



Temple Beth Hillel

Sunday Morning Bagel Brunch

November 8, 2015

10:15 a.m. - Noon

Are Our Children Jewish?

The Reform Jewish Movement and Patrilineal Descent

A Discussion Led by Dawn Kepler

According to traditional Jewish law, a person is a Jew if he or she is born to a Jewish mother (matrilineal) or converted to Judaism. However, in 1983, the Jewish Reform Movement broke with Orthodox and Conservative Jewish tradition and Jewish law—and officially declared that a child born of *one Jewish parent*—**mother or father**—is Jewish. This new patrilineal* descent resolution also went on to state that the child of an interfaith marriage is not *automatically Jewish*: the child must be raised *exclusively* as a Jew, receive a Jewish education, celebrate appropriate life cycle events, receive a Hebrew name and become a bar or bat mitzvah. The open question is: do we really expect all children from interfaith marriages to follow every one of these rules? For answers to this important question and more, join **Dawn Kepler** for an exploration of the patrilineal Jewish family today.

***Patrilineal:** based on the relationship to the father or descent through the male line; a Jewish father and non-Jewish mother.



Dawn Kepler, Director of Building Jewish Bridges: Outreach to Interfaith Couples and Families, has worked extensively providing support, ideas, and alternatives to interfaith and intercultural couples coming from diverse traditions and backgrounds. Through workshops, social events and couples counseling, *Building Jewish Bridges* helps interfaith couples identify their familial, spiritual, and communal goals in a warm, supportive environment. Dawn has chaired the Union of Reform Judaism's Interfaith Committee of the Pacific West, and has served on the Jewish Community Federation Endowment Fund of San Francisco, Marin, Sonoma Counties, the Peninsula Interfaith Advisory Committee, and The Planning Advisory Committee of interfaithfamily.com.

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801 Park Central (Hilltop exit off I-80)
Richmond, CA 94803
510.223.2560
www.tbhrichmond.org

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