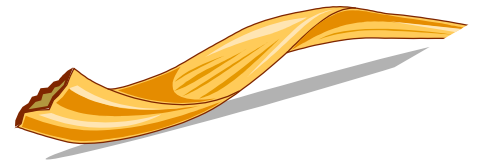




מרבח תורה • מרבח חיים  
**TEMPLE BETH HILLEL**  
 TORAH • LIFE • COMMUNITY

# The Shofar



TEMPLE BETH HILLEL, RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA

Volume 18, Issue 3, December 2011. Kislev-Tevet 5772

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## Light

Hanukkah comes at the darkest time of the year, during the winter solstice, and celebrates light when the nights are long and the days are cold. When the year is darkest we need light the most and Judaism teaches us about many different kinds of light, each with its own quality and value.

The first light is the primordial light mentioned in Genesis 1:3 when God said, "Let there be light." Light is the first thing God creates at the very beginning of Creation. This light is created before the sun or any stars. It is a special light that needs no source. Our sage taught, in *Bereshit Raba*, that this light was called *Ohr Ha Ganuz* or the hidden light. This light gave people the ability to see the entire universe and across all space and time at once. It was hidden away because in the wrong hands it could be used for evil rather than good. It is said that Moses had access to this light which enabled him to see the future and that King David did as well, when he wrote in Psalm 104:3, "He [God] wrapped Himself in light like a garment, and spread out the heavens like a curtain." For the rest of humanity the light is hidden away and saved only for the righteous as we sing on Kol Nidrei, "*Or zaruah l'tzadik...*, Light is sown for the righteous." Rav Kook, the first Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Israel (1865-1935), wrote that this primordial light was actually the unifying force of creation enabling the different basic elements of creation to relate to one another and develop into more and more complex forms of organization.

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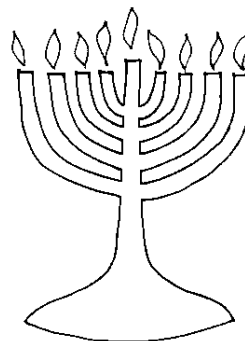


Another type of light is *ohr l'goyim*, “a light to the nations.” Isaiah first uses this term when he shares God’s promise of restoring the Jewish people to their land after their exile in Babylon. The Jewish people were commanded to build a society that would protect the weak, support the poor, and provide justice for every person. It is a description of the Jewish messianic mission to help all human beings live lives of maximum dignity.

Yet another kind of light is the way each of us can light up the world. Proverbs 20:27 says, “The soul of man is the candle of God.” The human spirit can be a candle. The way we live our lives and the actions we take can illuminate the lives of those around us. When we perform acts of loving-kindness and help people in need we burn with a pure light that can inspire others, thus kindling their inner light and increasing the brightness in the world. This verse from Proverbs suggests that the way we live our lives can even help illuminate the heavens. Judaism teaches that God and the Jewish people are in a relationship. We need God to provide morality and meaning. God needs us to create a world that will make God’s promise of universal justice a reality.

Hanukkah brings these different kinds of light together. The victory of the Maccabees over the Greeks, the weak over the strong, reminds us of the covenant between the Jewish people and God. According to tradition, it was the Maccabees’ commitment to Torah, to God’s way, that enabled them to prevail. Their bravery created new light in a dark time for the Jewish people and their actions inspired others to recommit to Judaism. When the battle was won and the Temple liberated and purified, the Maccabees’ faith inspired them to relight the *Ner Tamid*, the Eternal Light, even though they knew they only had enough pure oil to burn for one day. How did that miracle occur, that the *Ner Tamid* burned for seven days more until enough oil was purified for the light to continue burning? Perhaps God provided them with a tiny bit of the *Or Ha Ganuz*, the primordial first light from the beginning of Creation that needs no source; the light that is hidden away and shown to the righteous as a reward. We will never know. But we do remember all these different kinds of light when we light the light

the *hanukiah* for eight nights. December is the darkest time of the year. Hanukkah reminds us that we must bring more light to the world.



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Laura Taub

## from Our President

As we approach the midpoint of our administrative year, I have been looking back at the past six months and toward the rest of the year. We have been busy!

