



A disclaimer about our March 2020 Kol Kehilla Issue:

Dear community, please note that this hard copy might not contain the latest information about events, in light of the constantly changing reality of planning events under COVID19. We ask that you check our website calendar for the most recent updates, and look out for future Kehilla communications in your inbox.

## A Community Conversation: Sustaining our Congregation

Dear Friends,  
Kehilla has almost reached the tremendous milestone of 500-member households. We want to both celebrate this moment in our growth, and to prepare us for an upcoming financial sustainability conversation at our Annual Community Meeting on Tuesday, May 12.

The Board of Trustees – as peers and as those having responsibility to represent you in ensuring Kehilla remains afloat – wants to consciously tie our financial sustainability to our values as a community: a radically inclusive Jewish spiritual home for politically progressive people of all ages, identities and family constellations.

**This column is part of the communal discussion to guide us through a process of creating a dues structure that both meets the financial needs of our community and incorporates the value of**

**radical inclusion. It is our goal to create a transparent process regarding the community finances, and to engage all members in a discussion of the dues process.**

**Annual dues provide 52% of the operating budget**, dues are the main way the congregation ensures Kehilla’s financial sustainability.

As members of different class backgrounds, we acknowledge that our current dues structure is a middle-class construct. Using age-based categories for suggested dues, based on the assumption of increased earnings from ages 40-64, has created a middle-class norm. As such, this construct has made some of our members feel they are “not the norm” and therefore “the exception.” **The board is eager to hear the voices of the entire community to work to create a change in the current dues structure.**

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### In the Kol Kehilla this month:

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**Voluntary contributions are the second largest means of support (17%)** (educational tuition, 14%, and program income, 14%, make up much of the balance). Most of these donations are unrestricted in their use, unless specifically earmarked by the donor. Some donations, such as Terumah, are specifically earmarked for the building.

**Avodah, including volunteering or sweat equity**, also financially sustains Kehilla, because it reduces the amount of staffing or contracting needed. Each member's engagement in community activities is linked to financial sustainability. When each of us has meaningful experiences of belonging, our desire for Kehilla's continued healthy existence grows.

**All Members Decide What Annual Dues Their Household Pledges.** Our annual dues structure seeks to provide flexibility for us and our household to reflect on how we can best support our shared community.

- First-year members are provided a substantial discount to check out membership.
- Renewing members are provided with a suggested range based on the number of incomes in the household and the age of household members.
- All members are free to diverge from the suggested range if it's not compatible with their household's financial capacity, though it is hoped that all who can, do contribute within the suggested range.
- Different payment plans are available through the online pledge form. [continued on page 3]

## Board of Trustees Meeting

Tuesday, March 24, 6:15-9pm

All members are welcome. Back Classroom (main floor, straight down the hall).

Dinner at 6:15pm. All events at Kehilla are fragrance-free.

## Morning Meditation Sit

Wednesdays at 7:50am

With Rabbi Dev. In the Fireside Room (Enter through the patio entrance on Fairview).

Doors open at 7:50am, short teaching at 7:55am, silent sit from 8– 8:30am, mourner's kaddish and announcements at 8:30am

## Tot Shabbat!

Saturdays, March 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's Book Discussion Group

*The Wife* by Meg Wolitzer

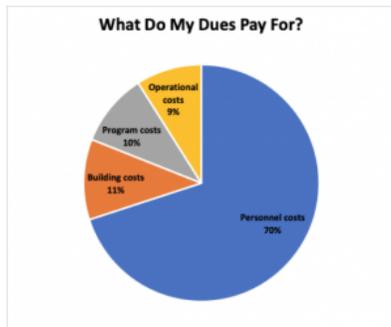
Monday, March 16, 7-9pm in the Fireside Room –  
PLEASE NOTE DATE CHANGE

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

**Part I: What does Kehilla financially need to function (all values shown are for fiscal year 2019-2020)**

The Board of Trustees approves budget expenditures each year, in consultation with the Executive Director, the Senior Clergy, and Board-led Personnel, Finance and Generosity Committees. Expenditures approved for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 total \$1,161,532.

***Members can – and are encouraged to – attend all board and committee meetings, with the exception of Personnel.***



**Personnel expenses**

In keeping with our values, we seek to provide Kehilla staff with compensation that provides a livable wage for the Bay Area. Employees working 50% time or greater can also elect to receive health and other benefits. These are people we know and love. We want our values and love to be reflected in how we compensate our staff.

Personnel expenses for this fiscal year are \$823,021. They include:

- salaries (\$636,735),
- employer payroll taxes (\$57,856),
- health and dental benefits (\$55,789),
- professional development (\$8,550),
- workers compensation (\$6,387),
- retirement contributions (\$35,154),
- outside services (\$18,900),
- payroll processing fees and general personnel costs (\$3,650).

