Celebrate Hanukkah with Puppets, Latkes, and Special Guest, Muslim Civil Rights Leader Zahra Billoo!

Monday December 23rd – The Second Night

By Rabbi Dev Noily

This year’s Kehilla Hanukkah party will include our usual fabulous puppet show for the littlest Kehillians, latkes, candle lighting and joyful celebration. And we’ll also have the chance to hear from an amazing leader in our Bay Area community, Zahra Billoo. I met Zahra, a brilliant Muslim civil rights lawyer and the Executive Director of CAIR-SF, a couple of years ago when we spoke together on a panel. Each of us had been called upon to represent our people’s experiences and fears of rising Islamophobia (Zahra) and rising antisemitism (me) in the post-Obama era. I learned a lot from Zahra that evening, and I’ve continued to learn from her and to be inspired by her leadership and integrity in the time since.

Twice in the last two years, Zahra has been honored for her bold and visionary leadership, only to face a backlash from certain Jewish sources who attacked her for her support for the Palestinian struggle. The first time, PACT, the Faith in Action affiliate in San Jose, announced that Zahra was the recipient of their annual award. The award was rescinded because of the pressure from Jewish sources, but was subsequently reinstated because of an outpouring of support for Zahra. Most recently, Zahra was named to the national board of the Women’s March. Once again, pressure was exerted and the Women’s March gave in and withdrew Zahra’s appointment.

To me, these attacks on Zahra are heartbreaking and dangerous. Zahra is a champion of civil liberties, fighting against Islamophobia, racism, homophobia, transphobia, and antisemitism. I see Zahra, and the communities she represents, as critical allies in our resistance to creeping authoritarianism and scapegoating of vulnerable minorities in our country.

I’m honored that Zahra agreed to be our guest as we celebrate Hanukkah, and to join me in conversation. I’m eager to learn more from her about the challenges facing the Muslim community in the Bay Area, and I’m excited for more people in our community to get to know Zahra as we build this relationship of solidarity. [continued on page 2]
Celebrate Hanukkah [continued from page 1]

Our Hanukkah party will begin at 5:15 with an amazing puppet show by Jen Miriam and Alon Altman, followed by candle lighting and a potluck dinner at 6:00. We’ll provide the latkes, lovingly fried up by our tireless and cherished Latke Maven, Jack Stuber. At 7:00, Zahra will speak in the sanctuary (and games and schmoozing will continue downstairs for anyone who’s not ready to stop spinning their dreidl.)

The story behind Hanukkah is a complicated one. Jews were being oppressed and were reacting in all kinds of ways—including passing as Greeks, resisting nonviolently, and mounting a violent and zealous insurgency that targeted both Greeks and Jewish non-resistors. It’s this last crew whose victory we recall on Hanukkah. The rabbis of the Talmud were so uncomfortable with valorizing these zealots’ military tactics that they established a spiritual basis for the celebration of Hanukkah—the miracle of the oil to rededicate the temple lasting eight days—and mostly ignored the rest (Babylonian Talmud Shabbat 21b). Hanukkah is a time to celebrate light and loved ones, to enjoy delicious food and play games, to sing and dance. And it’s also a time to be brave – to face the complexities of our history and our present moment with curiosity and openness. It’s a time to trust that the deepest teachings of our tradition—about love, justice and the holiness of all life—will guide us through.

Tikkun Ha-Nefesh (Repair of the Soul) Healing Racism, Unpacking White Privilege – Affinity Group
Sunday, December 15, 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
Executively Speaking: Completing a Crucial Step Towards Physical Sanctuary
by Michael Saxe-Taller

Kehilla first declared itself a Sanctuary congregation in the 1980s. In November 2016, the Kehilla Board passed a resolution to reaffirm our commitment to being a Sanctuary congregation, and a year and a half later, voted to approve the offering of physical sanctuary in our building to a refugee or immigrant in danger of deportation. Kehilla’s Sanctuary Task Force and Immigration Committee have been working diligently ever since to prepare our congregation and our building to be able to offer temporary housing. From the beginning, our biggest impediment has been that there is not an adequate bathroom in our building, including a shower, for any potential guest.

I am delighted to say, that after a year-long saga, including many twists and turns, we now have not only a new bathroom and shower, but a really fine living situation available to a refugee or immigrant in need. Our Miriam’s Well Room, which was an office and storage room next to the piano and foosball table in the Social Hall is now a bedroom, and we have built a new bathroom behind it, in what was a storeroom, which had been unceremoniously called the ‘dungeon’. That bathroom can also be accessed through either our Buber or Heschel Rooms.

