Hiring a Part-Time POC (People of Color) Organizer as the Next Step in Kehilla’s Belonging and Allyship: Racial Justice Initiative!
By Rabbi Dev Noily

Maybe you’ve seen our recent postings, looking to hire a ¼-time organizer to work with Kehilla’s POC affinity groups. I’m excited to share a little background about our Belonging and Allyship: Racial Justice Initiative, about how this position came to life, and about our hopes for the coming year and beyond. This hire marks a significant step in our work.

Over the past two years, we’ve been surfacing and challenging the ways white supremacy operates in our world and in our hearts, and looking to build our community’s capacity to be a fully affirming, embracing and nurturing Jewish home for People of Color. Initially, SAM Luckey and Penny Rosenwasser joined me to envision a process to move us forward. With the wise counsel of Eveline Shen, Hillary Brooks, Aurora Levins Morales and Remedios Cantu Martinez, in March 2018 we convened an Experts’ Circle made up of a majority of People of Color Kehilla leaders. In addition to Eveline, Hillary and Remedios, the circle included Paul Kivel, Rochelle Towers, Avi Brooks, Lisa Feldstein and Debra Guckenheimer. The Circle was beautifully facilitated by Elizabeth Seja-Min.

We asked the Experts’ Circle for guidance to design a process to address our goals, and to share their wisdom about how Kehilla might approach this work. Always in the front of our thinking was a commitment to center the voices, perspectives and leadership of People of Color, while not burdening People of Color with the work of undoing the harm that systemic oppression has led to in our community. There was also a broader group of people who had responded to Kehilla-wide outreach to participate in the racial justice initiative. We invited those people to come and witness and listen to the conversation the Experts’ Circle engaged in. (The Circle was videoed with the intention to make the conversation available to everyone, but the video was lost on a corrupted thumb drive.)

The thing that emerged most strongly from the Experts’ Circle, and the conversation among everyone who came to listen and to share, was a desire among People of Color, Sefardi, Mizrahi and Indigenous heritage people in our community to be together, to share stories and experiences and to build connection. Among white people, we identified desires to do the internal and communal work of decentering whiteness, and to support the gatherings and network-building among People of Color. [continued on page 2]
The Affinity Group model that we have now was developed in response to these needs and desires. There are six Affinity Groups – five POC, and one for people with white privilege. Each of the five POC-focused groups (People of Color, White Parents of Kids of Color, POC Families/Kehilla School-Involved Kids of Color, Sefardi/Mizrahi-heritage Jews and Indigenous-heritage Jews) has a facilitator who identifies with that group, and is also assigned a support person from the Folks with White Privilege affinity group.

To hold this multifaceted web of people and groups, we formed a Belonging & Allyship/Racial Justice Coordinating Committee, which includes Julie Aronowitz, Hillary Brooks, Susan Schulman, Penny Rosenwasser and me. Matt Leber also joined us for the first several months. The Coordinating Committee holds the larger vision of our racial justice work, while supporting the Affinity Groups and being a clearinghouse for questions, concerns, ideas and strategies.

Last year by High Holy Days, we were ready to invite the entire community to participate in one or more of the affinity groups. Aurora Levins Morales offered a stunning Racial Justice Invocation on Yom Kippur to extend that invitation. [continued on page 3]

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**Tikkun Ha-Nefesh (Repair of the Soul) Healing Racism, Unpacking White Privilege – Affinity Group**

**Sunday, August 18, 10am-12pm in the Back Classroom**

**Facilitators:** Rabbi Shifrah Tobacman and Chaplain Laura Fitch

This group will meet on the 3rd Sunday of every month (until Nov 2019 – it’s part of the community’s larger project of addressing racism and de-centering whiteness within and beyond our congregation. It is an outgrowth of Kehilla’s affinity group for those who identify as white or as benefitting from white privilege. This will be a safe space in which to engage in the emotional and spiritual journey of healing and repairing the soul around these critical issues. You do not have to participate in the larger affinity group in order to attend these sessions, and you are welcome to come to as many or as few sessions as will facilitate your healing journey.

As a framework we will use the three-fold path from the Ba’al Shem Tov’s teaching on healing and being present to grief and trauma. The three-fold path includes:

1. Hachna-ah: Full Immersion / Presence. We’ll sit fully and mindfully with our difficult experiences and feelings and be held by each other in a loving if also challenging way as we do.
2. Havdalah: Differentiation. We’ll find ways to distinguish between our past and present, our trauma and present day realities. We’ll ask ourselves: What keeps us silent or complicit in the face of racism? What keeps us safe? What are our fears, real or imagined, around racism and white privilege? What opportunities emerge as we honestly examine our experience? How can we let go of what keeps us from being fully present to racism, connect better with those who are targets of racism, and engage with other white people who may be acting out in oppressive ways?
3. Ha-Mitookah: The Sweetening. We’ll lean into gratitude and hopefulness for the ways our lives are enhanced and our spirits uplifted through an honest reckoning, and by the potential for more genuine and meaningful relationships with ourselves and others.

Please join us.

**NOTE:** Pre-registration is not required, but RSVP’s are strongly encouraged to give facilitators a sense of how many people to expect. To RSVP email Laura at lafitch@gmail.com
This past Hanukkah a number of the POC affinity groups collaborated on Kehilla’s first-ever POC Hanukkah party. For the first time in my experience at Kehilla, I saw Jewish kids of Color celebrating a Jewish holiday in their synagogue in a gathering that was majority POC. To me, that evening was a turning point. My heart was filled with joy for the present and the future, and I also felt the loss that too many kids and youth of Color in our community’s history had never had an experience like this.