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### **Essentials of Judaism**

**Tuesday, March 17, 7-9pm**

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.

### **Shabbat Morning Service with SLPC Kiddush and Presentation**

**Saturday, March 14, 10:30am-12:15pm**

Join us for Shabbat Morning Service. For enlivening Shabbat morning of prayer, torah, and community. Kiddush follows the service. Please bring something vegetarian to share. Kehilla's Spiritual Life Practices Committee is sponsoring kiddush and will provide a short presentation after the kiddush. In the Fireside Room.

## Clergy

With the needs of a growing congregation and an unprecedented national political situation, our spiritual leaders, Rabbi Dev (Senior Rabbi) and Hazzan Shulamit (Musical Director), are currently working 50-60 hours per week, each with multiple areas of responsibility. We acknowledge that even now all the needs of the community cannot be met. These demands will only increase. Our congregation has a large proportion of members who are 40-65+ years old, and as members age, we anticipate that pastoral counseling needs will continue to be a significant part of clergy duties. We also have a large proportion of younger members, including several upcoming large b'nei mitzvah classes.

To assist in the senior clergy's workload, we are seeking to hire a half-time Assistant Rabbi to begin in July, to assist with leading services including Bar/Bat Mitzvah services, offering pastoral counseling and other duties.

We also anticipate that the clergy team will need increased administrative support in the next year. These will need additional budget support.

## Executive Director, Youth Education and Administrative Staff

Our executive director, Michael Saxe-Taller, is managing multiple projects that have stretched him to need extra support. For this reason, a half-time

Development and Communications Associate, Batya Gelfand, was hired during this fiscal year. This expenditure will need additional budget support.

The responsibility for managing all aspects of the school is done by Rabbi Gray Myrseth and Natalie Boskin.

The Program and Membership Engagement position is currently held by Maya Joshua, who will be leaving in April. A search is underway to fill this position.

Other essential staff include: our office administrator, Dee Ward, Molly Melamed, our bookkeeper, and our custodial staff Josef Straub and Fred Williamson. Josef, who has cared for our building since long before we arrived, is retiring in April. Because of the needs and complexities of managing and caring for this large and aging building it has been decided to replace him with someone who will take on management tasks which have been done by the ED and the office administrator.

This past winter, we hired Ruthie Levin as our first-ever People of Color Organizer.

*([Click here](https://kehillasynagogue.org/greater-detail-about-the-areas-of-responsibility-of-our-clergy-and-staff/) (https://kehillasynagogue.org/greater-detail-about-the-areas-of-responsibility-of-our-clergy-and-staff/) to read in greater detail about the areas of responsibility of our clergy and staff.) [continued on page 5]*

## **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

[www.thehotline.org/help/for-abusive-partners/](http://www.thehotline.org/help/for-abusive-partners/) National Domestic Violence Hotline (for abusive partners)

**Non-Personnel expenses**

**-Building expenses (\$129,913)**

- mortgage interest (\$83,000);
- repairs and maintenance (\$22,000);
- security and utilities (\$9,650);
- janitorial and kitchen supplies (\$9,500)
- solar lease interest and property taxes combined (\$5,550).

*The Terumah Fund is budgeted to raise \$45,000 towards mortgage costs. Rentals for the year are budgeted to bring in \$58,200.*

**-Program expenses (\$125,757) include:**

- High Holiday costs (\$54,745);
- Retreats (\$19,665);
- Shabbat services (\$14,880);
- Program supplies and costs (\$14,567);
- Food costs (\$7,450);
- Passover Seder (\$5,500);
- Adult Education/Workshop (\$4,000);
- Simchat Torah and other holiday programs (\$3450);
- Young Adult Glitter initiative (\$1,500).

**-Operational expenses (\$82,840) include**

- Admin and Office Expenses (\$41,690)
  - Bank and credit card charges (\$12,500);

- Other Costs (\$27,550) including Restricted Funds expenditures of \$19,500;
- Fundraising costs and events (\$13,600).

**-Kehilla School and Bar/Bat Mitzvah Program:**

Dues and donations subsidize both the School and the BBM program. For this year, school income (primarily tuition) is \$90,000 and expenses are \$150,000, and BBM income (primarily tuition) is \$76,000 and expenses \$92,000. In addition there is the cost of custodial staff, ED time, the percentage of utilities used, and other things to support these programs.

**Part II. As members and Board members, we want to ensure that all households learn that their dues pay for the essentials of holding and serving the Kehilla community.**

As you see, your dues primarily pay to support the people on staff that you know and love, those that inspire us and attend to the needs of our community. These incredible folks are the backbone of how our community functions. They are key to ensuring that being a Kehilla member is not just a consumer experience (i.e. *What did I get for my money?*), but rather belonging to a community that makes an invaluable difference in the world (i.e. *What would I do if I didn't have Kehilla?*).