We would not have reached this point without the hard work, generosity and commitment of many people. Immigration Committee Chair Julie Litwin and Kehilla Board Co-Chair Catherine Lyons, have formed and led our Sanctuary Task Force and have steadily and tenaciously moved this project forward. They have been joined in their efforts by current task force members Penny Rosenwasser, Anna Martin, Carolyn Schour, Jonathan Blazer and Rachele Kanigel as well as previous members Richard Spiegelman, Tova Vance, Julie Aronowitz, Lesley Sternin and Frances Kreimer.

Michael Butler, a contractor and Kehilla congregant, has tirelessly spearheaded the construction. As we explored other plans, including a mop sink shower and adding a bathtub and shower to our downstairs woman’s room, Michael has been patient, flexible and creative as each plan fell apart. He has led us through the current building project. From my front-row seat, I have learned just how much skill it takes to manage relationships with the architect, the city, the many vendors (plumbers, electricians, construction firms, etc.) and the client (that is us). Michael is good at what he does and has a big heart and a deep commitment to doing the right thing.

The Kehilla staff, most particularly office administrator Dee Ward and custodians Josef Straub, have gone beyond the call of duty on this project. Dee interfaced with Michael Butler and many of our vendors, and Josef and Fred painted, cleaned and schlepped – and made it possible to complete this project. [Continued on page 4]

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Potluck Dinner and Kabbalat CHAI Shabbat! New Member Welcome & Special Guest, Rabbi Tirzah Firestone
Friday, December 6, 6:30-9:30pm

6:30 pm: Veggie/Parve Potluck Shabbat Dinner + New Member Welcome in the Social Hall

7:30 pm: Kabbalat Shabbat services in the Sanctuary, with Hazzan Shulamit, Debbie Fier, Julie Nesnansky and a special teaching from R. Tirzah Firestone, who’s leading a workshop on Saturday afternoon, Dec 7: “Wounds into Wisdom: Ancestral Healing and Social Action”. Join us for a song-filled and soulful evening of Shabbat music and prayer. Kiddush follows the service.

Please bring something veggie/parve to share that serves 8-10 people for the potluck dinner, labeled with ingredients, or if you’re only attending the service, something for the kiddush afterwards—many thanks!
I have learned that significant building projects cost money, and this one was no exception as the project cost $32,000 in the end. Some funding came from our Building Improvements Fund and the Rabbis Discretionary Fund, but the majority of it was raised by the Immigration Team, with the support of Susan Freundlich, and came from numerous donors from both within and outside of the Kehilla community. Thank you to all who gave.

The architects at Amato Architecture, did our many drawings at discount. The tradespeople from Plumbing Ministry, Lap Electric, AG Drywall and Michael Butler’s firm, Berkeley Craftsman, did their work with skill and efficiency.

And I want to say a special thank you to our new friends from across the street, Jaime and Christian from simpleFloors, who donated the beautiful flooring in the new “Suite” and to JJ, who beautifully installed it. We liked their work so much, that we just had them put in new flooring in the Buber and Heschel Rooms and the foyer by the bus-stop entrance to the ground floor.

I am humbled and grateful for the passion, commitment and generosity of all of these people and many others. It is an honor to work in a community that cares this much and in this way.

*Thanks to simpleFloors (across from Kehilla), Amato Architecture and Berkeley Craftsman for the donations they made to our new bathroom*

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**Hanukkah Party with Zahra Biloo & Holiday Crafts Fair to Benefit Immigrants!**

*Monday, December 23*

**We need greeters and help with dinner! Email maya@kehillasynagogue.org to sign up**

4-8pm:

Crafts Fair to Benefit Immigrants (also on December 19, 3-6pm)

5:15-5:45pm

Music with Jen and Alon and Puppet Friends for our youngsters and young at heart!

6pm

Chanukah Candle lighting and Potluck Dinner – Latkes provided! (in the Social Hall)

7:00pm

Zahra Biloo, special guest from CAIR (in the Sanctuary)

**POC/JOC Hanukkah Party**

*Sunday, December 22, 4:30-6:30pm*

POC/JOC adults, children and their white parents, partners and siblings welcome to join. Please bring your favorite hanukkiah to light the first candle in a community of love! [Register online to bring a potluck item.](mailto:ruthie@kehillasynagogue.org)

Questions to Ruthie Levin at [ruthie@kehillasynagogue.org](mailto:ruthie@kehillasynagogue.org)

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**Jews On Ohlone Land: Mauna Kea Report Back & Fundraiser**

*Thursday, December 5, 7-9 pm*

Indigenous protectors are encamped on Mauna Kea in Hawai‘i, guarding that sacred site from being desecrated by the building of a giant telescope. Alex Tan arrived on Mauna Kea on Yom Kippur, offering prayer and joining in sacred ceremony with the elders there. As part of his offering, Alex sounded a shofar (which had been imbued with the prayers of the Kehilla community on Rosh Hashana) and offered the shofar as a gift to the protectors of the Mauna.

