

Kehilla's Committee, Teams, and Groups

Adult Education – Contact: R' SAM at rabbisam@kehillasynagogue.org

Conversion Program 2.0

Kehilla's Conversion Program is designed to support growth of learning and spiritual practice integrated in relationships – with peers, teachers, clergy, and our wider community. Participants spend a learning year involved with four components: learning (e.g., taking classes, studying with chevruta, etc.); peer support (a monthly cohort meeting); mentorship; and Kehilla (contributing to the wider community in some way). In the following year, people prepare for and do their conversion ceremony as they are ready (by mutual discernment).

Adult B'Mitzvah Program 2.0

Studying for and completing an adult b'mitzvah is a wonderful way to deepen one's Jewish education, practice, and sense of community. Participants begin with a learning year, during which they take classes and meet as a cohort each month. In the following year, the journey culminates with shared leadership at a Kehilla Shabbat morning service, in collaboration with Kehilla spiritual leaders.

Anti-Death Penalty Action Group – Contact: antidpacontact@kehillasynagogue.org

The Anti-Death Penalty Action Group doesn't hold meetings, but you can get on our email list to be informed about and take action on upcoming events, vigils, and news (see contact email above). Activities have included lobbying and petitioning, education, representation at conferences, hearings and rallies. Annually we support and fly our banner for the Fast & Vigil to Abolish the Death Penalty at the Supreme Court, a national educational outreach in Washington. The Kehilla Resolution Against the Death Penalty was adopted in 2000.

Art Gallery Committee – Contact: artgallerycontact@kehillasynagogue.org

A small congenial working group, the Art Committee planned and installed several solo and group exhibits each year, showcasing Kehilla members' artwork in the Fireside Room for both professional artists and those exhibiting for the first time. The committee also organized an artist's reception for each show. Currently inactive, the Art Gallery Committee now needs re-envisioning and new leadership so interested members can again share their work with the community. Former co-chairs Lynn Lazarus and Ruth Koch are available to advise in revitalizing the committee. Please consider this easy, fun and gratifying way to serve Kehilla.

Belonging & Allyship Racial Justice Initiative is a Kehilla-wide project to challenge white supremacy at Kehilla:

- So that Jews of Color and people of color experience belonging;
- To support white folx working to decenter whiteness at Kehilla and in the world;
- To work in BIPOC-led coalitions outside of Kehilla.

The following are subgroups of the Belonging and Allyship Racial Justice Initiative:

- **BIPOC Congress (formerly BIPOC Council)** – Contact: pocorganizer@kehillasynagogue.org
Serves as advising subgroup of Kehilla's staff/member-led DEI Team, join by invitation.

- **Community Educators Working Group** – Contact: cewgcontact@kehillasynagogue.org
Educates the Kehilla community (and themselves) about white supremacy behaviors and initiates and supports racial justice practices and events at and for Kehilla.
- **Sephardi/Mizrahi Group (inactive)** – Contact: sephmizcontact@kehillasynagogue.org.
- **White Folx Decentering Whiteness** – Contact: wfdwhitenesscontact@kehillasynagogue.org

White folks are enthusiastically invited to attend monthly online meetings of the **White Folx Decentering Whiteness** affinity group led by Penny Rosenwasser & Maria Lewis. The meeting dates change, but the time is always 6:30-8:30pm PT. Email us to get on the mailing list so you'll know when the next meeting is taking place (see contact email above). Meetings are also listed on the Kehilla calendar at least one month ahead.

Any folks who identify as white, we'd love to have you, whether you've ever been to these meetings before or not! We work on de-centering whiteness at Kehilla and in the world so that Kehilla is a more welcoming synagogue for people of color and so we can become more aware of our own racism in order to dismantle it. At our meetings, we share feelings, build skills through experiential exercises and discuss actions. We also discuss homework articles and videos, which are encouraged-but-not mandatory, to sharpen our understanding and analysis. These activities help us learn, grow, and build community together, in our work to uproot white supremacy.