[continued on page 6]

**Kabbalat Shabbat: Liturgically Traditional, Radically Inclusive w/Potluck Dinner after Service  
Friday, March 13, 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. Services will be followed by a yummy potluck dinner, so bring something vegetarian to share and come prepared to linger over dinner after the service. Cosponsored by Kehilla and Glitter Kehilla. In the Fireside Room.

A Community Conversation: Sustaining our Congregation [continued from page 5]

We wish to introduce two references, the *SF Bay Area Consumer Price Index* and the concept of *Sustaining Annual Dues*. Consistent with our views about how all workers in society should be compensated, the Board has been considering how to ensure that all of our employees have salary and benefits that ensure self-sufficiency (i.e. a living wage, health care, etc.) and that keep up with the cost of living (COLA), based on fluctuations in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Some of the same issues are relevant to Kehilla non-staff contractors. In particular, the CPI for the Bay Area increased by 3% from October 2018 to October 2019, which included a 3.2% increase in rental costs.

### **Part III: Sharing financial sustainability, so that each can give according to their means**

It is a Kehilla value to embrace and value all members equally, not according to the amount of dues they can pledge or the donations that they contribute. In that context, we want to introduce the concept of “Sustaining Annual Dues,” a calculation that some congregations use to show how much it costs to run their organization per member household, averaging the dollar amount of dues that would be needed across all households. Using the fiscal year 2019-2020 expense budget of \$1,161,532, and dividing by 500 households, discounting any additional income or

fundraising, *the Sustaining Annual Dues amount for FY 19-20 was \$2,323.*

Board members as a group have differing means and we are sensitive to the fact that not everyone is able to pledge the Sustaining Annual Dues amount. Many members contribute substantial support by donating their time and labor.

About 13% (64) of our renewing households pledged dues at the Sustaining Annual Dues amount (\$2,323) or greater during this year. In this next fiscal year, we are asking for all who can do so to pledge this amount or greater. If so, we can collectively support Kehilla’s viability, each according to our means.

In conclusion, the Board wants to reinforce that we all add value to our community, and not just based on your ability to pledge funds or volunteer time. We express deep gratitude to all who support Kehilla in the manner that best matches your situation. We are a community because of your support!

Stay tuned for April’s *Kol Kehilla* continuation of this article. We wish to engage the community in examining whether the number of household income-earners and age stratification of suggested dues should continue in future years. We will talk about this at the May community meeting. Please respond [here](#) (email [board@kehillasynagogue.org](mailto:board@kehillasynagogue.org)), if you’d like to be part of such a discussion.

## **3 Generation Chevurah**

**Saturday, March 14 @ 9:30 am - 11:00 am**

Parents, young children, elders, and people of all ages who enjoy hanging out with young children are invited to join the *3 Generation Chevurah*, for a playdate and schmooze in the Back Classroom (where Tot Shabbat happens) and back yard. Bring a snack to share if you are so moved (please clearly label nuts and other common allergens) or just bring yourself.

Services will be beginning at 10:30am and some of us will be heading there afterwards. This is an informal social gathering. For more information email Elliot at [ekukla@gmail.com](mailto:ekukla@gmail.com). In the Back Classroom – Main Floor (best entrance is from the Fairview Avenue entrance).

# VISIONING CLIMATE JUSTICE

embracing the wisdom of Indigenous leadership and youth activism

## Ohlone Activist Corrina Gould in Conversation with Youth Organizers

Featuring a Trio from Dance Brigade's "Butterfly Effect"

**Saturday, March 28, 7:00 PM**

First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley, 2407 Dana Street, Berkeley, CA

Indigenous people and youth are on the front lines of the climate crisis, leading the movement for climate justice. Join Sogorea Te' Land Trust founder Corrina Gould as we explore with youth activists how to co-create a livable future for all:

- Isha Clarke: Youth vs. Apocalypse
- Isabella Zizi: Idle No More
- Hannah Freedman: Jewish Youth for Community Action
- Orion Camero: SustainUS: US Youth for Justice and Sustainability
- Zolboo Namkhaidorj: Communities for a Better Environment

Featuring dynamic movement from Dance Brigade's "Butterfly Effect", a groundbreaking performance about the climate crisis and the profound ripple of influence one person's actions can have.

LOCATION: First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley, 2407 Dana Street, Berkeley, CA

You are welcome to purchase tickets and/or make a donation

by writing a check to Kehilla Community Synagogue and mailing it to

1300 Grand Avenue, Piedmont, CA 94610.

No one turned away for lack of funds.