Alex will share stories from his visit, and will update us on the struggle and how we can support it.
In these monthly articles I have been offering readers some background history on the Jewish sources of the values and ideas that motivated me to develop the vision that became Kehilla Community Synagogue. In this four-part series, I turn to Rabbi Arthur Green, the founder of Hebrew College Rabbinical School. This is the seminary where Kehilla’s own SAM Luckey is studying to become a rabbi. And Rabbi Gray Myrseth, the educational director of Kehilla’s school was also ordained at that institution.

You’re probably aware that the name of our congregation, Kehilla Community Synagogue, means “Community-Community-Community!” (Kehilla is Hebrew and Synagogue derives from a Greek word for community.) Because Kehilla has focused so intently on tikkun olam and spirituality, you may be wondering why the name of our congregation highlights the value of community. In fact, it goes back to something that I disliked about synagogues in the 1950s and 1960s.

The American synagogues that were built in the suburbs following World War II were often externally impressive and showy. (Jews were said to have an “edifice complex!”) These congregations had certain specific goals: weekly worship services, education for Jewish children, pastoral care for members, and some adult education and social action. By and large these institutions were not communities. They did not promote personal connections between members, nor did they offer much support for individuals and families during difficult times. Of course, this situation was not only a Jewish problem. American individualism had eroded the sense of community in the U.S., and as a result there was a great deal of alienation in the culture.

Part of the rebellion of the youth culture in the 1960s had to do with ending this alienation. At the core of the new hippie counter-culture was the rebirth of community. All kinds of experimental communes and intentional communities were founded during that period. I myself was personally involved in a number of those experiments, including several spiritually-oriented communities. Havurat Shalom, founded by Rabbi Arthur Green in the Boston area in 1968, was one of the very first of these Jewish communities. Although I later took part and helped lead the Aquarian Minyan in Berkeley, it was Havurat Shalom that influenced my life the most, serving as a kind of prototype for Kehilla. [Continued on page 6]
The Jewish Roots of Kehilla’s Values [continued from page 5]

How did Art Green get the idea for Havurat Shalom? Early on, Art had read an article that Rabbi Zalman Schachter had written in the 1950s about the need for an urban “monastic” Jewish community. The idea fascinated him, and he later wrote,

*The Jewish community in the late 1960s was self-satisfied, suburban and bourgeois, but nothing exciting was going on, and a whole generation was turning away in disgust. These were the angry years of the late sixties, and much of the anger of young Jews—a good part of it justified, I thought—was directed toward the synagogue. I wanted to make something happen, some kind of counter-synagogue, perhaps, although I didn’t know what form that might take.*

Art invited me as well as a number of other, mostly young rabbis to move to Cambridge and to join the faculty of Havurat Shalom. We were all critical of the materialism and secularity of American life, and we longed for intimate connections with like-minded comrades and with the Spirit. Many of us also felt a longing, even a sense of nostalgia, for the spiritual depth of the Eastern European Judaism that we had not personally known.

Art Green provided the guiding vision for Havurat Shalom. He wanted to meld the spiritual ideals of the late eighteenth-century Hasidic communities of Eastern Europe with the radical democratic and communitarian values that were then emerging in the American counter culture. We sought to emphasize communal experience and interpersonal intimacy, to study traditional texts, and to share joyous and creative worship services. At the same time, the Havurah was to be a haven for young Jewish men who opposed the war in Vietnam. Many of us participated in anti-war activities and other social justice projects.

We all agreed to live within walking distance from the building that we purchased to house the havurah. We also agreed to remain members of the Havurah for at least three years. Like most of the other experimental communities around the country, the Havurah was small and intimate—30 or 40 members all in all.

I fondly recall the intense hours of blissful prayer, the joyous singing of Hasidic niggunim, the wild dancing on Shabbat and holy days, and the passionate dedication to sacred study. The spirit of openness, creativity and experimentation was patent. Members felt free to express our doubts about many aspects of the tradition, including traditional notions of God.

Havurat Shalom served as a model for what became known as “the havurah movement.” Numerous independent havurot sprung up around the country. And within a few years synagogues throughout the U.S. began to create havurot designed to enable members to celebrate Shabbat together, get to know one another, and act as supports for Jewish families.

