conservative synagogues to pray, I do not feel fully accepted or respected as a Jew. Additionally, Kehilla’s gender inclusion goes far beyond the binary-focused [continued on page 10]
Liturgically Traditional and Radically Inclusive Kabbalat Shabbat
[continued from page 9]

‘egalitarianism’; we welcome and celebrate people of all genders in our community and in our leadership.

This service, co-sponsored by Kehilla and Glitter Kehilla, is a multi-generational space led by younger adults. People of all ages connect with a liturgically traditional service, and many people in a younger generation particularly are seeking places to pray in that way while being able to comfortably and safely bring our whole selves. Luckily, creating such a warm and welcoming environment is Kehilla’s forte!

We try hard to make the service accessible, by using a fully transliterated siddur/prayer book, announcing what is coming next, and helping people follow what may be new melodies to them by using hand motions to visually represent the notes. People are invited to participate however they feel comfortable to, such as by singing, humming, yai-dai-dai-ing, clapping, listening, chanting, reading quietly, dancing or just sitting back and letting it wash over them. Whether this kind of service is new for you or intimately known, we invite you to join us and try it out on April 13th!

Save the Date: "Welcome to the Cancer Cafe"
Thursday, May 17, 7:30 in the sanctuary.

by Judith C., followed by a conversation with Judith and Rabbi Chaya Gusfield
This one woman show about Judith’s experiences with Myeloma, an incurable blood cancer, is inspiring, moving, funny, and very educational. The show benefits Charlotte Maxwell Clinic for low income women with cancer.
Suggestion donation $20, no one turned away for lack of funds. (Cash or check only.)

Save the Date: June 20, 7:00pm
At Moe's books
Book talk by Moriel Rothman-Zecher: Sadness is a White Bird
cosponsored by Kehilla Community Synagogue

ICE Raid In My Neighborhood
by Carol Rothman, Kehilla Immigration Committee

On Feb. 20th Kehilla hosted a rapid response training run by ACILEP (Alameda County Immigration Legal & Education Partnership) to prepare over 150 members of the interfaith community to support immigrant neighbors by confirming and documenting ICE raids in progress and by providing support and resources to those affected. The training included opportunities to practice various roles that we might be called on to play at the scene of an ICE raid.

This morning, March 16th, I received a rapid response text, alerting me that there was a confirmed ICE action happening in my neighborhood in Berkeley. When I arrived at the scene, I discovered that three people had already been taken away by HSI (Homeland Security Investigations), which often functions in conjunction with ICE. Three of the six unmarked vehicles were parked in a church lot. It was extremely upsetting that they had, apparently, partially staged the raid from the private property of a religious institution without permission. About 20 people were present as witnesses, including ACILEP staff, neighbors, and a number of rapid responders. Many were taking photos and talking with neighbors in an effort to identify who had been detained so that legal and other support could be provided.

Although the raid was heartbreaking and terrifying, particularly because it occurred in my neighborhood, I am so grateful that the community came out in outrage and support. I saw several Kehilla members, a number of people who had attended the training, including two clergy, and met a number of concerned neighbors ready to help and to learn more about how to respond in the future.

I learned firsthand the importance of keeping ACILEP materials in my car and how difficult it is to remain calm and centered when responding to a raid. (My adrenalin was surging.) I hope to be better prepared the next time I receive a rapid response text.....
Miriam Smolover’s Chanting CD Release Party
by Marcie Rubel

Our beloved Jewish chanting and meditation teacher, Miriam Batia Smolover will be releasing her new CD *The Source of the Sound*. It is a compilation of chants designed to inspire and soothe your spirit. The CD project includes a manual to guide people interested in creating their own local chanting meditation group. Please join us in celebrating the release of *The Source of the Sound* in a combination concert, performance, chanting and meditating experience and party at Chochmat HaLev, May 12, 8 p.m. For more information about the CD, you can write Miriam at msmolover2@gmail.com. In April, you can visit www.thesourceofthesound.com.