Tickets: [kehilla.ticketspice.com/climatejustice](http://kehilla.ticketspice.com/climatejustice)

Organizational Partners for this event include: Youth vs. Apocalypse, Jewish Youth for Community Action,

Jewish Earth Alliance, The Aquarian Minyan, Wilderness Torah, Chochmat HaLev, Never Again Action, IfNotNow, 350 Bay Area, 350 East Bay, Bay Area Green Tours, Northern California Solar Energy Association, Oakland Climate Action Coalition, Greenaction for Health and Environmental Justice and California Interfaith Power and Light.

It truly takes a village to put on an event of this magnitude, and this is both Kehilla's major fundraiser of the year and a way you can take action re climate change while supporting the well being of both our planet and our community. Please consider lending your support in the following ways:

Please spread the word about the event

Volunteer before / during

Become a Sponsor of the event

Learn more about all of these at

[kehillasynagogue.org/visioning-climate-justice-more-details](http://kehillasynagogue.org/visioning-climate-justice-more-details).

Sponsorship supports Kehilla's programs and the important work we do in the world. Make a sponsorship gift of \$10 to \$1,000 above the cost of the ticket

([kehillasynagogue.org/makeadonation/](http://kehillasynagogue.org/makeadonation/)). Sponsors will be acknowledged unless you ask to be anonymous. All sponsorships received by March 18th will be acknowledged on the Kehilla website and in the evening's program; after that date, sponsors will be acknowledged only on Kehilla's Visioning Climate Justice event webpage.

## Science, Spirituality, and Judaism, Part 2

by Rabbi Burt Jacobson

### *God and the Big Bang*

Kabbalah is the central tradition of Jewish mysticism that developed and deeply affected Judaism from the twelfth through the eighteenth centuries. The 1960s saw an explosion of interest in Eastern spirituality in the U.S., and a resurgence in interest in Kabbalah that continues to this day.

Daniel Matt, one of the premier scholars of Kabbalah in the world, lives and works here in the East Bay. Matt's greatest achievement has been his

translation into English of the major tracts of the Zohar, the "bible" of kabbalah, channeled and written by Rabbi Moses de Leon in Spain during the thirteenth century. The Zohar is a fascinating description of a mythical spiritual community centering around the figure of the great mystic, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai. It also contains a commentary on the mystical aspects of the Torah. Numerous Jewish scholars identify the Bible, the Talmud, and the Zohar as the three greatest bodies of the Jewish tradition. [continued on page 9]

### **Tikkun Ha-Nefesh (Repair of the Soul) Healing Racism, Unpacking White Privilege – Affinity Group Sunday, March 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 as 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](mailto:lafitch@gmail.com)

I have studied the Zohar with Danny and I honor him as a master teacher and friend. In 1992, before undertaking his translation work, he published a pathbreaking book, *God & the Big Bang*. In this work, Matt draws on the insights of physics and Jewish mysticism, emphasizing the sense of wonder and oneness that connects us with the universe and God. The book describes the parallels between modern cosmology and medieval kabbalah, revealing how science and religion together can enrich our spiritual understanding.

At the center of *God & the Big Bang* is the modern theory about the origins of the universe known as the Big Bang. As you might know, most cosmologists today believe that the universe began some fifteen billion years ago when a hot, dense seed of energy that was infinitely compressed by the pressure of

gravity exploded wildly, setting the universe into motion. This point of energy contained all the future energy and mass of the universe, which has been expanding outwards since its origins.

Matt became excited when he recognized that a particular teaching in the Zohar described the birth of the universe in language reminiscent of the Big Bang:

*A blinding spark flashed within the concealed of the concealed, from the mystery of the Infinite, a cluster of vapor in formlessness . . . Under the impact of breaking through, one high and hidden point shone. Beyond that point nothing is known. So it is called Beginning.*

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## Jews On Ohlone Land Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, March 11, 6:30-9:30pm

Jews on Ohlone Land is organizing to maximize Jewish participation in the Shuumi Land Tax throughout the East Bay. The heart of this project is training and supporting people to offer an interactive workshop that addresses the indigenous history of the East Bay, through the teachings of indigenous leaders, and that explores how we as Jews can live in right relationship to this land, its ancestors, and the indigenous people and communities who live here now.

The Shuumi Land Tax is a voluntary annual financial contribution that non-Indigenous people living on traditional Chochenyo and Karkin Ohlone territory make to support the critical work of the [Sogorea Te Land Trust](#). The Shuumi Land Tax directly supports Sogorea Te's work to acquire and preserve land, establish a cemetery to reinter stolen Ohlone ancestral remains and build urban gardens, community centers, and sacred arbors so current and future generations of Indigenous people can thrive in the Bay Area. Learn more at [sogoreate-landtrust.com](http://sogoreate-landtrust.com).