For the **Membership Committee**, Larry Fox took charge of our booths to help us reach a large audience at the ***El Cerrito Fourth of July celebration*** and the ***Solano Stroll***. At our recent well-attended ***welcome service***, we introduced ***five new member families***. At this point our congregation includes 88 members, with the possibility of a few more.

The **Caring Community**, under the guidance of Marilyn Hertzberg, has been ***cooking meals***, bringing them to our members in need, and ***visiting*** those who are ill or at home. Marilyn and Michele Waxman have also handled ***meals of condolence*** and shiva onegs. Alan Marks and Marilyn have been convening ***Saturday minchah services*** at the home of Evelyn and Ken Hooker which have been a wonderful experience for all attending. Norm Goldwyn established ***streaming video*** for the High Holy Day services to bring them to those who were unable to attend. All of these efforts to support our members have been greatly appreciated.

Fran Welstand helps our congregants with ***Tel Shalom grave sites***, and Sharon Mittleman, Bobbi Nadler and Louise Snitz sit on the **Tel Shalom Board**.

Our moving and inspirational ***High Holy Day services***, conducted by Rabbi Dean Kertesz and Cantor Howard Cohen were administered by the **Ritual Committee**, headed by Jane Durango, which also arranged for a ***Shabbat morning service***. In addition to our regularly scheduled Friday evening services, we celebrated ***Sukkot*** and ***Simchat Torah***. Sheri Tattenham makes sure we have delicious ***onegs*** for all of our regular services.

Malka Helfman has taken on the responsibilities of ***Religious School Head Teacher***. She has reinvigorated the curriculum, updated the Religious School Handbook, and provided additional resources for teachers, particularly online resources. Larry Fox, on behalf of the **Religious School Committee**, oversaw a ***work party*** to clean and spruce up the Religious School and the Temple, and Norm

Goldwyn and Larry set up a ***wireless network and large screen monitor*** in the Religious School building.

Malka has organized a ***Religious School Open House***, a ***Rosh Hashanah seder*** and a ***field trip to the Oakland Zoo***. At our welcome service, the Religious School students presented a ***dramatization*** of the week's parshah. We welcomed ***five new Religious School students***, plus Mazel Tot students.

Four of our young members have become ***b'nai mitzvah*** this fall. Several of our post-b'nai mitzvah students are attending **Midrasha**, and Andre Moskowitz is serving on the **Midrasha Board**.

Rabbi Dean has resumed his ***Adult Education series on the Prophets***, and ***Torah Study*** continues on Saturday mornings.

We have enjoyed ***Game Nights***, with pizza made by David Kline, and a wonderful ***Evening of Wine, Cheese and Music*** conceived and produced by Renee Powell.

Jay Weidenfeld is laying the groundwork for a ***TBH trip to Israel***; contact him right away if you are interested.

Social Action has been a major focus. It was the topic of the **Board Retreat**, and the **Social Action Committee**, chaired by Jeff Romm, has undertaken two ***bagel brunches***. Some members attended a URJ workshop and conferred with a URJ representative. The consensus at this point is that our members want to concentrate on ***hunger, environmental, and education issues***. Josh Genser is investigating a community supported agriculture program. Howard Cohen is learning about how we can support nutrition in the schools. Jane Kaasa is following up with the Jewish Coalition for Literacy. Come to the next bagel brunch and share your ideas.

We are maintaining our involvement with **GRIP**. Our High Holy Day Appeal project to ***refurbish the teen room***, spearheaded by Josh Genser, was a great success. Jane Kaasa gets us together every month to prepare and serve ***lunch*** at the **Souper Center**, and Neoma Kenwood and



Selma Goldberg are leading members in cooking *dinners for the Family Housing Program* about once a month.

We participated in the **GRIP Harmony Walk**, and Hallie Friedman is looking into our helping at **GRIP on Christmas Day**. We also continue to *collect food* for the **Richmond Emergency Food Pantry** year -round.

Michael Nye has volunteered to be our representative to the **Jewish Community Relations Council**. We joined in the JCRC-sponsored *Hunger Banquet*, and Alan Marks organized a JCRC-sponsored *Jewish-Muslim* group to cook and serve a *dinner at GRIP*.