Miriam has been leading the Kehilla-sponsored *Kol HaLev/Voice of the Heart* chanting meditation group for 20 years. Miriam leads chants that she has composed as well as from other sources, and guides a meditation practice in the monthly group. She brings in teachings from Jewish mysticism, and offers ways to apply them to one’s personal life. Each session includes time for checking in, setting a kavanah/personal intention, a healing circle, and closing reflection. The group celebrates the seasons & Jewish holidays through chanting. Miriam’s been with this group through good times and bad. After 9/11, she responded by creating a chanting sheet called “Chants Following a Disaster.” After the November 2016 election, she created a session around “Chants for Scary Times.” Kol HaLev meets usually on the second Sunday of the month, from 10am to 12 pm, in North Berkeley. Kitty Kameon is the group administrator and can be contacted at kitkam@earthlink.net or 510-529-5442.

Miriam grew up in musical family, where they would sing Shabbat prayers in 4 and 5 part harmony. Two of her uncles were cantors. Miriam was a graduate of the Chochmat HaLev Jewish Spiritual Leadership Program, Jewish Meditation Instructor Training one-year program, and received certification as a Morah L’Hitbdidot/Jewish Meditation Teacher through Chochmat’s three-year Teacher’s Certification Program (TCP). She went on to direct the second cohort of the TCP.

Group members have shared such thoughts and feelings as, "I felt so much healing from this group," "During the meditations for 'Chants of Spring,' I felt my soul emerging and growing," "I had felt distant from the Divine, and now I feel much closer," and "This group is my Passover preparation." One member elaborated: “I feel how connected and [continued on page 13]
supported this group makes me feel. The group is always there. There’s something grounding about how we celebrate the seasons and the holidays every year. I love how Miriam integrates abstract spiritual ideas with something personal, how she offers ways of coping and being with difficult times."

Rabbi Rosalind Glazer started the group in 1996. At the time, Rosalind was Kehilla's cantorial soloist. She wrote, “The growing popularity of chanting among contemporary Jews is a fascinating phenomenon. Part of the appeal is that the chants offer new and exciting tunes, bringing a revitalizing and energizing element to prayers whose old melodies have grown stale...The active ecstatic outpouring balanced with an internal receptive calm provides the community of worshippers with a respectful blend of communal and individual ‘prayer’.” When Rosalind went off to rabbinical school in 1998, she asked Miriam to take over leading the group.

Miriam says, “Many of us traveling a conscious spiritual path are filled with longings and questions. We want to navigate our daily life with guidance from our spiritual Center. Chanting creates a doorway through which our consciousness can travel into the realm of Spirit. Meditating in this space can be profound, opening us to the hopes and fears in our hearts. Chanting and meditating in a group of people with similar kavanot/intentions is a powerful, tender way to both lighten and deepen our journey.”

The Middle East Peace Committee Film Night: A THIRD WAY, Sat. April 21, 7-9pm
The Kehilla Middle East Peace Committee is pleased to sponsor the film, A Third Way. It is a documentary filmed in the West Bank that focuses on the courageous work of the late settler Rabbi Menachem Froman and other Palestinian and Israeli activists.
We are showing this film in conjunction with B'yt Tikkun Synagogue at Kehilla Community Synagogue, 1300 Grand Avenue, Piedmont.
See the trailer at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jkrMh22szsw
Donation: $10-20 (no one turned away) to benefit The Center for Jewish Nonviolence.

Please help Tayla Husbands-Hankin support our homeless population by donating blankets, tarps, tents, warm jackets, pants and men’s socks to be distributed to homeless folks in the area. We have a box located right by the front door (near name badges). It continues to be a pressing need.
An Interview with Kehilla Congregants and Staff: Lea Delson
by Bill Lazurus

From 1972 to 1978, Lea Delson spent junior high school and high school years growing up in Omer, a Jewish village near Beersheba. Lea’s parents, originally from Chicago, immigrated to Israel in 1972. Her parents were committed Zionists and their family joined a small Reform congregation which was lay led and had many American members. Despite their liberal outlook, contact with Muslims was minimal. “Even though there were Arabs and Palestinians around, I rarely interacted with them,” Lea recalls.