Founded in March 2019 by Ariel Luckey and Dev Noily, Jews on Ohlone Land is now a robust and growing crew of amazing people, bringing a wealth of teachings and perspectives to our shared work. Our project is designed so that anyone can join anytime and we can continue to build with ongoing participants. If you have not come to a session before, please join us at 6:30pm.

**6:30pm (sharp)** Orientation for New Folks

**7:15pm** Jews On Ohlone Land Workshop Components and Development

**8:30pm** Dialogue and Training Session

In this passage the Zohar is describing the creation of the cosmos as a blinding spark—a big bang, if you will—that burst out of the unknown. Remarkably, the Zohar also uses the image of a high and hidden point, just like the Big Bang theory’s description of the point of energy which contained all the future energy and mass of the universe. Both narratives also envision the original point of energy as having emerged out of some enigmatic mystery. Evidently, Moses de Leon intuited a key piece of information regarding the origin of the universe that twentieth-century science has shown to be essentially correct. I found this confluence to be astonishing.

Both Kabbalah and science picture the universe as having evolved through a series of stages, each new phase proceeding out of and dependent upon all of the previous stages. And both of these disciplines understand the cosmos to be an intricate, complex multi-layered reality. But the Kabbalists envision the universe as an organism being directed by conscious spiritual forces, while the physicists and cosmologists stay clear of all metaphysical language, at least when they are engaged in describing the processes of the natural world. Most scientists picture those forces as physical in character and mechanical in their operations.

When examined side by side these two differing perceptions of the nature of the cosmos give rise to a perplexing question: *Is the universe more like an organism or a machine?* Mainline physicists and cosmologists tie their understanding of reality to a materialistic view of the world; thus they believe that scientific method is the only way to arrive at the underlying truth of the physical universe. Spiritual traditions from all over the world, however, favor the view that the universe is more like an organism and that its origin lies in some kind

of cosmic blueprint that transcends the physical realm. It will be no surprise to readers that I find myself in this latter camp, but at the same time I must candidly admit that when it comes to positing a definitive answer to this kind of question I am, in the end, an agnostic—it seems like an unknowable mystery to me.

But this raises another vital question: *Is scientific methodology the only way to discover the truth about the world?* What about poetry, fiction, drama, music? What about dreams and mythology and the insights of spiritual teachers throughout the world? John Haught, who directs the Georgetown Center for the Study of Science and Religion, proposes that the sacred symbols and myths of religion “may, at a certain level of understanding, come closer than science to registering what is *really* going on in the narrative depths of the universe. A religiously informed consciousness. . . may be able to detect signals arising from the depths of nature that the method of science. . . will inevitably (and quite appropriately) overlook.” The last half century has seen the rise of a cadre of scientists who have been engaged in integrating science and spirit, and I imagine that most of them would agree with Haught’s remarks.

Would you like to read about scientific pioneers who are pursuing spirituality? You might start with Danny Matt’s *God & the Big Bang*. But you can also check out Shirley Jones’ delightful little book, *The Mind of God & Other Musings: The Wisdom of Science* (New World Library, 1994). A good follow up would be Rabbi David W. Nelson’s *Judaism, Physics, and God: Searching for Sacred Metaphors in a Post-Einstein World* (Jewish Lights, 2005).

## Homeless Action now Part of the Economic Justice Committee! Join us at our first meeting, March 25, 7 – 8:30pm

The last two years have seen a 47% increase in homelessness in Oakland. Over 70% of the people living on the streets are African American. This is not just a crucial racial and economic justice issue, but a public health issue as well. Although Kehilla member Talya Husbands- Hankin has been addressing this issue, there has not been a formal Kehilla committee to support this important work.

Based on the identification of this need, the Economic Justice Committee welcomes a new subcommittee, **Homeless Action**. Talya Husbands-Hankin and Sue Greenwald, long-term Kehilla members, will chair this new subcommittee. Under their leadership and in collaboration with the Economic Justice Committee, the Homeless Action Subcommittee will:

1. Address policy and advocacy issues for our homeless community members including meeting with the Homeless Advocacy Working Group and continuing to engage the Oakland City Council in improved policies.

2. Expand the direct support provided to homeless encampments including potential cooking of meals, collecting needed donations etc.
3. Support major events such as the recent Moms4Housing action at an unoccupied home in west Oakland. Be a witness when the Oakland Police Department closes encampments.

We are excited to form this intergenerational committee at Kehilla to address such a pressing issue in our community. If you have interest, time and energy to help us make a difference in homelessness in Oakland please come to an initial gathering on **Wednesday, March 25,**

**7 – 8:30 pm in the back classroom on the sanctuary level at Kehilla.** This will not be our normal meeting time but will be a chance to get organized. For more information or to RSVP, please contact Sue Greenwald at [sgreenwald53@yahoo.com](mailto:sgreenwald53@yahoo.com).