The **Marketing Committee**, chaired by Betty Bleicher and Wendy Roth, has been getting the word out about our activities. Wendy has launched a new, improved *e-mail list serve*, managed our *web site*, and published the *weekly e-mail update* written by Rabbi Dean and edited by Roberta Alexander. Audrey Berger has maintained contact with the local *newspapers*. And Barbara Weidenfeld has brought us the *Shofar* every month.

David Brown is at the helm of the **Buildings and Grounds and Security Committees**, ensuring that our facility is in good shape and watching out for our safety. Scott Wexelberg, with the help of Larry Fox, has installed beautiful *lighting for our sign* and is in the process of *lighting the parking lot*. Juli Goldwyn plants and beautifies our grounds.

Josh Genser, Dana Meyer, and Marc Teitelbaum are dealing with some of our administrative issues

Looking ahead –

Sunday, December 11 is the *Latke Party*, under the auspices of Doug Freifeld. Doug and the kitchen crew will again be frying up delicious latkes. Renee Powell has seen to it that the *artisans* will be returning with their handmade treasures. Betty Bleicher will open the *gift shop*. The *Religious School students*, directed by Malka Helfman, will *perform* at noon, and Elisabeth Miller is taking care of *crafts* for the children afterward. Save the date – a good time is always had by all.

The next Friday night service, December 16, will also be looking forward to Hanukkah. Young and old are encouraged to bring and *light* their *Hanukkiahs* to shed light as the days grow darker.

As we move toward spring, Kieran Kemp will become a bar

mitzvah on Saturday, January 14, and we will celebrate Tu b'Shevat with a seder on Sunday, February 5.

Our next big event is the *Purim carnival* and *silent auction* on Sunday, March 4. It is not too early to begin preparations, especially for the auction. Please contact me if you can help.

We have a *Shabbat morning service* scheduled for March 31; the *Temple Seder* is Saturday, April 7; and the *Yom Hashoah service* is Wednesday, April 18. Our *Yom Haatzmaut* celebration is Sunday, April 22.

We are planning an *alumni service* featuring cheesecake in honor of Shavuot on Friday, June 1, and an *ice cream social* on Sunday, June 3, the last day of Religious School.

The *General Membership Meeting and barbeque* is on Sunday, June 10, and Josh Genser is again extending an invitation for a *Men's Weekend*, June 22-24.

Thanks to all who have contributed to the success of our programs. We hope to see everyone at our upcoming events. If you have any other ideas for activities you would like, please let me know.

### Easy ways to support Temple Beth Hillel without spending any extra money.

Please sign on to eScript and register to support TBH. If you shop at Safeway, a percentage of your spending will be donated to Temple Beth Hillel. If you register your credit cards a percentage of what you spend at certain vendors will donate money to TBH.  
Go to: <http://www.escrip.com>

Also, don't forget about: [www.OneCause.com](http://www.OneCause.com). If you shop on line, go to OneCause.com and assign TBH as your charity of choice. Then whenever you shop on line go first to OneCause.com and then through that web site, find the store you want to shop in. A percentage of your bill will be donated to TBH.

And for those of you who shop at Lucky's or Food Maxx: Pick up your S.H.A.R.E.S. card at the Temple and give it to the cashier when you shop. Easy -- no registration, no tracking of personal information. It's all easy and free and a great way to support Temple Beth Hillel in Richmond!

Please pass this message on to your friends and family members so they can chose to support TBH as well.



## *Anniversaries:*

Gary & Helene Class	12/21
Steve & Fran Welstand	12/21
Marc & Naura Teitelbaum	12/29
Neil & Roxann Zarchin	12/31

## *Birthdays:*

Laura Taub	12/3	
James Freeman	12/5	
Kieran Kemp	12/5	13th birthday
Ellen Stephens	12/7	
Sidney Irving Feurst	12/8	
Marc Teitelbaum	12/10	
Kyle Hunt	12/11	14th birthday
Miguel Furman	12/23	
Sheri Tattenham	12/26	
Debra Lurie	12/27	
Holvis Delgadillo	12/28	

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD  
Are you looking for services? Housing? Employment?  
Or do you have these available?