By the early 1980s, I began to ask myself whether the American synagogue itself could be transformed by an infusion of the values and experiences that characterized Havurat Shalom. I must say that I was not certain that something like this could happen in a large synagogue context, but I thought it was worth a try. It took more than ten years before it became clear that like Kehilla might stay around for the long haul.

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**Morning Meditation Sit**

*Wednesdays at 7:50am – NO meditation on Dec. 25 OR Jan. 1!*

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 Shabbat!**

*Saturdays, December 7 and 21, 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.*
Kehilla Board Service Myths and Facts

Every year new members join the Board of Trustees, starting in July. The process involves attending a board meeting, and a conversation with board members, as well as the executive director. Once nominations have been finalized, the congregation votes on the candidates prior to the community-wide meeting in May. Sometimes – as is the case now – a member leaves the board mid-term and we can fill the position immediately.

Board service is rewarding and a wonderful way to deepen your engagement in the Kehilla community. Here we would like to address some myths about board service. Please do not hesitate to come to a meeting or to call one of us with any questions or to learn more.

1) Myth: Being on the Board will be too time-consuming.

Truth: Board members attend Board meetings one evening a month, 2.5-3 hours in length. Board members also serve on at least one Board committee that usually meets once or twice a month. Sometimes you may be asked to serve on a temporary committee or to assist with a special project or event, e.g.: Spring fundraising event planning.

2) Myth: It’s too much responsibility to manage the daily operations of Kehilla.

Truth: Although the Board is legally and financially responsible for Kehilla’s well-being and ensures that the Executive Director (ED) manages all financial resources effectively and appropriately, it is the ED who manages Kehilla’s daily operations. In contrast, the Board’s responsibility is to periodically evaluate the effectiveness of programmatic efforts to achieve Kehilla’s mission. We provide oversight of the ED by listening, questioning, raising discussion about the desired outcomes, plans, and actual work.

3) Myth: Kehilla Board meetings are too boring or too contentious.

Truth: We are a cohesive group of people with wisdom and intelligence, who are free from egocentricity, and have an ability to listen, communicate, articulate and give and take. We have a sense of humor and like to have fun. We are individuals who have the ability to see the big picture and deal with things when they don’t go well. We like getting together and making deeper connections with each other. We are always learning how to make Kehilla a stronger congregation. [Continued on page 8]

Kehilla Sings!

Upcoming dates:
(2nd Tuesdays of the month, 7:00-8:30 pm, Fireside Room)

Tuesday, December 10
(taking a break in January)
Wednesday, Feb 19
Wednesday, March 25
Wednesday, April 22

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 niggunim (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!
4) Myth: Being on the Board means you have to make a big financial contribution to Kehilla.

Truth: All Board members are asked to make their financial contribution to Kehilla as one of their three top annual charitable donations, rather than a specific monetary amount.

In addition, the Board assures that Kehilla has adequate resources by assisting in the annual fundraising cycle created by the Generosity Committee. The Generosity Committee offers all Board members excellent support and training on how to make annual face-to-face individual solicitations. All Board members support fundraising efforts a few times a year.

5) Myth: You have to already have expertise in fiduciary responsibilities.

Truth: Kehilla Board members are trained in analyzing the annual budget and monitoring the ED’s monthly expense reports. All questions are welcomed. The Board approves all decisions which have long-range financial and/or legal effects on the organization. The Board also approves the annual budget, subsequent to assisting the ED and Finance Committee in its development.

6) Myth: You have to be a long-term Kehilla member to serve on the Board.

Truth: Board members don’t have to be long-term Kehilla members! We welcome members who think deeply about Kehilla’s ability to evolve and grow into the future. We want to ensure that members of the Board represent many facets of Kehilla’s community.

7) Myth: Board meetings are secretive and information is not often shared with the community.

Truth: We wish that everyone reading this article will come attend one of our meetings!! They are posted on the Kehilla calendar and usually are on the 4th Tuesday of the month. Please contact Catherine Lyons (calyons33@gmail.com) or Karen Cohn (karen_cohn2003@yahoo.com) to let us know that you’d like to attend and we’ll be sure to share the agenda in advance. We are now learning how to post our agendas in advance to the members’ portion of Kehilla’s website and link it also to the appropriate “This Week at Kehilla” email announcements.

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**Immigration Committee Meeting**

Wednesday, January 15th, 6-8:30pm

We will show the film Waking Dream by local filmmaker Theo Rigby (more info online) and will give updates on Immigration Committee activities. Bring a veggie potluck dish to share. In the Social Hall. This meeting is open to all who are interested in Kehilla’s immigration justice work. If you have any questions, email immigrationcommitteechairs@kehillasynagogue.org.