- **Youth Education Working Group** – Contact: bayouthedcontact@kehillasynagogue.org

We are a group of parents and educators that came together to participate in the Arc of Change. We are working to transform the Kehilla School and B'Mitzvah Program to decenter whiteness and promote equity and belonging for all the children we serve. Currently, we are focusing on informing parents with children in Kehilla's youth programs about our work, integrating our group into Kehilla's existing decision-making structures, and supporting listening circles for parents of kids of color with connections to Kehilla to better understand their experiences around Jewish education and race. We are on hiatus for the summer, but will resume meeting virtually in the new school year, currently alternating first Mondays, 7:00–8:30 PM, and first Sundays, 6:00–7:30 PM.

Book Group – Contact: bookgroupcontact@kehillasynagogue.org

The Kehilla book group has lively, many-faceted discussions monthly via Zoom about all kinds of topics! All Kehilla members are welcome to join us on the second Monday of the month at 7 pm. This is a terrific way to get to know people more personally, as well as to explore Jewish culture through BOOKS.

Chavurah for a Free Palestine – Contact: chav4freepalestinecontact@kehillasynagogue.org

The Chavurah for a Free Palestine is a group of Kehilla members who oppose Zionism and support Palestinian liberation. We join people across the world in solidarity with Palestine and in support of the 2005 Palestinian call for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS). We offer resources and opportunities at Kehilla to engage in discussion, to further understanding of the impacts of Zionism, and to participate in Palestine solidarity activism. In collaboration with

local, national, and international groups, we participate in events, actions, and campaigns in support of Palestinian movements for freedom and justice.

[Chesed \[Lovingkindness\] Coordinating Committee](#) – Contact: chesed@kehillasynagogue.org
In Kehilla, we strive to treat each other with kindness and compassion every day. Sometimes an extra effort is called for. The Chesed Coordinating Committee connects people who have a short term need for food, rides, shopping or other assistance as a result of an injury, illness, birth, or other sudden life change, with the larger Kehilla community.

We encourage all members to read the Chesed Requests that come to you by email and consider the mitzvah of responding to requests. We also encourage you to reach out to our committee should you have a need that the community (see contact email above).

If you would like prayers said for you and wish to be included on the [Mi Shebeirach](#) list which is read at services, you can complete the [form](#) found on the Kehilla website for that purpose. The Chesed Committee tries to contact everyone who is on the Mi Shebeirach list to support their needs.

[Chevra Kadisha](#) – Contact: chevrakadcontact@kehillasynagogue.org
The Chevra Kadisha carries out the final Jewish end of life rituals with a Jewish Renewal perspective. We offer *Tahara* and *Shmira* to any Kehilla member or their family members. *Tahara* is the tradition of honoring the deceased by lovingly washing them followed by the respectful preparation of them for their final resting place.

The Chevra Kadisha organizes *Shmira* on behalf of the deceased and their family. *Shmira* is the tradition of guarding the deceased by taking turns sitting in the vicinity of the body between death and burial (or cremation). All community members can volunteer to carry out this meaningful ritual. Please contact us (see email contact above) if you are interested in volunteering.

We also educate the Kehilla community about death, mourning, and dying. These have included presentations on local cemeteries, traditional Jewish death practices, and ethical wills; we wrote and printed a booklet for all Kehilla members on how to prepare for death. The Chevra Kadisha is open to all Kehilla members.

[Committee Connection](#) – Contact: newseditors@kehillasynagogue.org

We produce a [bimonthly online newspaper](#) covering Kehilla's many member-led social justice committees, community care crews, and affinity groups. Meetings are virtually, as needed.

Doing *Committee Connection* work does not need to be a huge obligation, or even an ongoing commitment. Maybe you have an idea for one article or photo spread, even though it's not something you have time to pull off. Or perhaps you have a response to an article that you'd like to share with the congregation. Email us (see contact email above) with your concept or letter to the editor!

Our modest little online newspaper only publishes an issue every other month. For a light, ongoing commitment: if you're a web designer, you could be the person we consult when we get

stumped by WordPress. It could be that you're a web or graphic designer and would like to be the one to double-check our style/settings consistency before the newspaper "goes to press." Or maybe you're a fact checker or copy editor who wants to join our team. Or perhaps you have another idea! Hit us up.