Do you have something to buy, sell, rent, exchange?  
This is your space to contact members of our  
community.

Please send your notices to Louise Snitz.

### **Experienced Hebrew teacher And Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutor for ALL ages**

My services include:

- Teaching correct Hebrew reading and diction
- Teaching Biblical and modern Hebrew grammar and syntax
- Teaching and practicing spoken Hebrew
- Teaching tropes for Torah and Haftarah portions
- Preparing audio files for each Aliah and Haftarah chanting
- Teaching pre and post Haftarah blessings
- Coaching students with Hebrew interpretations and commentary on central themes of the Torah and Haftarah portions.

I have a flexible schedule and I offer my services for a reasonable fee.

References are available upon request.

Malka Helfman

[malkahelf@yahoo.com](mailto:malkahelf@yahoo.com)

(510) 230 4933

## *Welcome New Members:*

Greg Tananbaum and Melanie Dixon, and their daughters Sydney and Kaia.

Jeffrey and Kumi Hadler, and their daughters Maia and Noe.

### **URJ Biennial, Dec. 14-18 In Washington, D.C.**

Due to record-breaking attendance, registration for the 2011 URJ Biennial has had to close for the first time in Biennial history.

But plenary sessions and forums will be available for viewing via webcast or on cable TV.

For more information, see the URJ weekly briefing.

<http://urj.org/connect/enews/jta/>



# *Yahrzeits*

*Zichronah livrachah*



Maurice Stern, Father of Geri Stern	12/1
William Hardy, Brother of Sherbie Aberle	12/3
Ruby Dulberg, Mother of Bernie Dulberg	12/5
Harry Guss, Grandfather of Saralynn & Helen Nusbaum	12/6
Joseph Morris Leib, Father of Alice Chanowitz	12/6
Joel Paladino, Beloved member of our Congregation	12/7
Morris Rosenberg, Beloved member of our Congregation	12/7
Seymour Freifeld, Father of Doug Freifeld	12/9
Rosita Levy, Beloved member of our Congregation	12/10
Rudolph Kamerling, Father of June Kamerling	12/12
Thomas Waxman, Father of Arny Waxman	12/12
Annie Kiefer, Mother of Harry Kiefer	12/13
Blanche Sagle, Mother of Allan Sagle	12/14
Sybil Creper, Cousin of Roberta Alexander	12/15
Fannie Bloom, Beloved member of our Congregation	12/16
Arnold Neiderbach, Husband of Janet Neiderbach	12/16
Harry Dulberg, Father of Bernie Dulberg	12/17
Gabriel P. Ehrmann, Beloved member of our Congregation	12/18
Rubin Leben, Grandfather of Barbara Weidenfeld	12/18
Sam A. Manger, Father of Irene Morgan	12/18
Shirley Gerry, Mother of Eric Husby-Gerry	12/19
Alexander R. Weiss, beloved Father of William Weiss	12/23
Yetta Weiss, beloved Mother of William Weiss	12/24
Sara Katz, Grandmother of Hallie Friedman	12/26
James Osburn, Father of David Osburn	12/26
David Nelson, Father of Carl Nelson	12/27
David Adelman, Father of Carol Katz	12/28
Mori Genser- Pagle, Daughter of Clara-Rae Genser, Sister of Josh Genser	12/28
John Maberry, Beloved member of our Congregation	12/29
Rose Marcia Greenberg, Aunt of Barbara Weidenfeld	12/31



After some questioning by the Gestapo at the prison in Bonn, I landed in a prison in Coblenz. Because of my knowledge of German, I was assigned a job in the kitchen where I was given a hero's welcome by the former Communist inmates that were imprisoned in the jail for many years who wanted to know everything about the Soviet Union, and their heroes Lenin & Stalin.

One man brought over a sack with potatoes for me to peel, and laughingly told me to take my time. "There will be enough help," he said. These men wanted to learn everything about the Russian people: about its school system, its rivers and mountains, the cities, villages, and about the industrial developments in the Soviet Union. They were curious about the living standard. The men listened with keen interest in their eyes as I told them about the function of the political system. The discussion stopped only when a guard entered the kitchen.