### **Homeless Action Initial Organizing Meeting**

**Wednesday, March 25 @ 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm**

*Homelessness action now part of the economic justice committee!*

*Join us in supporting unhoused residents!!*

*We are excited to form this intergenerational committee at Kehilla to address such a pressing issue in our community. If you have interest, time and energy to help us make a difference in homelessness in Oakland please come to an initial gathering on Wed., March 25th from 7-8:30pm at Kehilla. This will not be our normal meeting time but will be a chance to get organized.*

*For more information, please contact Sue Greenwald at [sgreenwald53@yahoo.com](mailto:sgreenwald53@yahoo.com)*

*In the Back Classroom – Main Floor (easiest entrance through the Fairview Avenue door – near handicap parking space)*

# Economic Justice Committee Report, March, 2020

by Myrna Schwartz and Richard Speiglmán

February 2020

*Schools and Communities First initiative* – EJCers are actively engaged in the gathering of signatures to get this important initiative on the November ballot. March 14 is the deadline for the organizations we're working with (Faith in Action – East Bay; East Bay Citizens for Action). If you haven't yet signed the petition, or would like petitions to circulate, please email Sue Goldberg at [suegoldberg@sbcglobal.net](mailto:suegoldberg@sbcglobal.net)

*Homeless Action*–The EJC has established a subcommittee on homelessness, under the direction of Talya Husbands-Hankin and Sue Greenwald that will work under the EJC umbrella. First organizing meeting is March 25, Wednesday, 7 – 8:30 pm in the back classroom on the Sanctuary Level. Please read the accompanying article here in Kol Kehilla.

*Interfaith Coalition for Justice in Our Jails* is the newly named coalition of faith congregations that at the end of October, 2019 presented the Alameda County Board of Supervisors with over 1,000 signatures calling for prompt restoration of Medi-

Cal for detainees upon release from Santa Rita Jail. We have seen encouraging follow-up to the action; the Supervisors have directed county agencies to review the data and come up with a workable plan by the end of March.

The Coalition plans to continue organizing work around Medi-Cal and other jail-related issues under a Mission Statement (printed below) and plans to grow and diversify the Coalition. Kehilla's Economic Justice Committee endorsed the Coalition and Mission Statement at our meeting on February 12, 2020, and we have requested an endorsement by the Kehilla Board/Rabbi/ED on behalf of the congregation.

The mobilization around Medi-Cal restoration grew out of a two-session workshop on county jail conditions and community re-entry held at Kehilla and our neighboring congregation, Plymouth United Church of God.

For more information on this work, please contact Richard Speiglmán at [rspeiglmán@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rspeiglmán@sbcglobal.net) or

Karen Rachels at [karenrachels@gmail.com](mailto:karenrachels@gmail.com).

## Day-long Workshop!

### ***Tikkun HaNefesh (THN): Repairing the Soul, Untangling White Privilege***

**Sunday, April 26, 2020 10am – 5pm, at Kehilla**

This day-long workshop is a chance for white folks to expand our skillfulness as friends, allies, activists, loved ones, and community members with people of color. Participants engage in body, mind, and spirit to do this necessary and often difficult work in a safe and challenging setting. Open to anyone 18 or older who identifies as having white privilege, regardless of whether or not you have attended other *Tikkun HaNefesh* groups.

FACILITATORS: Rabbi Shifrah Tobacman and Chaplain Laura Fitch

COST: Sliding scale. \$36-\$72 for Kehilla members. \$40-\$80 for non-members. No one turned away for inability to pay. Lunch will be provided.

TO REGISTER:

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Email [rabbishifrah@gmail.com](mailto:rabbishifrah@gmail.com) or call 510-915-1040

All events at Kehilla are fragrance-free. For information about what it means to be fragrance-free, go to <https://eastbaymeditation.org/resources/fragrance-free-at-ebmc/>.

## View Barry Shapiro's Ongoing Art Exhibit

Kehilla's Art Committee invites you to stop by and enjoy Barry Shapiro's deeply thoughtful, bold, and uniquely imaginative compositions currently on exhibit in the Fireside Room. This show will run through mid-April.

Barry writes: "As a visual artist, I use images now, almost exclusively, to tackle the social themes I've talked about professionally and personally as a philosophy teacher, diversity trainer, and political activist for over 45 years. Additionally, I've always found myself seduced by simple beauty, intrigued by how things look, awed by spectacle, and addicted to the pleasures of metaphor and illusion.

When I first began producing art, I used scissors and glue on appropriated printed images. Now, by using only my own photographs, I am compelled to get

closer and engage more personally with my subjects, thereby reducing the distance that might cast them as "other." As I work with my images digitally, this connection to my subjects helps advance my goal of countering prejudice and creating painterly, seamless collages that reveal searching souls behind social stereotypes.