Disability Justice Committee – Contact: dj-contact@kehillasynagogue.org

The DJC promotes accessibility, recognition, and belonging for disabled people at Kehilla by supporting disabled Kehillans, addressing inaccessibility, and integrating disability justice principles into Kehilla practices. We encourage anyone who is interested to reach out to us (see email contact above) regardless of whether you identify specifically as disabled or if you are already familiar with Disability Justice.

Economic Justice Committee – Contact: econjustcontact@kehillasynagogue.org

The Economic Justice Committee acts on the Jewish value of Tikkun Olam to repair some of what is morally broken around us.

We ally with other faith-based and community organizations doing anti-racist and anti-poverty work in Alameda County. We are currently focused on the culture of cruelty within Santa Rita Jail where conditions are horrific and include scores of unexplained deaths and suicides, and unacceptable, inadequate treatment incarcerated people, of whom approximately 60% of have a mental illness. Overall, we aim to reform the criminal legal system by reducing the number of people who end up in jail, and to reform law enforcement locally and within California.

Our work has included moving, spiritual rallies to call attention to egregious conditions, advocating with governing entities such as the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, and doing intense electoral work in this and other areas of economic justice.

Now is the time to add your voice to this urgent work. Ask to be on the Friends of the EJC listserv to work with us on letters, petitions, emails, phone calls, or direct action. Or, join the EJC. We meet (currently by Zoom) the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30pm for a "virtual potluck" then hold our meeting from 7 to 8:30pm. We welcome everyone and would particularly like more young people and people of color to join us.

Face to Face – Contact: f2fjprepcontact@kehillasynagogue.org

Face-to-Face is a Jewish-Palestinian Reparations Alliance. Inspired by Rabbi Burt, Kehilla's visionary founding rabbi, Kehilla continues to develop our solidarity with the people of the Palestinian village Umm al-Khair located in the South Hebron Hills as we search for Israelis with which to partner. Over the past year, we have met (remotely) with village leaders; raised funds; co-sponsored educational programs with the village; and shared news. Our meetings are usually the 2nd Sunday at 10am (when we hear directly about life at Umm al-Khair) and the 4th Sunday of the month at 6pm.

Faith Trio Committee – Contact: faithtriocontact@kehillasynagogue.org

We engage in interfaith dialogue, coordinate events and activities with the Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California (ICCNC) and Montclair Presbyterian Church, and volunteer at food pantry every Wednesday morning at the ICCNC. We meet virtually on the second Tuesdays of each month from 5 to 6:30pm.

Generosity Committee – Contact: generosity@kehillasynagogue.org

The Generosity Committee researches and creates sources of additional income beyond dues for Kehilla through fundraising events, donor outreach, and other strategies.

[Greening Committee](#) – Contact: greeningcontact@kehillasynagogue.org

We are not currently meeting, but you can get on its email list serve to stay informed of actions you can take to address environmental issues with focus on combating global warming.

[Homeless Action Committee](#) – Contact: homelessaction@kehillasynagogue.org

In conjunction with [Love and Justice in the Streets](#), and inspired by Kehilla activist Talya Husbands-Hankin, the Homeless Action Committee answers the call that recurs in the Torah and the Prophets to perform deeds of chesed (loving kindness) in our community. We welcome other congregants to join us as we assist the unsheltered community.

We witness at encampment sweeps, engage in local policy advocacy, educate our fellow congregants and the larger community, and gather donations to meet the need on the streets. We forge relationships with the unhoused community and with relevant agencies and volunteer groups to maximize our impact. Homelessness is a class and racial justice issue. This work is ever more pressing as poverty and economic inequality have increased during the pandemic.

You can help!

- Donate rain gear, warm clothing, and bedding to the [Kehilla Homeless Depot](#).
- Learn about local policy and help document encampment sweeps.
- Support [Love and Justice in the Streets](#) with a cash donation.

We meet on Zoom twice per month, at 3:30pm on the first and third Wednesdays of the month.