The huge kitchen was preparing meals for the prison inmates, and also for the prison officials. The kitchen staff took advantage of their positions by making all kind of snacks, special dishes, and cakes for themselves. A guard would return me in to my cell at the end of the day, and in the morning he would take me again to the kitchen.

I thought if I had to spend the rest of the war in this prison, it certainly wouldn't be a hardship. I was even able to help my fellow prisoner, Pietro, by bringing him special food treats. All this time, I wasn't questioned or interrogated, and little by little I turned less anxious and worried about being detected by the Gestapo. I made a number of friends among the German crew. They certainly were not criminals. I found these people to be respectful, and intelligent.

All this tranquility ended one morning when a jail guard entered the cell, and ordered me to grab my belongings. A uniformed policeman waited for me. He escorted me to a heavily guarded transport truck, and we were soon on our way. The truck rolled out through the prison gates, passed on the busy streets of Koblenz, and continued along a tree lined road alongside the Rhein. Terraces planted with grapes boarded the road and peasants hunched over the vines were busily weeding the young plants. Old castles were also visible in the distance. A light breeze caressed the gentle waves of the Rhein as the warm rays of the sun reflected on the water of the river.

When I was a young boy, I dreamed of taking a trip to anywhere. At the age of sixteen I finally took my first train trip, when I joined the Financial-Economic technicum in Lvov September 1940. I was very excited about the train journey. Little did I know then that several years later I

would be traveling all over Poland and Germany, including this ride along the Rhein. As we rode along, I thought much about the broad and complicated question of being Jewish. Thinkers, historians, and philosophers had been debating the so-called "Jewish Question" for centuries. Whether we were a people, a nation, a race, or a religious minority. Or, does it even matter. Jews have been persecuted by many different nations for two thousand years. They have been hunted by the crusaders. They have been driven out from countries over, and over again. They have been held in ghettos for centuries. Chased and murdered in various pogroms. Throughout all their sufferings, Jews had clung to their religion, customs and religion.

Should I return to my Jewish background, if I survive this war? I returned to reality, when a young man sitting next in the truck asked me in Polish, why I was arrested. "I escaped from my job". I responded. "And why are you here"? I asked him. "Oh, I played around with a German girl" he answered.

After a couple hours we arrived at a camp. The camp was completely fenced in with double rows of barbed wire. There were signs on the road leading to the camp warning motorists of minimum speed of one hundred kilometers an hour. The truck entered through a barbed wire gate, coming to a stop in front of the administration building. A number of fierce looking SS soldiers with shepherd dogs were waiting for us. There were also some capos circling. "Aussteigen, aussteigen"! They shouted. Anyone that didn't move fast enough was beaten mercilessly. We were quickly lined up. SS soldiers as well as capos watched us. Some threw questions at us.

"You are now in custody of SS Sonder Commando Lager". A high ranking SS Officer announced. "You miserable bums, You will work hard, obey all orders, and don't even think about escaping".

TO BE CONTINUED



# NOTES FROM THE BOARD

November 9, 2011

## Upcoming Events

- **AIPAC event**, December 5. Contact Howard Cohen.
- **Latke Party**, December 11.
- **Shabbat service with Hanukkiah lighting**, December 16

## Welcome New Members

- **Greg Tananbaum** and **Melanie Dixon**, and their daughters **Sydney** and **Kaia**.
- **Jeffrey** and **Kumi Hadler**, and their daughters **Maia** and **Noe**.

## Programs

- Plans are in place for a great **Latke party** on December 11. We will have artisans selling their creations; delicious latkes; a play by the Religious School students; crafts for the children; and the gift shop will be open for that special Hanukkah gift. Come and enjoy. If you can help, contact Doug Freifeld.
- Jay Weidenfeld is working on organizing a **Temple trip to Israel** in June with Rabbi Dean. Contact him if you would like to join us.