This exhibit was designed to present and visually balance the broad scope of my work for the viewer – allowing them to experience my passion for social justice and diversity while also appreciating my commitment to aesthetics."

Coming next in the Fireside Room will be work by Dvora Gordon – mosaics to inspire you and photographs to soothe the soul.

### Folks with White Privilege Affinity Group Meeting

Wednesday, March 11, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm, Heschel Room

Everyone who identifies as white is welcome; whether or not you have attended these meetings in the past, we'd love to have you! This affinity group is part of Kehilla's Belonging & Allyship Racial Justice Project. Questions? Contact Susan Shulman, [susanschulman60@gmail.com](mailto:susanschulman60@gmail.com).

Here's our suggested Homework for March 11:

1 - *How I Can Offer Reparations in Direct Proportion to my White Privilege* By [Chris Moore-Backman](#)

<https://www.yesmagazine.org/issue/just-transition/2017/10/25/how-i-can-offer-reparations>

2 - Hanukkah anti-Semitism Requires a Response, But We Cannot Fight Hatred with More Hatred by Carin Mrotz and R. Michael Adam:

<https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/hanukkah-anti-semitism-requires-response-we-cannot-fight-hatred-more-ncna1108771?fbclid=IwAR1bl4WIAUAFglAHEq4SRfAdrMFfHz3y3ja8-SBZuGuYhYzxThGZ828TwOA>

3 – We're suggesting folks try this exercise for the next 2 months!: Whenever you're talking about doing something with white Jews, SAY 'my white Jewish' friend instead of 'my Jewish' friend (etc.) in conversation. See how defining the Jewish friend as white highlights the fact that some Jews are NOT white -- but that often our assumption is that all Jews are white. Notice how this feels when you do it, and notice how others respond!

And, as always, please meet with your buddy and discuss these or anything else that's coming up for you!

## 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](http://norahneedsyou.com) or join the registry today at [join.bethematch.org/SwabforNorah](http://join.bethematch.org/SwabforNorah).

## ***Anti-Zionism at Kehilla: a Pot-luck Brunch and Discussion***

***Sunday, March 29 @ 11:00 am - 1:00 pm***

*Please join anti-Zionists at Kehilla for a pot luck brunch! This is a time for us to get together, to get to know one another, and to discuss the possibilities for Palestine solidarity and anti-Zionism at Kehilla Synagogue. With our first brunch gathering, we hope to grow our anti-Zionist Jewish community within Kehilla and beyond, as we imagine ways to mobilize our justice commitments in our sacred practice and through our collective and public activities. All of our community is welcome to join us—you don't have to be a member of the synagogue to attend this event.*

*We will provide a fritata, challah, and coffee. Please bring a vegetarian side dish to share!  
In the Fireside Room.*

## **Clergy Appointments**

To make appointments with Rabbi Dev, please contact Dee at [dee@kehillasynagogue.org](mailto:dee@kehillasynagogue.org), and Dee will help you schedule time with them!

## **Kehilla Sings!**

**Upcoming dates: Wednesdays, March 25, April 22 and May 20**

7-8:30 pm, in the Fireside Room

A monthly gathering with Hazzan Shulamit to circle round and sing together! 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 or tuck into our spiritual tool boxes. Join us for a delicious time of tuning into our souls and to one another. Everyone's welcome! Donations accepted at the door \$5-20. Visit the website for posted music for Shabbat, protests, and more!

**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

## Financial

### General Donation

Cathy Steirn and Chris Kinavey, in honor of Mom's yartzeit

Sherrie Ebyam, in honor of Inland Mendocino County Kol HaEmek Community

### Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Lana Kogan, in honor of Shia's baby naming

## Volunteer

Many people helped us in February – many people help us every month! – and we've been a little behind on our gathering of notes on this front. So please know that if you stepped in or stepped up, you made Kehilla happen with us and we're so grateful

**To the people we may have left out in error:** Thank you. Really. We're sorry we missed naming you, but please know every few minutes of your help and generosity made a difference for us and for the entire community who got to celebrate the holidays the way we did

## March 2020 Event Listing

Please remember that all events are fragrance-free

Wednesday, March 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.

Friday, March 6, 7:30 pm. **Kabbalat Shabbat and Aufruf with Hazzan Shulamit, Rabbi Dev, and Debbie Fier.** Join us in the sanctuary for a song-filled and soulful evening of Shabbat music, prayers, meditation, and community. We will also celebrate the upcoming wedding of Miriam Burzlaff & Naemi Mahrud. Please bring something veggie to share, sweet or savory, at the kiddush following services.

Saturday, March 7, 10:00 am - 12:30 pm. **The Annual Learner's Service with Rabbi Dev and Hazzan Shulamit .** Once a year our Shabbat morning service transforms into a laboratory for learning what the service is all about-- where things come from and why we do them. Join us for this interactive experience where all questions and interruptions are welcome! We'll also explore parashat Tetzaveh. Please bring a veggie dish to share at the kiddush luncheon afterwards. In the Sanctuary.