In addition to the Folks with White Privilege affinity group, two other important initiatives are challenging white supremacy in our community. Chaplain Laura Fitch and Rabbi Shifra Tobachman facilitate a monthly Tikkun HaNefesh group, helping people with white privilege to explore and heal from the internalizing of systemic racism. And under the leadership of Karen Cohn, our Board Co-chair, Kehilla’s Board of Trustees has reserved a segment of most of its monthly meetings over the past two years to examine white supremacy, building the Board’s capacity to view our community through a racial justice lens and to welcome People of Color into Board membership.

Independent of our racial justice work, a few years ago, an extremely generous anonymous donor made a significant gift to Kehilla. The gift was intended for initiatives that would increase our organizational capacity, and not for things like regular operations or our mortgage. Over time, we’ve used funds from that gift to build a new database, to improve our building’s entry systems and lobby and to support the bi-annual Leadership Retreat. Our Board also decided to set aside a portion of that gift to support the Belonging & Allyship Racial Justice Initiative.

As the affinity groups rolled along, each at its own pace, a shared need emerged among the POC affinity groups. All of them needed more logistical and administrative support and facilitation. All of them needed backing to bring the groups’ aspirations to life. After consultation with all of the affinity group facilitators, we saw that the greatest need was for a POC Organizer— a part-time staff person whose job is to facilitate the development of the POC affinity groups, and support the goals of the Belonging & Allyship initiative. The money set aside from the anonymous gift is making it possible for us to fund a ¼-time POC Organizer for one year, and we’ll be looking for grants to help fund the position for at least an additional year or two.

If you haven’t already, please consider joining one or more of Kehilla’s affinity groups! And stay tuned for news about our new POC Organizer! The Coordinating Committee also welcomes input and feedback about Kehilla’s Belonging and Allyship: Racial Justice Initiative. Please be in touch with me, or other members of the committee.

### Invitation to Artists: Kehilla High Holy Days Art Show

**Entry Deadline is August 30th!**

Kehilla’s Art Committee is finalizing plans for our annual exhibit open to all members of the congregation. We invite you to share your creativity with the community as you reflect on your feelings, thoughts and hopes for the coming year. Get those artistic juices flowing and create a new piece for this show, or bring an old favorite. We are seeking two-dimensional art, ready to hang. The only other limit is your imagination!

If you are interested in participating or have any questions, please contact Lynn Lazarus at lrlazarus18@gmail.com or Sasha Gottfried at sashago@comcast.net. The August 30th deadline for submission is fast approaching, so please let us hear from you this month.

The exhibit will hang in the Fireside Room from September through December. We will share details and coordinate closely with each artist as you contact us. We look forward to seeing your work!
Is Kehilla a Fit for My Interracial Family?
by Aviva W.

I'm not a member of your synagogue... but I could be. I am the daughter of a Rabbi from a long line of rabbis. I am the product of Jewish day school education, Jewish camps and summer programs. I know Hebrew, am well versed in Jewish prayers, and feel deeply rooted in Judaism, but I'm not sure whether or not your synagogue would be a safe or welcoming community for my family.

If I am being honest, I am scared that my family will be harmed.

I am a White Jewish woman. My partner is a Black man. My children, who are four and one years old, are biracial. They are being raised in an interfaith and interracial home. I have begun a slow and guarded process of trying to find a Jewish community for my family. That process started in Boston, where my partner and I first started our family. We moved to the Bay Area from Boston specifically in hopes of finding community where my children would be more than just accepted. I want them to be affirmed at the intersections of who they are.

I came to Kehilla because I heard that Kehilla is an incredibly inclusive and progressive Jewish community. I also came because I heard of the Belonging and Allyship Project. Knowing Kehilla was actively initiating a project to decenter Whiteness in a Jewish space felt promising.

There is a lot that is promising to me about what I have seen at Kehilla so far. Kehilla has a large rainbow flag and a Black Lives Matter banner outside. In the lobby, there is artwork that features Jews of color. Inside the sanctuary, there is a beautiful memorial to Black people who have been killed by police. In fact, it was the first thing that caught my daughter’s eye when we visited.

There are so many visible representations that Kehilla is doing more than the vast majority of synagogues to be inclusive. And yet, I am hesitant to bring my family into the community.

Here is why:

In Boston, my family and I went to visit one of the city's most "progressive" and "inclusive" synagogues. We went to Saturday morning services one week. Within five minutes of our arrival, my partner was approached and asked "Excuse me, are you Jewish?"

If you are in some way surprised he was asked that question or are internally gasping, know that this question came from a well-intentioned place. The congregant was asking because we were the 9th and 10th people to arrive to services that morning. As such, they wanted to check if Danny could be counted in the Minyan or required quorum of Jewish adults needed to recite several prayers.

That a congregation would want to make sure they were counting their Minyan correctly makes sense. However, unless each person walking into that room was asked if they were Jewish (myself and all the other White people included), this ask is an example of a racial microaggression.