## Social Action

- Our efforts creating the **GRIP Teen Room** were recognized in an article in the *West County Times* and a nice thank-you card from the residents. If you have not yet sent in your pledge for the High Holy Day appeal, please do so.
- Several members participated in the **Harmony Walk**, to raise money for **GRIP**. If you have not yet sent in your pledges, please send them to the walker you sponsored.
- Our members, under the leadership of Neoma Kenwood and Selma Goldberg, are preparing **dinners for GRIP**. The first ones are scheduled for November 20 and December 18.



I make my living tidying up other people's writing. But I always have one or two writing projects of my own going on, too.

Right now I'm working with a partner on a work of fiction geared to adolescents. This is new territory for both of us, so it is intellectually challenging. We are still working on our first draft, and I have learned to live with the main characters in my head all the time, even when I'm far from a keyboard.

Most days, when I sit down to write, I pick up from wherever the last paragraph left off. It's almost as if I have a little camera in my head: I see the next scene unrolling and that's what I write.

Until we get to the sex stuff. The plot requires it, and I am trying to be professional here. But it's a hard sell.

The camera grinds to a halt and the fingers curve above the keyboard, but ... nothing happens.

I have noticed this writing interruptus thing before, on past fiction projects. I have read interviews with other writers who have the same problem, so I guess I'm in good company.

Not that it comforts me all that much. I miss my customary fluency. Writing two words, then agonizing for 15 minutes, is not what I signed up for.

People think writing a sex scene is titillating. And maybe for some people it is. For me, it is about the least erotic thing you can think of.

I read over the few lines I have struggled to produce. I see that I've used the word "excited" in three consecutive sentences.

Sigh.

I redo one of the lines and substitute "trembling." I sit for 15 minutes. I rewrite another sentence and add "panting." I sit for 15 minutes. I make a note to use "throbbing" the next time.

By this time I am pulling my hair out in clumps. I doubt if my characters are having a good time. I'm certainly not.

One of the complications of writing sex scenes is determining how explicit you want—or need—to be.

Some publishers have guidelines on this sort of thing. I once wrote for one where each 5,000-word story had one strong sex scene in which no body parts below the waist were named, ala Barbie and Ken. Well, to be strictly accurate, men were permitted a sex organ as long as it was referred to as "his manhood."

In case you thought of "manhood" as a complex amalgam of beliefs, hormones, history and anatomy, think again. Apparently some committee decided it was a less scary word than penis.

Each time I struggled through one of these contortionist exercises, I thought of a writing duo based in New Jersey who reported that, although they normally worked apart, the only way to get their sex scenes done was to get together with a bottle of wine. Their scenes got written; there was no word about any hangovers.

In my current project, it's up to us. We can say what we like. So the question is, what do we like? How explicit do we wish to be? Our characters are teenagers; how would they describe what happens? I'm pretty sure they aren't going to talk about "throbbing manhood," but are they going to use the words they learned in school or the slangy, often four-letter kind?

Maybe I need to do a little research and find out the appropriate slang.

My own sense is that an occasional four-letter word provides emphasis, but too much is a cheap trick that coarsens the story. It's not a road I want to go down. But I don't want to seem too clinical either. This is not a primer on venereal disease.

I did a little web search and learned, no surprise, that there are people selling books on how to write sex scenes. I also learned these "sexperts" advise avoiding any descriptions involving fluids as well as the expression "erect member." You can imagine my joy at realizing I had successfully avoided both pitfalls.

My writing partner, when I kvetched about this problem, suggested I just push on through, as it were, and we'll make it better in the next draft. I can't decide if he's being sensible or cowardly.

I remember reading years ago about writers aiming scripts at the Star Trek series. Somewhere in the script would be a big hole, which the writer would fill in with "tech," "tech," "tech" and "tech." The idea was that if the producers liked the story, some scientifically-minded type would fill in with stuff about dilithium crystals or the space-time continuum.

If only I had that option! I'd have a string of paragraphs that said "sex," "sex," "sex" and "sex," and hope that someone more fluent than I would fill in the necessary gyrations.

## **Special Thanks To**

**Jane Durango, Doug Freifeld, Carl Nelson,  
Jeff Romm, and Laura Taub**

for participating in the GRIP Harmony Walk  
and all those who sponsored them with donations  
to GRIP.