Saturday, March 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.

Sunday, March 8, 2-4pm. **Purim Carnival.**

Sunday, March 8, 3-5pm. **Jewish Afterlife & Journey of the Soul with Reb Simcha Raphael.**

Wednesday, March 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.

Wednesday, March 11, 6:30-8:30pm. **Folks with White Privilege Affinity Group Meeting.** Learn more on page 13.

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

Wednesday, March 11, 6:30-9pm. **Jews On Ohlone Land Monthly Meeting.** Learn more on page 9.

Friday, March 13 @ 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm. **Bereavement Spiritual Support Group – FULL.**

Friday, March 13, 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm. **Liturgically Traditional, Radically Inclusive Kabbalat Shabbat, Fireside Room.** 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.

Saturday, March 14, 9:30-11:00am. **3 Generation Chevurah.** Learn more on page 6.

Saturday, March 14, 10:30 am. **Shabbat Morning Service with Rabbi Dev and Beth Dickenson.** Join us for an enlivening shabbat morning of prayers, music, community, and an exploration of Parashat Ki Tisa. Kiddush sponsored by the Spiritual Life Practices Committee. (The SLPC is a liaison between the clergy and the community for questions pertaining to the spiritual life of Kehilla.) Fireside Room

Sunday, March 15, 10:00am-12:00pm. **Tikkun Ha-Nefesh (Repair of the Soul) Healing Racism, Unpacking White Privilege – Affinity Group.** Learn more on page 8.

Monday, March 16, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm. **Book Discussion Group – DATE CHANGE. ATTN: The**

*March Book Discussion Group has a date change from March 9th (Purim) to Mon., March 16th. Learn more on page 2.*

Tuesday, March 17, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm. **Essentials of Judaism.** Learn more on page 3.

Wednesday, March 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.

Thursday, March 19, 6:15 pm - 7:30 pm. **Greening Committee Meeting.** Emma Goldman room.

Friday, March 20, 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm. **Bereavement Spiritual Support Group – FULL.**

Friday, March 20, 7:30 pm. **Kabbalat Shabbat with Hazzan Shulamit, Julie Nesnansky, & Jen Miriam Altma.** 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.

Saturday, March 21, 10:00 am in the Sanctuary. **Shabbat Morning Service and Adult B'nei Mitzvah of Ali Canon and Nina Cohen.** Join Rabbi Dev, Hazzan Shulamit, Debbie Fier, and Ali and Nina for celebratory shabbat morning prayers, music and an exploration of Parashat Vayakhel-Pekudei. Kiddush following the service, sponsored by Ali and Nina's families in honor of this joyous occasion.

Saturday, March 21, 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.

Tuesday, March 24, 6:15 pm - 9:00 pm. **Board of Trustees Meeting.** (Dinner at 6:15) All members are welcome. Back Classroom (main floor, straight down the hall).

Wednesday, March 25 @ 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm. **Kehilla Sings!** Learn more on page 14.

Wednesday, March 25 @ 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm. **Homeless Action Initial Organizing Meeting.** Learn more on page 11.

Wednesday, March 26, 7:50 am. **Morning Meditation Sit, 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.

Friday, March 27, 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm. **Bereavement Spiritual Support Group – FULL.**

Saturday, March 28, 7pm. **Visioning Climate Justice.** Learn more on page 7.

Saturday, March 28, 10:30 am. **Family Shabbat Service with Rabbi Gray Myrseth and Beth Dickinson.** Join Rabbi Gray and Beth Dickinson for an engaging, musical service for people of all ages, exploring parashat Vayikra. Families especially encouraged to join in the fun! Please bring a veggie dish to share for kiddush lunch after services.

Sunday, March 29 @ 11:00 am - 1:00 pm. **Anti-Zionism at Kehilla: a Pot-luck Brunch and Discussion.** Learn more on page 14.

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

Senior Rabbi, Dev Noily RabbiDev@kehillasynagogue.org	X104		
Active Emeritus Rabbi, David J. Cooper Rabbidavid@kehillasynagogue.org		Youth Programs Coordinator, Natalie Boskin Natalie@kehillasynagogue.org	X107
Executive Director, Michael Saxe-Taller Michael@kehillasynagogue.org	x101	Bookkeeper, Molly Melamed Molly@kehillasynagogue.org	x102
Music Director, Hazzan Shulamit Wise Fairman Shulamit@kehillasynagogue.org	X105	Ruthie Levin, People of Color Organizer	X108
Founding Rabbi, Burt Jacobson 510- 283-5704 rabburt@icloud.com		Batya Gelfand, Development and Communications Associate	X103
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