You might be thinking to yourself, how problematic is that question? After all, your partner isn't Jewish! It's true. He isn't Jewish. However, there are two problems with that question. First, my son and daughter are Jews of color. That question can, and likely will, be asked to my children at various points throughout their lives. Hearing that question could make them feel isolated and marginalized. It could also make them feel that Jewish spaces are not for them and Judaism is not for them.

Additionally, my partner just as easily could have been Jewish. That simple question served to remind him within his first five minutes at the synagogue that it is unlikely that he belonged there. That comment communicated to him (and to me), that this community is not for you and your family. That this was our first visit to any synagogue together felt like a cautionary preview of what is to come.

As Kehilla is a place that is already inclusive in so many ways, I can imagine you might be thinking to yourself, but that was Boston. That's not our synagogue. That wouldn't happen here. I want to emphasize that this synagogue in Boston was welcoming and inclusive in many ways. It had posters in the hallway from the Jewish Multiracial Network that say “Jews Come in All Colors” that celebrate the diversity of the Jewish community. Their membership outreach coordinator actively thought

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about ways to connect us to other interracial families in the synagogue. There was a lot of promise there. Yet I knew that it wasn't the right community for my family.

So what about the thought, “That wouldn't happen at Kehilla”? It could be easy to think “that wouldn't happen in one of the most inclusive, progressive communities in the country.”

The moment we adopt that mindset about anything, we are potentially complicit in the process of marginalizing others. The truth is that the specific incident or microaggression that happened to us in Boston might not happen at Kehilla.

But how sure are you that something similar wouldn't and doesn't happen in your community spaces? The reality is that racial microaggressions are regular occurrences in all predominantly White Jewish spaces. What if instead of thinking, "that couldn't happen in our synagogue," operate under the assumption that it will. Assume it will happen because we, as a community of primarily Ashkenazi White Jews, have a lot of work to do.

One of the most common microaggressions are from well meaning, curious individuals asking Jews of color questions that in some way, directly or indirectly ask, "how are you Jewish?" That question might be kindly disguised as "Where are your parents from or what synagogue were you raised in?" The frequency with which this happens to Jews of color suggests that there is more to this question when asked of people of color. Folks might be wondering to themselves is this person adopted? Did they convert? Do they have one Jewish parent? This question, often comes from a well meaning community member as a way of indirectly, but still just as harmfully asking, "why are you Brown and here?"

A few months ago, I went to the fourth meeting for the White Privilege Affinity group at Kehilla. As a White Jewish woman, it is deeply meaningful and important to me to be in a space like that. After one meeting, I was speaking to another White Jewish parent of a child of color. The parent said something to me that deeply resonates with my worries. They said that even if 90% of the congregation is aware of their privilege, even if 90% refrain from committing racial microaggressions, the impact of the remaining 10% is concerning. Given the small number of folks of color in the community, just several comments from that 10% (a potentially generously low estimate) could cause real harm. That is part of why I am cautious about bringing my family into Kehilla or any predominantly White Jewish space.

To be clear, as a White woman, I also have a lot of my own work to do. White supremacy is deeply ingrained in my thought process. By no means does having an interracial family mean that I haven't perpetuated racial microaggressions myself. It also does not mean that I do not have my own work to do to unlearn internalized biases, including unlearning the bias that looking Jewish is not synonymous with being White.

It is essential that White Jews challenge those assumptions. A 2015 study conducted at Brandeis University estimated that 11.2 percent of Jews in the United States are not White. The numbers are even more significant in the Bay Area. A 2018 study found that close to 25 percent of Jewish households in the Bay Area include at least one person of color. Jews of color and their families are a significant part of the Jewish community. My family’s experience and my concerns represent just one of those households.

This is just a little bit of my perspective. All too often, the words of White folks are elevated or highly publicized when folks of color have already said these things. So please, do not just take my word for it. Read this and other writing by Jews of color. Read these words because they speak to the reasons so many Jews of color may not feel comfortable in an "accepting" community that is filled with caring, social justice minded, White Jews. Support organizations like this. Engage other White Jews in conversations about White supremacy both within and outside of your community. Please engage people in conversation who would be unlikely to show up to White privilege affinity spaces. If you do not actively engage all White members of Kehilla in these conversations, you can expect that harm will be done to people of color in your community. Furthermore, engage in relationship building with humility. Assume that you will unconsciously cause some harm. It is essential to continue to engage in dialogue such as in Kehilla’s Belonging and Allyship Project.
especially if you are someone who can't imagine yourself doing so.

I'm personally asking each of you to find active ways to make the community more inclusive. I ask this not just for me, but for my family, for families who are already part of the community, and for families who like mine, who are not sure if it would be safe to join Kehilla.

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A note from Rabbi Dev: I met Aviva and her family at a Belonging & Allyship: Racial Justice Initiative gathering. When I heard some of her story, I was very moved, and I asked if she'd be willing to share it in a form that would enable more people in our community to hear it. I'm very grateful to Aviva for giving us this insight into her experience, and for helping to guide and challenge each of us, and all of us as a community, to come closer to who we are called to be.

Why I’d Love to have you Volunteer for High Holy Days

Like ants taking home a big piece of cake, all working together to pull off something that would be out of their league without collective power, our High Holy Days are an impressive feat of collaboration.