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**December 25 through January 1:**

**Kehilla Administrative Offices Closed for Winter Holiday**

Kehilla staff will be working outside the building for most of this week and the office will be closed. It will reopen 9am on Thursday, January 2, and return to normal business hours then. Please note Kehilla school will not meet on 12/26 OR 1/2, and morning meditation will not meet on 12/25 or 1/1.

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**Kehilla’s Book Discussion Group**

*On Division* by Goldie Goldbloom

Monday, December 9, 7-9pm in the Fireside Room

All Kehilla members are welcome to join us for our customary meetings on the second Monday of the month at 7pm!
Electrify Everything: What We Can Do About the Climate Crisis –
Updates from the Greening Committee

Save the Date—Feb. 11—for presentation of “Electrify Everything” at Kehilla. For urban dwellers the main sources of greenhouse gases are the gas we use to heat our homes and water, our transportation and the electricity we use for power in our homes. This presentation by volunteers from 350 Bay Area will address these areas and what we can do personally (beyond LEDs and recycling) to make a real difference. We’ll look at our non-fossil fuel choices for our homes and businesses to help us get to where we want to be—100% clean, renewable power throughout our buildings and between our destinations. Tuesday evening, 2/11, 7-9 p.m. Invite your neighbors and friends from sister congregations.

Reminders About Your East Bay Community Energy (EBCE) Options: A year ago community choice energy came to most of us who live in EBCE cities, including Berkeley, Oakland, Emeryville, San Leandro, Hayward and Piedmont. This alternative to PG&E offered 3 options, which we wrote about in this newsletter. The Greening Committee recommended either accepting the default called Bright Choice, with slightly lower rates than PG&E, or, if you could afford a little more, opting up to Renewable 100, for 100% renewable energy. Regardless of what you chose back then, including a choice to opt out and stay with PG&E, you can change that choice any time you want to do so; go to ebce.org to get more info on each option and make your choice.

For PG&E customers who get discounted rates through CARE, FERA and Medical Baseline Allowance programs: You can get the same discounts applied to your energy bill by EBCE. Yes, you can get cleaner energy by opting in or up with EBCE and still get discounted rates. If you opted out last year because you were afraid of losing your discounts, you can still choose the cleaner energy option. New enrollment and renewals are still handled by PG&E; for more info, go to pge.com/financial assistance or check the info at ebce.org.

Workshop ‘Wounds into Wisdom: Ancestral Healing & Social Action’
December 7, 2-6pm in the Fireside Room

With Rabbi Tirzah Firestone.
How can healing our families’ traumas transform our organizing, movement building, and lives, in these turbulent times? This experiential workshop draws from neuroscience, Jungian psychology, and Jewish wisdom, and it includes meditation, storytelling, and discussion -- it is for activists, change-makers and healers.
Cost: $40- $65, Register at tirzahfirestone.com/calendar/kehilla. For Scholarships and info, contact: info@tirzahfirestone.com.

Note that Rabbi Tirzah will be offering a teaching at Erev Shabbat at Kehilla on December 6. She will also offer a similar workshop to the one above on Sunday, December 8, 10am-6pm at Chochmat Ha'Lev in Berkeley, as well as other Bay Area events—see contact info above.

Essentials of Judaism
Tuesday, December 17, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Join Rabbi Dev for a deep dive into some of the juiciest parts of Jewish practice and life. This monthly class is required for Conversion and Adult B’nei Mitzvah Students and is open to all. Register online or call the office

All Sessions will meet on every Third Tuesday from 7:00-9:00pm in the Fireside Room.
Note: This is a continuing class with ongoing registration.
Economic Justice Committee Report Back:
Schools and Communities First Ballot & Tiny House Village

Kehilla’s Economic Justice Committee has focused on criminal justice and affordable housing issues throughout the past year, while closely watching the progress of a ballot measure to reform California property taxes on large businesses. After important revisions to this measure, now known as “Schools & Communities First,” Kehilla has joined a broad coalition to endorse the revised initiative and gather signatures to place it on the ballot. Key goals of this measure:

- Reclaim $12 billion per year for K-12 schools, community colleges and local communities
- Close commercial property tax loopholes that corporations and wealthy investors use to avoid paying their fair share of property taxes
- Protect all homeowners and renters by maintaining tax protections for ALL residential property and agricultural land
- Protect small businesses with an exemption for properties valued at less than $3 million and a five-year delay for reassessment of other small business properties.
- Ensure strict accountability so that money goes directly to our schools and communities