[Immigration Committee](#) – Contact:

immigrationcommitteechairs@kehillacommunitysynagogue.org

Members are involved in political advocacy, direct service and education. We share opportunities to get involved in immigration justice events and actions at Kehilla and in the wider community through an email list. Current activities include:

- Accompaniment and Housing: The committee coordinates teams of volunteers and housing hosts to provide practical assistance, welcome and shelter to newly arrived immigrants.
- Sanctuary: Volunteers assist with meals, errands, laundry, visits and other support for immigrants being hosted in our guest suite at Kehilla.
- Courtroom Accompaniment: Committee members attend ICE check-ins, bond hearings and immigration court hearings to provide community support for those making their way through the immigration court system. Currently, some opportunities for courtroom accompaniment are happening via Zoom, and others are in person.
- Political Organizing: Our political work currently focuses on fighting for just closure of jails, prisons and ICE detention centers with reinvestment of resources in our communities and ending transfers between these facilities.

[Kehilla Greeters \(Volunteer / Avodah Opportunity\)](#) – Contact:

volunteers@kehillasynagogue.org

Are you looking for a way to help your community? Then consider signing up to be a Kehilla Greeter! We need your help so we can continue to offer in-person events and services in a way

that promotes safety and accessibility. With our training and guidance, you will help to welcome folk while implementing our health and safety protocols to ensure a smooth service while minimizing COVID risks. Signing up to volunteer is easy (and counts towards your Avodah hours). Thanks for your help!

Men's Group – Contact: mensgroupcontact@kehillasynagogue.org

An informal group of Kehilla men have been coming together on Zoom as a monthly men's group on a mid-week evening. A major focus has been creating relatively unstructured intimate space for sharing and listening. Often, we have a special topic for the evening, which is sometimes announced in advance by the leader of the evening. We welcome participation from Kehilla men who would be interested in checking out the group.

Meditation Group – Contact: No email available. See the website or Kehilla Weekly for details. Kehilla's meditation group meets online on Wednesday and Friday mornings. Rabbi Dev usually opens the session at 7:55am with a short torah commentary. Then we meditate for thirty minutes, ending with a chant, Modeh Ani, a prayer of gratitude. People name those they've lost, and we recite the mourner's kaddish. After that, people share about their loved ones or their grieving process. Then announcements. The supportive group welcomes all to come for all or part, and join or leave at any time. You may attend regularly or just for a specific loss.

The group, which started as a small in-person group meeting at the synagogue once a week, expanded and evolved during the pandemic. It has become even more supportive, especially for those who are grieving. Various group members filled in for Rabbi Dev during their sabbatical and now various different people take turns leading the sessions a couple of times a month. The group is an opportunity for those who wish to meditate with a group and for some to find support for grief.

Join by following the instructions in each Kehilla Weekly, 7:50-9am, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Middle East Peace Committee – Contact: middleeastchair@kehillasynagogue.org

The Middle East Peace Committee advocates for justice, freedom and equal rights for all people living in Israel/Palestine. We strive to increase understanding of the reality of Israel/Palestine for both Kehilla and the wider community. We mobilize opposition to the Israeli Occupation, the siege of Gaza and the recent pogroms. We offer a vision that holds all sides with compassion while at the same time making it clear "there is no democracy with occupation." For more details about our views please read our "Kehilla's Statement of Values on Israel/Palestine," approved by the Kehilla Congregation in 2016, and our "[Statement Against Annexation of the West Bank, approved by the Board May 2020](#)". You are welcome to come to our meetings to find out what we're doing. We usually meet on the first Tuesday of the month, from 7:30-9pm on Zoom.

Sacred Land Committee – Contact: infoslc@kehillasynagogue.org

Our vision is to bring Huichin, the unceded land of the Lisjan Ohlone people, on which Kehilla rests, into harmony with Indigenous and Jewish values. We landscape the outside spaces to reflect the values of an ecosystem connected and integrated with the land and its spirit. If you enjoy gardening with a vision of environmental integrity, we invite you to join us. We meet on Zoom the 1st Sunday of each month for an hour at 9:30am and at Kehilla for gardening the 3rd Friday of every month from 2-4pm.