That didn’t change much after she moved to the East Bay in 1985 to study biology at UC Berkeley. She plugged into the Aquarian Minyan and then Kehilla, and felt deep connections with Jews. But her contact with Muslims long remained minimal. In 2010, Lea was feeling distressed about the continuing conflicts between Israelis and Palestinians, and decided on working to bridge the gap between peoples of faith. One problem, though, was that locally there were more Jews expressing interest in dialogue than Muslims. Then Lea noticed an item in Kol Kehilla about an interfaith effort in Richmond to make meals for people in need.

On doing that, Lea chatted with Reza Rohani, the director of Oakland’s Islamic Cultural Center. Rohani noted that his center had an art gallery, and Lea wondered whether an interfaith art show might be a good idea. Rohani noted that Kehilla, along with the Montclair Presbyterian Church and the Islamic Cultural Center formed the Faith Trio and had been hosting gatherings focused on meals, spurring talks and friendships. Their discussion that day was a seed of the Interfaith Art Exhibit Committee, which over the years has sponsored four major art shows at the Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California, featuring hundreds of artists who submit written personal statements along with their art.

The exhibits have each stayed up for at least a month and opening days alone have attracted hundreds of visitors. Themes of the biennial shows reflect their spirit: “Collaboration and Connection” (Dec. 3, 2017-Feb. 24, 2018); “We are the Bridge” (2015); “Finding Common Ground through Sacred Words” (2013); and “Diverse Visions of Harmony” (2011). For details and pictures go to www.interfaithart.org, a website that Lea and Arash Shirinbab at ICCNC worked together on. Lea notes that Nabeela Sajjad brought in many of the Muslim artists. For the closing ceremonies, “We asked each artist to talk about their work,” Lea recalls. “Those were beautiful. Each statement had layers and depth.”

A quick Google search confirms that a great many efforts at Muslim-Jewish-Christian dialogue are taking place in the United States, Israel and Europe. Interfaith art exhibitions are relatively, perhaps wholly, unique though. As Lea happily discovered, they engage artists and others in dialogue and cooperative efforts, spurring interfaith community as well as creativity.

When not curating art and talking with artists of all faiths, Lea can often be seen at Kehilla b’nai mitzvahs and other occasions, taking photographs. She can be reached by email at lea@delsonphoto.com.

Artists and interfaith committee members Lea Delson and Ruby Kazi at the “We are the Bridge” exhibition that traveled from Oakland’s Islamic Cultural Center to the Osher Jewish Community Center in San Rafael in 2016. Published with permission from Robert Tong, photographer-photo editor, and the Marin Independent Journal.
Thank You for Your Generosity

Annual Fund
Harold and Diana Feiger
Jeanette Nicols
Ellen Burke in honor of Burke Rainey
Helene Frommer and Steve Lipton
Ruth Fagen Phillips
Laura Nelson
Nikki Sachs in honor of Rabbi Burt for his years working for peace in the Middle East
Janet Linder and Elena Moser

General Donation
Judith Butler

Immigration Project
Carole Raimondi
Joseph R. Michael
Claudia Norby

Rabbis’ Discretionary Fund
Mark Stover in honor of the birth of his grandson, Rafael Joseph Stover-Kemp
Anita Goldstein in honor of Rabbi Dev

Youth Scholarship Fund
Malka and Jenna Stover-Kemp in honor and to thank Rabbi Dev and Hazzan Shulamit for a beautiful brit shalom and naming ceremony for their son, Rafael Joseph Stover-Kemp

Thank You for Your Time

Purim, from Rabbi Gray and Natalie:
What a delight it was to celebrate Purim with the Kehilla School community! I loved seeing all the costumes, creativity, and merry-making.

Natalie and I want to thank everyone who contributed to making the Kehilla School Purim schpiel and the Purim carnival both run so smoothly. If you donated a baked good, shaped hamentaschen, made the dough, ran a game station, helped set up or clean up, helped your student assemble their costume, showed up to watch the schpiel, or supported our Purim celebrations in any other way, please know—we appreciate you!!! A special shout out to Yasha Spong, Naomi Stein, and Sharon Brown for being amazing!