The need for this measure dates back to 1978 and the passage of Proposition 13, which made no distinction between commercial and residential property when setting property tax limits. “Schools & Communities First” is endorsed by PICO California, Bend the Arc, and many other faith-based organizations, as well as the California Federation of Teachers and numerous other labor groups. The local PICO affiliate, Faith In Action – East Bay (previously Oakland Community Organizations) has set a goal of collecting 4000 signatures by March 1st. Surely, Kehilla could gather 400 signatures by January 1st? Any registered voter can help circulate petitions. Contact Sue Goldberg for petitions and instructions: (510) 660-5125 or suegoldberg@sbcglobal.net, more info: https://www.schoolsandcommunitiesfirst.org

Solving the problem of homelessness for East Bay youth takes a really big team, like the one organized by Youth Spirit Artworks and their many community partners. Their vision is a secure community of 26 Tiny Houses with:

- Murphy beds
- windows
- skylight
- storage
- electricity
- furnishings
- heated floors

This community will have:

- On-site, clean communal bathrooms and showers
- A kitchen yurt for residents to cook weekly communal meals and securely store their own food
- Many onsite services (job training, social services, etc.)

Over 800 community members have joined in this effort so far, and 14 Tiny Houses have been completed. Many thanks to everyone who pitched in!

Visit the High Holy Days Art Show
December is your last chance – up through the month!

This year’s exhibit, with its wide variety of art media, is creative, beautiful and thought-provoking. In the Fireside Room.
Faith Trio News
by Lea Delson

On Saturday evening, November 9, congregants from four Oakland faith communities joined together at the Harvest Dinner for fellowship and a wonderful potluck vegetarian feast, held at the Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California (ICCNC). The Faith Trio is an alliance of Kehilla with ICCNC and with Montclair Presbyterian Church, and this year we were joined by some members of Temple Sinai in Oakland. Blessings by spiritual leaders framed the evening, along with presentations on the topic of building relationships between communities. This is the 14th year that Kehilla has participated in a Harvest Dinner with the Faith Trio congregations, and we continue to build relationships and stand in solidarity with these congregations. Some photos of the Harvest Dinner from Alex Madonik and Lea Delson can be seen here https://www.smugmug.com/gallery/n-WKPFkv/

On Tuesday, December 31, from 8:30 – 11:30 am, members of the Faith Trio communities and Temple Sinai will join together to volunteer at the Alameda County Community Food Bank at 7900 Edgewater Dr in Oakland (off Hegenburger Road, near the Oakland airport). We will be doing tasks such as bagging fruit or vegetables. Standing for about an hour at a time is required, but other than that it is physically easy. This will be the seventh year that Faith Trio volunteers work together at the food bank at the end of December. The facility is very clean and well organized. Children age 10 or older are welcome, and this is a great activity to do as a family. This is a popular activity, so sign up soon. Volunteers may be able to get rides to the facility, please inquire. Please contact Lea Delson at lea@delsonphoto.com or (510) 528-6725 to sign up to volunteer at the food bank. For information see https://www.accfb.org/get-involved/volunteer/food-sorting/


Here is a photo of Faith Trio volunteers at the food bank December 2018 https://www.smugmug.com/gallery/n-4ccvv8/i-jtmGwpQ/A

700 Benches: Winter 2020 class info for Kol Kehilla

You are invited to come learn with 700 Benches, a SVARA-method beit midrash (house of study; more information about SVARA is at www.svara.org).

In this 6-week beit midrash, you’ll learn ancient Jewish texts in their original language, explore Talmud study as a spiritual practice, and co-create a supportive, queer-normative community of study. All you need to begin is your alef-bet (Hebrew alphabet) and to be able to commit to all six sessions. Whether you’re a newbie or an expert, we invite you to join us. We’ve saved you a seat.

For new students, the learning begins on January 6th, with an orientation to our philosophy and method of Talmud study. Returning students are welcome at the January 6th session, but are not required to attend. This class will be co-taught by Rabbi Dev Noily and Rabbi Gray Myrseth. Sessions will take place Monday evenings from 6:45-9:15pm on January 13th, 20th, and 27th, and February 3rd, 10th, and 24th. Note: there is no class on February 17th.