Whether you usually attend services or not, this is a great time to step in and help for a couple of hours. If the High Holy Days are important to you, this is a chance to be part of the project that is so meaningful to you, in whatever capacity you have – there are so many shifts that don’t get in the way of services. And if the High Holy Days are just another day for you – what a beautiful chance to help build something that really matters to people in your community by taking on tasks that people attending services or fasting cannot.

Go to kehillasynagogue.org/VHHD to see the shifts and sign up for one. There are so many options. I know you’ll find one that works for you 😊 Don’t hesitate to contact me with questions, comments, weather updates, whatever strikes your fancy – maya@kehillasynagogue.org / 510.547.2424 x 106.

Kehilla Sings!

Upcoming dates:

Tuesday, August 13, 7:00-8:30 pm, Fireside Room
Tuesday, September 10, 7:00-8:30 pm, Fireside Room

A monthly gathering with Hazzan Shulamit to circle round and sing together! Special focus on High Holy Day preparation in August and September. We’ll nourish our bodies, minds, and spirits with nigunim (wordless melodies), new tunes for ancient prayers, and songs to take out into the streets. Join us for a delicious time of tuning into our souls and to one another. Everyone’s welcome! Donations accepted at the door $5-15 (for gatherings at Kehilla). Visit the website for posted music for shabbat, protests, and more!
EXECUTIVELY SPEAKING: IT’S ABOUT THE BATHROOMS
by Michael Saxe-Taller, Executive Director

Inclusion is one of our community’s central values. The latest opportunity that we have to live out our values is connected to our bathrooms.

Having a broad reach in our inclusion efforts often means addressing a variety of people’s needs at the same time. When it comes to bathrooms, we are thinking about the following needs:

- Physical Access – do we have facilities that are accessible to people with a variety of abilities?
- Gender Diversity – do we have facilities that meet the needs of people with a range of gender identities?
- Gender Specific Safe Space – do we have a place where people of all genders can feel safe?
- Infant Changing – Have we setup our bathrooms so that every caretaker can have a place where they change a baby’s diaper?

Addressing and meeting all of these needs at the same time is a challenge for us, particularly because of the physical limitations of our building. We expect that there will come a time we have remodeled our building and anyone who has difficulty with stairs can easily move between our two main floors, and when all of our bathrooms are wheelchair accessible.

Unfortunately, that time has not come yet. Therefore, we must face complex issues and find creative solutions.

Our building has four bathrooms, two on the main floor and two on the lower floor. Originally, each floor had a women’s room with one or more stalls, and a men’s room with stalls and urinals. Because of their designs, only the two original women’s rooms are accessible to people in wheelchairs.

Several years ago, Kehilla turned the upstairs men’s room into an all-gender, single-stall bathroom. We also put a diaper-changing station in both the upstairs and downstairs women’s rooms, but soon had to remove the downstairs changing station because it interfered with wheelchair access to the stall.

We were still left with two problems, we didn’t have a diaper changing station that could be accessed by people of all genders and we didn’t have a wheelchair accessible bathroom on either floor that could be used by people of all genders. In an attempt to address these issues, the staff recently decided to make all of the bathrooms into all-gender bathrooms. We changed the signage to reflect what was in the bathroom (stalls/urinals/changing table/single stall/multiple stall) rather than who should use the bathroom.

We soon learned that our latest solution wasn’t sufficient either. We were approached by a number of women who spoke clearly about the importance to them of a women’s-only bathroom. Their main concerns were (1) that women-only bathrooms are an important safe space in a society where gender-based violence and vulnerability are so pervasive; and (2) having people of multiple genders simultaneously using a bathroom that has both urinals and stalls can be uncomfortable for many people. [continued on page 8]

MORNING MEDITATION SIT
Wednesdays at 7:50am
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.

TOT SHABBATs!
Saturdays, August 3 & 17, 10:30-11:15am
Join us for Tot Shabbat with Jen Miriam and Alon Altman with their Puppet Friends. Geared towards babies and children up to age 5 with their grownups! Join us for songs, prayers, friends, puppets, and stories and end with challah and grape juice. Bring a snack to share if you’d like. In the back classroom.
It’s About the Bathrooms [continued from page 7]

As you can see, this situation calls for creative thinking, and we believe we have come up with a workable (though maybe not ideal) solution that addresses all of the four needs I listed above.

- Both upstairs bathrooms will be all-gender. Anyone wanting full privacy can use the single-stall bathroom.
- What was formerly the downstairs men’s bathroom room will be converted to a women’s room. The urinals will be covered up.
- The other downstairs bathroom will become an all-gender bathroom.
- All bathrooms will have clear signage.

We hope to implement these changes by the end of August. Please contact me if you have questions or concerns. Getting used to the new configuration may take everyone some time to adjust. In the meantime, I invite us all to use our trips to the bathroom as an opportunity to practice the living of our values in the most physical of ways.

Additional Building Updates

We have several other exciting things happening to our building this summer:

1. Construction is going to begin in mid-August on a new bathroom, including a shower and bathtub. The bathroom will be located off of Miriam’s Well, a small room near the foosball table in the Social Hall. Miriam’s Well and the new bathroom will be available as a residence for any potential refugees or immigrants who need to take up sanctuary here at Kehilla. This project has been in the works for months and we are finally ready to break ground. Many thanks to Kehilla’s own Michael Butler, who has shepherded the whole process.