Passover, from Maya:
Thank you so much to all of our Passover volunteers, who showed up early and helped us set up a beautiful seder, and then stayed — along with many guests — and cleaned up so meticulously!! You all made the event a great success. [continued on page 16]
Thank You for Your Time
[continued from page 15]

Thank you also to Rabbi David Cooper, Rev. Ken Chambers, his partner Michelle, and Hazzan Linda for leading us in a spiritually audacious seder.

Other Thank Yous:
Shoshana Finacom, who proof reads the Kol Kehilla every month and does much more every week

Many Missing Thank Yous
There are many more people who volunteered at Kehilla in March to make a wide range of events a great success. In the interest of better capturing such efforts – though we know we can never capture them all, because so many people give in so many ways, big and small, to make Kehilla hum in the magical way it does – we have added a small section to our Kol Kehilla submission form that allows you to submit someone’s name to our thank you list. The link is on our website under the tab titled ‘Calendars & Communications,’ where it says ‘Kol Kehilla Submission Form.’ We will be doing a better job recording relevant information in April for the May Kol Kehilla – please help us

April 2018 Event Listing
Please remember that all events are fragrance-free

Tues., April 3, 7:30pm. Middle East Peace Committee Meeting. Fireside Room.

Wed., April 4, 7:50am. Morning Meditation Sit with Rabbi Dev, Fireside Room. Doors open at 7:50am, short teaching at 7:55am, silent sit from 8:00-8:30am, mourner’s kaddish and announcements at 8:30am. Please enter through the patio off Fairview Avenue.


Fri., April 6, 7:30pm. Passover Kabbalat Shabbat with Hazzan Shulamit and Debbie Fier. Join us for a song-filled and soulful evening of both spirited and contemplative Shabbat prayer as we head into the final day of our Pesach (Passover) journey. We’ll be counting the omer together, too! Passover style Kiddush follows the service. Please bring something veggie to share in accordance with our Passover Food Policy.

Saturday, April 7, 10:30am. Tot Shabbat with Jen Miram and Alon Altman, Back Classroom/Main floor. Join in the musical fun with Jen Miriam, Alon and their puppet friends. Our morning tot shabbat service is geared especially for children up to 3 years old, and siblings and friends are welcome. Kiddush with grape juice and matzah provided.

Bring a vegetarian snack to share if you’d like: Passover Food Policy.

Saturday, April 7, 10:30am. Shabbat Morning Passover Service with Hallel and Yizkor, Fireside Room. Join Rabbi David, Hazzan Shulamit and Rabbinic Intern SAM Luckey for our Shabbat of Passover service with special Hallel and Yizkor services. Hallel is sung on holidays – and this Shabbat of Passover is one of the four occasions to do the memorial Yizkor service during the year. Kiddush and oneg to follow, sponsored by Izzy Bokser in memory of her beloved mother Sylvia Bokser. Please bring a vegetarian potluck dish to share if you can, conforming with our Passover Food Policy.

Sun., April 8, 11am. Protest at the Richmond Immigration Detention Center. Join Kehilla Immigration Committee and Our Family Coalition, FOR JUST ONE HOUR (11am-Noon). This is a multi-faith, accessible-for-all-ages action to call for an end to the detention/deportation and mass incarceration of our communities and neighbors. Bring signs and noisemakers to let those being interned—and forced to work—know we have not forgotten them. Location: the West County Detention, 5555 Giant Hwy, Richmond.

Mon., April 9, 7pm. Book Discussion Group. All Kehilla members are welcome. This month’s book:
The Undoing Project by Michael Lewis.
In the Fireside Room.

Mon., April 9, 7pm. **700 Benches: Teshuvah.** A Radically Inclusive Svara-Style Beit Midrash - April 9, 16 and 23 at Kehilla, April 30, May 7 and May 14 at Chochmat HaLev. We’ll study the original texts in their original languages, Hebrew and Aramaic. While all texts are studied in the original Hebrew/Aramaic, no prior text experience is necessary. If you’re willing to try, we’ll help you to learn! (see page 4 for details)

Wed., April 11, 7:50am. **Morning Meditation Sit with Rabbi Dev,** Fireside Room. Doors open at 7:50am, short teaching at 7:55am, silent sit from 8:00-8:30am, mourner’s kaddish and announcements at 8:30am. Please enter through the patio off Fairview Avenue.