$130 for members of Kehilla, $160 general. No one turned away for inability to pay. To discuss financial aid or to ask any other questions, email rabbigray@kehillasynagogue.org.
Upcoming Torah Chanting Opportunities:

- Dec 7: Shabbat morning (Fireside Rm) Contact rabbidev@kehillasynagogue.org
- Dec 21: Shabbat morning (Fireside Rm) Contact rabbidev@kehillasynagogue.org
- Jan 4: Shabbat morning (Fireside Rm) Contact Shulamit@kehillasynagogue.org
- Jan 11: Family Shabbat morning service (Sanctuary):
  Contact Beth Dickinson and Rabbi Gray — bdickinson@yahoo.com rabbigray@kehillasynagogue.org
- Jan 18: Shabbat morning (Fireside Rm) Contact rabbidev@kehillasynagogue.org
- Jan 25: Shabbat morning (Fireside Rm) Contact rabbidavid@kehillasynagogue.org

Love to chant Torah? We want YOU to leyn!

Teens and Adults, let’s do this, one aliyah at a time. Join us for Shabbat morning services and share your skills and love of leynen with our community. If you’re interested but have never chanted torah before, or if it’s been a long time and you expect to need significant support, please contact Hazzan Shulamit first: shulamit@kehillasynagogue.org.

Living Room Conversation with Kehilla's Faith Trio - 2nd Round
Saturday, January 11, 2:30-4:30pm

The Faith Trio - Kehilla, Montclair Presbyterian Church, Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California is having the 2nd round of Living Room Conversation. We sit in mixed groups of 6, agree to fully listen as each person shares their thoughts and feelings in this round: Religious Freedom and Non Discrimination.

Please go to this link for a full description: https://www.livingroomconversations.org/topics/religious_freedom_and_non_discrimination

The Second link is the Living Room Conversation guidelines. Thank you, Steven Falk, Facilitator

Note: This will be the first of 3 living room conversations, the 2nd and 3rd will be at the Montclair Presbyterian Church and the Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California. We plan to schedule them about a month apart.

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.
Thank You for Your Generosity

Due to technical difficulties, we will post our thank yous from November in the next issue of the Kol Kehilla! Thank you to all of you who helped and donated, and we look forward to thanking you by name next month :)

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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.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org) – National Domestic Violence Hotline 1−800−799−7233
- [www.shalom-bayit.org](http://www.shalom-bayit.org) – Shalom Bayit (East Bay) 866-SHALOM-7 / or (510) 845-SAFE

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Join Jewish Youth for Community Action (JYCA)!

Thursday, December 12, 7-9pm

JYCA’s introductory program, the Leadership Group in Training, is beginning at the end of January! In this program, youth participate in workshops on issues such as race, class, gender, anti-Semitism and youth empowerment. They participate in two weekend-long Shabbaton retreats, attend political events, build deep connections with peers, laugh, sing, lead, and contribute to creating a radically inclusive Jewish youth community!

On Thursday December 12th from 7-9 PM, teens are invited to join current JYCA youth for an informational session. This is a great way for new potential JYCAns to learn about JYCA, get a feel for our program and see if it’s the right space for them. We hope to see you there!

Please feel free to email Rachel Gelman at jyca.rachel@gmail.com with any questions. Learn more at [www.jycajustice.org](http://www.jycajustice.org)

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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](http://join.bethematch.org/SwabforNorah).
December 2019 Event Listing
Please remember that all events are fragrance-free

Mon., December 3, 7:30-9pm. **Middle East Peace Committee Meeting.** Fireside Room.

Wed., December 4, 7:50 am. **Morning Meditation Sit with Rabbi Dev, Fireside Room.** 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. Please enter through the patio off Fairview Avenue.

Thurs., December 5, 7-9pm. **Jews On Ohlone Land: Mauna Kea Report Back & Fundraiser.** Learn more on page 4.

Fri., December 6, 6:30 pm-9:30 pm. **Potluck Dinner and Kabbalat CHAI Shabbat! New Member Welcome & Special Guest, Rabbi Tirzah Firestone.** 6:30 pm: Veggie/Parve Potluck Shabbat Dinner + New Member Welcome in the Social Hall. 7:30 pm: Kabbalat Shabbat services in the Sanctuary, with Hazzan Shulamit, Debbie Fier, Julie Nesnansky and a special teaching from R. Tirzah Firestone, who’s leading a workshop on Saturday afternoon, Dec 7: “Wounds into Wisdom: Ancestral Healing and Social Action”. Join us for a song-filled and soulful evening of Shabbat music and prayer. Kiddush follows the service. Please bring something veggie/parve to share that serves 8-10 people for the potluck dinner, labeled with ingredients, or if you’re only attending the service, something for the kiddush afterwards-- many thanks!

Sat., December 7, 10:30 am. **Shabbat Morning Service with Rabbi Dev and Julie Nesnansky, Fireside Room**
Join us for shabbat morning prayers and an exploration of Parashat Vayeitzei. Kiddush follows the service. Please bring something vegetarian to share. Fireside Room.