•

**Renee Powell** for conceiving and organizing  
An Evening of Wine, Cheese and Music,  
and **Audrey Berger, Sam Chen, Marcia  
Delgadillo, Doug and Meg Freifeld, Hallie  
Friedman, Norm Goldwyn, Marilyn Hertzberg,  
Maggie Jacobs, Alan Marks, Dana Meyer,  
Linda Rose and Jim Montgomery, Sheri  
Tattenham and Stan Hazlak, Dave Van Hoy,  
and Barbara and Jay Weidenfeld**  
who helped or gave a generous wine donation.

•

**Marilyn Hertzberg** for bringing food to the  
members of our community who are ill.

•

For cooking for the Caring Community: **Marilyn  
Hertzberg** for organizing; **Jane Durango, Hallie  
Friedman, Selma Goldberg, Jane Kaasa** (and  
**Maurice** who waited patiently),  
**David Katzenellenbogen, Sharon Mittleman,  
Bobbi Nadler, Fran Welstand,  
and Barbara Weidenfeld**

•

**Larry Fox** for organizing the Welcome Service.

•

For helping to feed the hungry at the GRIP  
Souper Center: **Jane Kaasa** for organizing;  
**Adolph Kamil, Henry Linker, Sheri Tattenham,  
Barbara Weidenfeld,  
and Merilyn Wong.**

•

**Louise and Frank Snitz, Neil and Roxann  
Zarchin, and Deborah and Jim Koenig**  
for hosting delicious onegs.

•

**Alan Marks, Rachel Marks, Carl Nelson, and  
Jeff Romm**  
for preparing the JCRC-sponsored Jewish-  
Muslim dinner at GRIP

## **HELP WANTED**

Help at the Latke Party, December 11 – *Contact  
Doug Freifeld*

Cook and serve delicious latkes.

Help with children's crafts.

Help with the gift shop.

Shelve and/or process books for the Children's  
Library – *Contact Laura Taub*

Help with the Gift Shop – *Contact Laura Taub*

Help with the Silent Auction – *Contact Laura Taub*

Plan Adult Education programs – *Contact Laura  
Taub*

Sponsor an oneg to celebrate Shabbat – *Contact  
Sheri Tattenham.*

Help our members: The Caring Community needs  
cooks, drivers and visitors

– *Contact Marilyn Hertzberg*

Help prepare and serve GRIP dinners – *Contact  
Neoma Kenwood or Alan Marks*

Feed the hungry at the Souper Center – *Contact  
Jane Kaasa*

Help organize an educational or social program –  
*Contact Laura Taub*

Beautify our Temple by rehangng the holiday  
needlepoints – *Contact Louise Snitz*

## from Midrasha in Berkeley by Diane Bernbaum

It seems that I have finally taken down the sukkah and packed away the decorations and caught my breath from cooking and eating all those holiday meals and now the first semester of Midrasha is nearly over. How did that happen?

This has been a semester with a lot of wonderful new programming, and a lot of “firsts.” On our Berkeley campus here are a few: Because many of our teachers participated in a two-day training for retreat staff, we replaced ordinary classes on October 23 with a “Midrasha Extravaganza.” Students got to spend their morning screening the film “Jews and Baseball: An American Love Story,” and heard first hand about the subject from Midrasha alum Yashaiah Goldfarb who has worked in the Giants’ front office for 10 years. Other students chose to learn about Jewishness and Blackness in the music of Irving Berlin with musicologist Kimberly Gelbwasser. Midrasha faculty member Day Schildkret led a meditation session and also taught a class on Jews and Revolution. At the same time 8<sup>th</sup> graders spent the morning in a disabilities awareness workshop, listening to speakers talk first hand about their disabilities or those of people they work with, screening portions of the films “Perspectives” and “How Difficult Can this Be?” and seeing what traditional Jewish texts tell us about disabilities. Everyone left the morning really glad they had come.

Second, for the first time this year Midrasha in Berkeley is initiating a Havdalah outreach program to some of our partner synagogues where some of the Midrasha teens and staff bring the celebration of Havdalah to the religious school students and their parents. The idea was started by our colleague Devra Aarons at Contra Costa Midrasha. She thought that for many teens at Midrasha, their favorite part of the program is Havdalah on retreats and she wanted to bring some of that excitement to younger students at our partner synagogues so that religious school students would have a glimpse of what to look forward to at Midrasha. At the time of this writing we’ve had our first event (a smashing success) and have two others scheduled. If we haven’t come to your synagogue this year, reach out to us and ask us to come next semester.