Fri., April 13, 6:30pm. **Friday Night Peace Walk with OCO.** Join Rabbi David in this walk for peace in our own community led by Oakland Community Organizations’ Ceasefire campaign. Location: Meet inside First Mt. Sinai Church, 1970 86th Ave.

Fri., April 13, 7:00pm **NEW!!! Traditional-style Kabbalat Shabbat with Rabbinic Intern SAM Luckey, Talya Husbands-Hankin, Wren Ganin-Pinto & Fox Kogut.** Fireside Room. A more traditional davenning style of Kabbalat Shabbat and Ma'ariv, the Shabbat evening service, songful and in Hebrew, following the full liturgy. Kiddush and light oneg after the service. Sponsored by Kehilla and Glitter Kehilla (see page 9 for more details).

Sat., April 14, 10:00am. **Shabbat Service and Devon Bowyer becoming Bar Mitzvah.** With Rabbi Dev, Hazzan Shulamit, Rabbi Gray Myrseth, and Debbie Fier. Join us for a celebratory Shabbat morning exploring Parashat Shmini as we kick off the first ceremony of the 2018 B’nei Mitzvah class. Everyone is welcome! Kiddush provided by Devon’s parents, Naomi Levy & Ben Bowyer.

Sun., April 22, 10am. **Joyfully Jewish.** Joyfully Jewish is our program for kindergartners and their parents. Joyfully Jewish meets from 10-11:30am in the Back Classroom – Main Floor.

Sun., April 22, 7pm. **Dr. Avivah Zornberg — “Sing Now! — to God!” — Miriam and Moses.** Join us as we co-sponsor this event at Chochmat HaLev. Dr. Avivah Zornberg is one of the most dynamic and compelling interpreters of the Bible alive. She weaves together ideas from literature, secular...
philosophy, psychology and the ancient teachers’ take on the texts. It is entirely engaging and built for the 21st century (more on page 12).

Mon., April 23, 7pm. **700 Benches: Teshuvah.** A Radically Inclusive Svara-Style Beit Midrash - April 9, 16 and 23 at Kehilla, April 30, May 7 and May 14 at Chochmat HaLev. We’ll study the original texts in their original languages, Hebrew and Aramaic. While all texts are studied in the original Hebrew/Aramaic, no prior text experience is necessary. If you’re willing to try, we’ll help you to learn! (see page 4 for details)

Tues., April 24, 6:15pm. **Board of Trustees Meeting.** Dinners starts at 6:15pm. All members are welcome. In the Back Classroom – Main Floor.

Wed., April 25, 7:50am. **Morning Meditation Sit with Rabbi Dev,** Fireside Room. Doors open at 7:50am, short teaching at 7:55am, silent sit from 8:00-8:30am, mourner’s kaddish and announcements at 8:30am. Please enter through the patio off Fairview Avenue.

Fri., April 27, 6:30pm. **Tot Shabbat with Jen Miriam Kantor & Alon Altman, Social Hall**

For children up to 5 years old (or older if they enjoy it) and their grown-ups. Join Jen, Alon and Jen’s puppet friends. Please bring a vegetarian potluck dish to share.

Sat., April 28, 10:30am. **Shabbat Morning Service w/ Sharon Grodin, Rab. Intern SAM Luckey, and Julie Nesansky, Fireside Room.** Join us for shabbat morning prayers. We will chant from the Torah, learning about the Biblical origins of counting the Omer and Shavuot in parashat Emor. Please bring a vegetarian dish to share for the Kiddush after services.

Mon., April 30, 7pm. **700 Benches: Teshuvah.** A Radically Inclusive Svara-Style Beit Midrash - April 9, 16 and 23 at Kehilla, April 30, May 7 and May 14 at Chochmat HaLev. We’ll study the original texts in their original languages, Hebrew and Aramaic. While all texts are studied in the original Hebrew/Aramaic, no prior text experience is necessary. If you’re willing to try, we’ll help you to learn! (see page 4 for details)