2. After many years, our friends at St. Mikael’s Ethiopian Orthodox Church have purchased their own building and are no longer renting from us on Sunday mornings. We are taking this opportunity to do a thorough cleaning of our sanctuary. From August 4-14, we will be closing down the sanctuary to clean the rafters, carpets, walls, chairs and pews. We are hoping that this cleaning, along with our new air conditioner, will make our sanctuary a more accessible and welcoming place for everyone.

3. You may have noticed already, but we are sprucing up our building. By the end of the summer, we will have painted the social hall and all of our classrooms, as well as our hallways and bathrooms. We are also hoping to give the outside of the building a wash before the High Holy Days. Many thanks to our custodians Josef Straub and Fred Williamson for doing the painting and the heavy lifting, and to Lisa Korwin, Ruth Koch and Lynn Lazarus for choosing the colors.

4. We recently replaced the door to our accessible entrance on Fairview Avenue and added a key fob system that allows people to enter on their own. This will make it easier for our members who regularly use the entrance to get in the building. If you would like to have a key fob, please contact Dee Ward in our main office.

Kabbalat Shabbat: Liturgically Traditional, Radically Inclusive
Friday, August 9, 6-7:30pm

Join us for a more traditional davening style of Kabbalat Shabbat and Ma’ariv, the Shabbat evening service, songful and in Hebrew, following the full liturgy. ALL are welcome to come pray, sing, hum, clap and celebrate building our beloved community. Kiddush and light oneg (ritual snacks) after the service. Cosponsored by Kehilla and Glitter Kehilla.

Last chance to view the art and photography of Lynn Lazarus and Glenn Shor!
On exhibit now in the Fireside Room. The show will be up through August.
Learn more at kehillasynagogue.org/fireside-art-gallery.
In these monthly articles I have been offering readers some background history on the Jewish sources of the values and ideals that motivated me to develop the vision that became Kehilla Community Synagogue. In this six-part series, I turn to the legacy of Reb Zalman for our community.

During my interview with Reb Zalman in 2005, I asked him which of the Ba’al Shem’s teachings he felt held the greatest spiritual wisdom for seekers today. “You know, if the Ba’al Shem were living today,” he replied, “he would be concerned about the future of our Earth. God so loved the world that She gave herself to it and became the Earth. Therefore, we must love and care for the Earth because She is an embodiment of the Divine.”

“That’s really a powerful way of reframing the Besht’s experience for our time, Zalman,” I responded, “If we were really going to take the Ba’al Shem’s vision of God’s radical presence seriously, we would be forced to place the environment at the head of our spiritual and moral agenda!”

When I re-read my transcript of the interview sometime afterward, the word “environment” didn’t seem quite right to me. My Encarta online dictionary gives three definitions for the word environment: 1. The natural world, within which people, animals and plants live; 2. All the external factors influencing life or organisms, such as light or food supply; 3. The conditions that surround people and affect the way they live. All three of these definitions characterize the world “out there”—that is, the environment—as an entity that is separate from human beings.

But is it conceivable for humans or for any living things to exist outside of their “environments”? Organisms exist only in relationship with one another and with the inorganic world. And if humanity and animals and plants are actually one with the earth, and the earth is one with God, as the Besht believed, then there is no “environment.” There are no ultimate boundaries between things.

Reb Zalman would have accepted this understanding of God, for he wrote, “God does not occupy a portion of existence over and against us, a divine territory in what we call existence or the universe; God, quite simply, is existence. When God is existence, then all is God and everything that we encounter is but a symbol ‘transparent to transcendence.’ . . . God simply is. God is all in everything.”

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The Jewish Roots of Kehilla’s Values [continued from page 9]

Reb Zalman embraced the “Gaia Hypothesis,” originated by geophysicist James Lovelock and macrobiologist Lynn Margulis. The theory states that the earth itself is a living organism and possesses a planetary intelligence of her own that is innate, self-governing, self-sustaining, self-regulating and self-healing. Zalman wrote,

“More than I want to talk about serving God, I want to talk about serving the planet . . . Strengthening this whole-Earth cooperation is to me the most urgent and important way we have of serving God, the holiest and most pressing invitation of our time.”

In other words, if the Earth is Divine, then we must treat Her with the love and reverence due to God.

Reb Zalman writes eloquently about our responsibility to the planet we are part of:

A vision of Earth that respects but transcends national and religious boundaries is part of the Torah of the future. We humans have the potential to be the global consciousness of a living planet, with every individual conscious cell and every group a contributing organ of . . . that vast living being. Gaia has already seen herself through our eyes: she’d been waiting so long to see her own face! Now we have a choice: we can act like cancer cells, rogue cells sowing the seeds of the organism’s destruction, or we can become Gaia’s most flexible digits for healing Herself where she hurts.

In Zalman’s vision, the future of humanity, the future of the earth, the future of God in this corner of the universe lies in each of our hands, and collectively in the hands of the human race.

Lamentations & Reparations: A Tisha B’Av Response to Ongoing Harms of Slavery and Its Legacy

Saturday, August 10, 6:30-8:30pm


August Book Discussion Group:

They May Not Mean to But They Do by Cathleen Schine

Monday, August 12, 7-9pm

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

Please help Talya Husbands-Hankin support our homeless population by donating blankets, tarps, tents and men’s socks to be distributed to homeless folks in the area. Please, no clothing and no babies’ / children’s gear. We have a box located right by the Sanctuary door. It continues to be a pressing need.
Kehilla Board of Trustees Update

July marks the start of the board year. We are thrilled to welcome new members: Ori Tzvieli and Stephanie Hochman. We will miss the wise voices of Natalie Roden, Marjorie Cox, and Marcie Rubel.