Sat., December 7, 10:30 am -11:15 am. **Tot Shabbat with Jen Miriam and Alon Altman with their Puppet Friends.** Especially for the littlest tots (0-3 years) and their grown ups; children up to 5 are welcome! Join us for songs, prayers, friends and stories and end with challah and grape juice. Bring a snack to share if you’d like. Main floor back classroom.

Sat., December 7, 2-6pm. **Wounds into Wisdom: Ancestral Healing & Social Action.** Learn more on page 9.

Mon., December 9, 7-9pm. **Book Discussion Group.** Learn more on page 8.

Tues., December 10, 7-8:30pm. **Kehilla Sings!** Learn more on page 7.

Wed., December 11, 7:50 am. **Morning Meditation Sit with Rabbi Dev, Fireside Room.** 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. Please enter through the patio off Fairview Avenue.

Wed., December 11, 6:30-9pm. **Economic Justice Committee Meeting.** Back Classroom.

Fri., December 13, 6:00 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., December 14, 10:00 am - 12:30 pm, Sanctuary. **Shabbat Morning and Alexa Baum becoming Bat Mitzvah.** With Rabbi David Cooper, Julie Nesnansky, Noa Grayevsky, and Debbie Fier. Join us for a celebratory and musical Shabbat morning, exploring parashat Vayishlach. Everyone is welcome! Kiddush provided by Barbara and Stephan Vermut.
Sun., December 15, 10am-12pm. **Tikkun Ha-Nefesh (Repair of the Soul) Healing Racism, Unpacking White Privilege – Affinity Group.** Learn more on page 2.

Tues., December 17, 6:15-9pm. **Board of Trustees Meeting.** Dinner at 6:15. All members are welcome. Back Classroom.

Tues., December 17, 7-9pm. **Essentials of Judaism.** Learn more on page 9.

Wed., December 18, 7:50 am. **Morning Meditation Sit with Rabbi Dev, Fireside Room.** 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. Please enter through the patio off Fairview Avenue.

Thurs., December 19, 3-6pm. **Holiday Craft Fair to Benefit Immigrants.** Learn more on page 9.

Thurs., December 19, 6:30-8pm. **Greening Committee Meeting.** Emma Goldman Room.

Fri., December 20, 1-2:30pm. **Art Committee Meeting.** Fireside Room.

Fri., December 20, 7:30pm. **Kabbalat Shabbat with Hazzan Shulamit, Jen Miriam Altman, and Julie Nesnansky.** Join us in the sanctuary for a song-filled and soulful evening of Shabbat music, prayers, meditation, and community as we welcome in Shabbat. Kiddush follows services. Please bring something veggie to share, sweet or savory.

Sat., December 21, 10:30am. **Shabbat Morning Service with Rabbi Dev, Hazzan Shulamit, and Julie Nesnansky, Fireside Room.** Join us for shabbat morning prayers and music and an exploration of Parashat Vayeshev. Kiddush follows the service. Please bring something vegetarian to share.

Saturday December 21, 10:30am -11:15am. **Tot Shabbat with Jen Miriam and Alon Altman with their Puppet Friends.** Especially for the littlest tots (0-3 years) and their grown ups; children up to 5 are welcome! Join us for songs, prayers, friends and stories and end with challah and grape juice. Bring a snack to share if you’d like. Main floor back classroom.

Monday December 23, 5:00pm - 8:00pm. **2nd Night of Chanukah PARTY: Puppet Show, Crafts Fair to Benefit Immigrants, Potluck & Conversation with Zahra Billoo: Celebrating Liberation and Resisting Islamaphobia.** Learn more on page 4.

Wed., December 25, through Wed., January 1: **Kehilla Administrative Offices Closed for Winter Holiday.** Kehilla staff will be working outside the building for most of this week and the office will be closed. It will reopen 9am on Thursday, January 2, and return to normal business hours then. Please note Kehilla school will not meet on 12/26 OR 1/2, and morning meditation will not meet on 1/1.

Tues., December 31, 8:30-11:30am. **Interfaith Food Bank Volunteering, Come Join Us!** Join members of the Faith Trio communities and Temple Sinai at the Alameda County Community Food, we will be doing tasks such as bagging fruit or vegetables. Standing for about an hour at a time is required, but other than that it is physically easy. Volunteers may be able to get rides to the facility, please inquire. Please contact Lea Delson at lea@delsonphoto.com or (510) 528-6725 to sign up to volunteer at the food bank.

**Wednesday December 25: Morning Meditation is CANCELLED**

**Saturday, December 28: Shabbat morning services are CANCELLED**

**Wednesday January 1: Morning Meditation is CANCELLED**
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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
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