The four Midrasha campuses have also tried some new innovative programming together. We realized last year that eighth graders may need a little bit of an orientation to our retreat program, so we have planned a wonderful “Tasty, Backwards Adventure: A Sneak-Peek at the Midrasha Retreats with Burritos, Blindfolds and The Beastie Boys.” Eighth graders from all four campuses will get to meet each other on the afternoon of December 11 (when the older Midrasha students are on a two -day retreat of their own) and experience the highlights of a Midrasha retreat, all in reverse order, as they travel together on a bus to a movable feast of sample Midrasha retreat activities. (I hate to tell you more and spoil the surprises we have in store for them.) Another thing the four campuses did together was to plan an afternoon at the Urban Adamah farm. You should have seen our kids making pesto from basil they harvested, using a bicycle-powered blender.

Planning all the details for these new programs has taken a lot of time, but it has also been very energizing. That’s what keeps the job of directing this great school so engaging. Each year is filled with new horizons, new programs to plan and new logistical challenges to solve. It keeps me young, I guess.

## TBH Social Action Committee

The Social Action Committee’s first general meeting achieved a broad consensus to focus on issues of food and hunger. This is an area in which the congregation already has many commitments that will now be understood in a more comprehensive frame. Several new initiatives have moved ahead since the second general meeting. Under the leadership of Cantor Howard we have begun to seek impact on nutritional barriers to learning in the Richmond schools. Cantor Howard has developed a highly productive collaboration between GRIP, school district officials and school principals, Urban Tilth, and area retailers to provide food to the families of needy children during holiday times when school food programs are in abeyance. This first year two primary schools - Nystrom and Verde - and 31 families have been selected by school principals. This is a pilot effort, but so far the signs are very positive.

Penny Norman has done a tremendous effort mobilizing donations of science learning games that will be included in family food boxes and also given directly to the schools. Penny’s efforts, combined with the food deliveries, create a program that may be called Food for Thought or Nourishing the Mind, or other suggestions you may have. We do need a simple name. These efforts also test a path that was of interest to many of the attendees of the first general meeting, a mixture of science education, literacy, and environmental justice. This is very promising.

Josh Genser is investigating possibilities of TBH as a site for distribution of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) vegetables to customers and to needy families. This is likely to move forward in several months.

We will begin posting weekly schedules of area events that are likely to interest members. Please keep an eye out for announcements about Pogo Park development, the development of a perennial garden along the Richmond Greenway, the rapidly expanding program of school gardens, and organization of the Richmond Food Security Council. Contributions of effort, experience and money are welcome.

For more information and/or updates contact Jeff Romm.



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THAT OUR FAMILY INVITES YOU  
TO SHARE OUR JOY  
AS

KIERAN JOSHUA

כ"ה

IS CALLED TO THE TORAH  
AS A BAR MITZVAH

19TH OF TEVET 5772  
SATURDAY, JANUARY 14, 2012  
AT TEN O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING

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RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA

KIDDUSH LUNCHEON FOLLOWING SERVICE

JANE KEMP

PLEASE REPLY BY DECEMBER 20, 2011  
KIERANSBARMITZVAH@GMAIL.COM

# December 2011

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<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Nov 2011</p> <table style="font-size: small; border-collapse: collapse; width: 100%;"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Jan 2012</p> <table style="font-size: small; border-collapse: collapse; width: 100%;"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td></tr> <tr><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> </div> </div>		S	M	T	W	T	F	S		1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30				S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31					1	2	3		Shabbat Potluck Dinner 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Shabbat Family Service 7:30 p.m. - 8:45 p.m.	Lay Leader Torah Study 10:00 a.m.
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*December 2011*  
*Kislev-Tevet 5772*



*Cantor Howard Cohen sings the National Anthem and Hatikvah at the AIPAC Membership Dinner 12/5/11*