The board meets the 4th Tuesday of each month (with occasional changes) at 6pm in the back classroom. All Kehilla members are welcome – encouraged! to attend. Meetings last 2 to 3 hours. No worries if you come straight from work; dinner is served. This is a wonderful opportunity to see into the operations of our organization, and to gain insight into how your dues and donations are used. Following the main meeting, the Board meets in a closed Executive session if there are confidential matters to be discussed.

Committees are encouraged to update the board periodically on their activities by submitting a report in writing. The EJC has been doing this, as well as having a member attend regularly to report back to the committee.

Questions? Concerns? Comments? Feel free to contact either of the co-chairs: Catherine Lyons calyons33@gmail.com or Karen Cohn karen_cohn2003@yahoo.com

B’nei Mitzvah on the Horizon!

Dear Kehilla community,

You are invited to join us at the following Shabbat morning services as some incredible humans become B’nei 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 B’nei 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 B’nei Mitzvah families show while joining in the Kehilla community aliya 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 scent free.

The following Shabbat morning services will include the following young people becoming B’nei Mitzvah:

- August 3- Moana Levenfeld
- August 17- Adrian Alie
- August 24- Rachel Bernard-Pearl
- August 31- Sam Hokkanen

Norah Needs You!

Norah is an expert joke-teller, modern-dancer, ice cream-licker, and loving big sister. At five years old, she takes her jobs pretty seriously. Norah was diagnosed with a rare genetic disorder called Fanconi Anemia (FA). Essentially, FA interferes with her body’s ability to properly repair its DNA. If untreated, it increases her risk of leukemia or bone marrow failure to 90%.

Norah will need a bone marrow transplant. Unfortunately, none of Norah's family members are a match for her. Norah has a donor match out there – it could be YOU. Join the “Be The Match” registry with a simple, painless cheek swab to help save Norah’s life. Adding donors to the registry increases the likelihood of finding a life-saving match for Norah and others in need!

If you aren’t able to join the registry, there are still ways to help us get the word out and register new people by hosting drives – which is easy to do and in which we are happy to support you!

Learn more on norahneedsyou.com or join the registry today at join.bethematch.org/SwabforNorah.
Join the Kehilla Volunteer Team for the Youth Spirit Artworks Tiny House Project

Rebuild the world by helping to create a dozen or more homes for youth in Oakland. The build dates:
Saturday, Aug 17 and Sunday, Aug 18: Framing/Siding
Saturday, Aug 24 and Sunday, Aug 25: Siding/Electrical/Insulation/Sheetrock
Saturday Sept 7 and Sunday Sept 8: Windows/Doors/Flooring/Trim/Painting

The secure 8’ x 10’ Tiny Houses feature windows, a skylight, storage, electricity, and furnishings. They will be constructed on standard trailer frames for mobility and compliance with California codes. The village will include shared facilities for cooking, sanitation, etc. as well as on-site service coordinators from YSA.


Sign up at this link: [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScApi447dFg6iDLkU1iSMvk9snGsAnCSiYVkJZ55TwbcKUr45Q/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScApi447dFg6iDLkU1iSMvk9snGsAnCSiYVkJZ55TwbcKUr45Q/viewform)

The Kehilla Economic Justice Committee is working with Youth Spirit Artworks (YSA), East Bay Housing Organizations (EBHO), and many other partners to help build the YSA Tiny House Village for homeless youth. With the cooperation of the City of Oakland, City of Refuge UCC will host the Tiny House Village at 8400 Enterprise Way in Oakland.

Kehilla members were able to tour a Tiny House prototype at Kehilla on May 23rd, and a number of you have already signed up to help. Kehilla members Nikee Borden and Sam Gast have taken the lead and are trained build leaders. You can join the team by signing up for any of the build dates shown above. Give back to your community, while learning the construction skills needed to build a Tiny Home.

Please contact me if you have questions! Alex Madonik: 510-872-0528, alexmadonik@sonic.net

The Tiny House Project is also seeking tangible donations – Furniture Donations: As a faith partner, Kehilla is being asked to collect the necessary furniture for one Tiny House for our September move in. Also needed are donations of kitchen and dining room essentials, as well as outdoor furniture. Below is the list of items needed.

Gently used is awesome – and please feel free to go above and beyond with beautiful art, lighting, or decor for the resident! you collect so we can see how close we are to furnishing all the houses.

Please contact Alex Madonik at the email above if you have donations to offer.

Items Needed at Time of Move In - First Ten Tiny Houses: 9 desk chairs, 9 small desks, 10 twin mattresses or futons, 10 mattress covers, 9 dressers, 9 desk lamps, 10 small round rugs, 20 twin sheet sets, 20 sets of towels (wash cloth, hand towel, full), 10 standard pillows, 10 twin quilts, 10 wall mirrors (dimensions?), 10 small garbage cans. Tiny House Kitchen Set Up: 2 tables, 2 chairs, microwave, small fridge, toaster, toaster oven, silverware, utensil tray, dishes, 10 glasses, 10 mugs, utensil holder, 2 kitchen trash cans for garbage & recycling, 2 cutting boards, 5 cutting knives, 2 large spoons, etc, can opener, paper towels, napkins, kitchen garbage bags. Dining Room Set Up: round table, 10 chairs, 10 placemats.

If you are experiencing abuse in an intimate relationship

Please be in touch with one of our clergy members (Rabbi Dev, Hazzan Shulamit, Rabbi Gray, Rabbi David or Rabbi Burt), or with one of these organizations:

[www.shalom-bayit.org](http://www.shalom-bayit.org) – Shalom Bayit (East Bay) 866-SHALOM-7 / or (510) 845-SAFE
Thank You for Your Generosity

Financial

Contributors to: Many Stories, Shared Liberation, an Evening with Alicia Garza:
Alex Madonik and Eve Sweetser
Ali and Jessica Cannon
Andrea Lappen and David Smith
Ann Finkelstein
Barbara Petterson and David Lee
Carol Rothman and Scott Ullman
Carole Lowenberg
Carolyn Schour
Catherine Lyons
Cathy Steirn and Chris Kinavey
Daniel Alpert and Laura Nelson
Deborah Kaufman and Alan Snitow
Dolores Taller
Don and Bracha Stone
Elaine Leitner and Steve Zieff
Hedy Straus and Laura Boxer
Hero Mikuriya, Robert Olken and Amy Shutkin
Jan Herzog and Izzy Bokser
Jane Hoberman and Robert Kelly
Janet Linder
Jay and Ruth Koch
Jeanne Finberg
Jenna and Malka Stover-Kemp
Jennifer Wachter and Eveline Shen
Julia Epstein and Betsy Sandel

Volunteer

Sim Kallan, for helping with music equipment

Our Amazing Retreat Committee: Don Stone, Anna Martin, Sharon Brown, Tadish Durbin, Leah Korican, Terry McGlynn, Michael Tertes, Pearl Werfel, Sheella Mierson, Bracha Stone, Loel Solomon, Linda Ozarow, Carrie Cizauskas, Sabine Armour, and all the many people who attended helped during the weekend!

Sharon Grodin, Jeanette Nichols, Renee Enteen, and others who are already helping us get ready for HHDs!
Contributors to: Many Stories, Shared Liberation, an Evening with Alicia Garza:
Kam McCallum-Gesher and Gabriella Heinsheimer-Gesher
Karen Gersten-Rothenberg and Jonathan Blazer
Karen Pernet and Howard Tevelson
Laura Finkler and Larry Walter
Laura Fitch and Jaime Jenett
Lisa Korwin and Karen Walsh
Lisa Raffel and Scott Smith
Lynn Bravewomon, Sam Braveman-Kennedy and Ann Kennedy
Marcie Rubel
Marilyn Golden
Merle Lustig and Ron Glass
Michael and Amy Sholinbeck
Michael and Julie Saxe-Taller
Michael Myers and Sarah Carnochan
Michael-David Sasson
Myrna and Barry Schwartz
Naomi Tucker and Valerie Curtis
Natalie Roden
Paul Kivel and Micki Luckey
Pearl Werfel and Sheila Kolenc
Penny Rosenwasser
Quin Hussey and Julia Caplan
Rachel Pray and Liza Hecht
Ralph Silber
Randi Myrseth and Jonathon Gray
Richard Maisel
Rita Cahn
Rita Huybrechts and Glen Price
Ron Strochlic and Avi Rose
Ruth Minka and Kathy Smith
SAM Luckey and Kendra Froshman
Sandy Bredt and Em Holmes
Shari and Stephen Washburn
Sharon Brown and Robert Pompeani
Sherry Novick and Bob Roden
Shirley Haberfeld and Bob Allegretti
Stephanie Hochman and David Drum

Financial [continued from page 13]

Annual Fund
Diana and Hal Feiger

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund
Carol Hoffman, in memory of Ellen Bernstein's mother
August 2019 Event Listing

Please remember that all events are fragrance-free

Fri., August 2, 1-2:30pm. Art Committee Meeting. Fireside room.

Fri., August 2, 7:30 pm-9:00 pm, Sanctuary. Kabbalat Shabbat with Hazan Shulamit, Debbie Fier, and Julie Nesnansky. Join us for a song-filled and soulful evening of Shabbat music and prayer, both spirited and contemplative, as we welcome in Shabbat. Kiddush follows the service. Please bring something veggie/parve to share, sweet or savory.

Sat., August 3, 10:00 am-12:30 pm. Shabbat Morning Service and Moana Levenfeld becoming Bat Mitzvah. With Rabbi Gray Myrseth, Julie Nesnansky, Red Karpman, and Debbie Fier. Join us for a celebratory and musical Shabbat morning service exploring Parashat Matot-Masei. Everyone is welcome! Kiddush provided by Moana’s parents, Leonora Willis and Ari Levenfeld.

Sat., August 3, 10:30 am-11:15 am. Tot Shabbat with Jen Miriam and Alon Altman with their Puppet Friends. Main floor back classroom. Learn more on page 7.

Sun., August 4, 10am-12:30pm. Living Room Conversation Kehillas Faith Trio Committee. The Faith Trio has had 2 living room conversations, one at Kehilla with 26 folks and the other at the Islamic Cultural Center of N. Ca with 28 attending. Both of these previous events were well enjoyed and appreciated, and the next one is on August 4th! To learn more about the Living Room Conversations please go to Kehilla’s website calendar. The August 4th event will be held at the Montclair Presbyterian Church – 5701 Thornhill Drive, Oakland, CA.

Tues., August 6, 7:30-9pm. Middle East Peace Committee Meeting. Fireside Room.

Wed., August 7, 7:50 am. Morning Meditation Sit with Rabbi Dev, Fireside Room. Learn more on page 7.

Thurs., August 8, 6:30-9pm. Economic Justice Committee Meeting. Starting with on Thurs., Aug. 8th this meeting will now be held in the Back Classroom-Main Floor (entry through Fairview Avenue accessible entrance).

Fri., August 9, 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm. Liturgically Traditional, Radically Inclusive Kabbalat Shabbat, Fireside Room. Join us for a more traditional davenning style of Kabbalat Shabbat and Ma’ariv, the Shabbat evening service, songful and in Hebrew, following the full liturgy. ALL are welcome to come pray, sing, hum, clap and celebrate building our beloved community. Kiddush and light oneg (ritual snacks) after the service. Cosponsored by Kehilla and Glitter Kehilla.

Sat., August 10, 10:30 am-12:15 pm. Shabbat Morning Service with Howard Hamburger, Julie Nesnansky, and Hazan Shulamit, Fireside Room. Join us to daven, sing and share in an extended Torah study and discussion together on Parashat Devarim on Shabbat Chazon-- the shabbat before Tisha B’av begins. After the service, please join us for a delicious kiddush lunch sponsored by 4 of Kehilla’s newest Retirees: Diana Fieger, Karen Cohn, Teri Gruenwald, and Julie Nesnansky. Come celebrate this milestone with us!

Sat., August 10, 6:30 pm-8:30 pm, Berkeley. Lamentations & Reparations: A Tisha B’Av Response to the Ongoing Harms of Slavery and Its Legacy. Location: Chochmat Ha Lev, 2215 Prince St, Berkeley. Learn more on page 10.

Mon., August 12, 7-9pm. Book Discussion Group. August’s book: They May Not Mean to But They Do by Cathleen Schine. All Kehilla members are welcome to join us for our customary meetings on the second Monday of the month at 7pm.

Tues., August 13, 7-8:30pm. Kehilla Sings! In the Fireside room. Learn more on page 6.

Wed., August 14, 7:50 am. Morning Meditation Sit with Rabbi Dev, Fireside Room. Learn more on page 7.
Thurs., August 15, 6:30-8pm. **Greening Committee Meeting.** Emma Goldman Room.

Fri., August 16, 7:30 pm-9:00 pm. **Kabbalat Shabbat with Hazzan Shulamit, Julie Nesnansky and Jen Miriam Altman.** Join us for a song-filled and soulful evening of Shabbat music and prayer, both spirited and contemplative, as we welcome in Shabbat. Kiddush follows the service. Please bring something veggie/parve to share, sweet or savory.

Sat., August 17, 10:00 am-12:30 pm. **Shabbat Morning Service and Adrian Alie becoming Bar Mitzvah.** With Rabbi Dev, Hazzan Shulamit, Noa Grayevsky, and Debbie Fier. Join us for a celebratory and musical Shabbat morning service exploring Parashat Va’etchana. Everyone is welcome! Kiddush provided by Adrian’s parents, Mac and Laura Alie.

Sat., August 17, 10:30 am-11:15 am. **Tot Shabbat with Jen Miriam and Alon Altman with their Puppet Friends.** Main floor back classroom. Learn more on page 7.

Sun., August 18, 10am-12pm. **Tikkun Ha-Nefesh (Repair of the Soul) Healing Racism, Unpacking White Privilege – Affinity Group.** Learn more on page 2.

Wed., August 21, 7:50 am. **Morning Meditation Sit with Rabbi Dev, Fireside Room.** Learn more on page 7.

Sat., August 24, 10:00 am - 12:30 pm, Sanctuary. **Shabbat Morning and Rachel Bernard-Pearl becoming Bat Mitzvah.** With Rabbi Dev Noily, Hazzan Shulamit, Rachel Stone, and Debbie Fier. Join us for a celebratory and musical Shabbat morning, exploring parashat Ekev. Everyone is welcome! Kiddush provided by Rachel’s parents, Lisa and Dierdre Bernard-Pearl.

Tues., August 27, 6:15-9pm. **Board of Trustees Meeting.** (Dinner at 6:15) All members are welcome. Back Classroom (main floor, straight down the hall).

Wed., August 28, 7:50 am. **Morning Meditation Sit with Rabbi Dev, Fireside Room.** Learn more on page 7.

Sat., August 31, 10:00 am - 12:30 pm, Sanctuary. **Shabbat Morning and Sam Hokkanen becoming Bar Mitzvah.** With Rabbi Dev, Julie Nesnandky, Beth Dickinson, and Debbie Fier. Join us for a celebratory and musical Shabbat morning, exploring parashat Re’eh. Everyone is welcome! Kiddush provided by Sam’s parents, Nicole Silverman and Gary Hokkanen.

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**Kehilla Community Synagogue**  
1300 Grand Avenue, Piedmont, CA 94610  
Please use the following number for all staff: (510) 547-2424

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| Youth Education Director, Rabbi Gray Myrseth | rabbigray@kehillasynagogue.org |