



CONGREGATION
Beth Ami

Shofar

4676 MAYETTE AVENUE, SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA 95405

707-360-3000

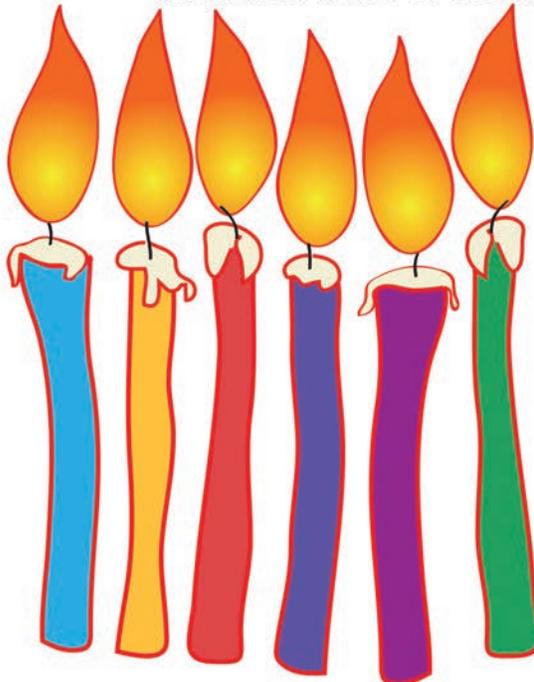
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2014

5775

The Beth Ami Board Hosts Family Chanukah Potluck, Latkes and Game Night!

**Sunday, December 21,
4:00-7:30 p.m. in the
CBA Social Hall**

Sixth Candle! bring your
Chanukah menorah (hand made
non-flammable ones are great!),
candles and dreidels



Songs, Stories and Games: Ping Pong, Twister, Bowling, Bean Bag Toss, and Dreidel, of course. Also Sorry, Apples to Apples, Scrabble, Chess, Bananagram, Sequence, Cards, Cribbage and more.

Potluck: Letters A-M desserts (parve or dairy); letters N-Z uncooked veggie salad, fruits, or veggie sticks

Potluck questions? There's a link to guidelines at BethAmiSR.org>food, or call or email Jeffrey or Janet, 707-539-6612, JSL2602@sonic.net.

Latkes and trimmings provided and cooked by the board!!!!

Cost: Free for CBA members, Nursery School and Religious School. Please bring 2 non-perishable food or toiletry donations for the Jewish Family Service Food Bank

**RSVP to Beth Ami Office by
Wednesday Dec. 17, or we won't
have enough latkes! 360-3000**

Congregation Beth Ami

4676 Mayette Avenue
Santa Rosa, CA 95405

Telephone 707/360-3000

Fax 707/360-3003

Email office@BethAmiSR.org

Website www.BethAmiSR.org



Please "like" us at

facebook.com/CongregationBethAmi

Office, Library, and Gift Shop Hours

Mon.–Thurs. 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Fri. 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

Mission Statement

Congregation Beth Ami enriches our lives, transforms our hearts, helps heal the world and sustains our Jewish heritage. We are deeply rooted in Jewish tradition and welcome all to our community through celebration, learning, education, and prayer.

Personnel

Rabbi Mordecai Miller

314-308-3672

rabbi@bethamir.org

Carolyn Metz, Executive Director

707-360-3011

execdirec@bethamir.org

Elizabeth Jarlsberg,

Office Manager

707-360-3000

office@bethamir.org

Diane Lennox, Bookkeeper

bookkeeper@bethamir.org

Jenny Levine-Smith

Nursery School Director

707-360-3030

ns@bethamir.org

Mandi Emery-Flynn, NS Assistant

707-360-3030

ns@bethamir.org

Rick Concoff, JCC Teen Program

707-823-3916

[rickc@jccsoco.org](mailto:rnick@jccsoco.org)

Ben and Tara Winkler,

Shofar Newsletter

641-451-7076

newsletter@bethamir.org

Pnina Loeb, RS Director

707-360-3000

rs@bethamir.org

Gabor Por, Librarian

707-360-3006

library@bethamir.org

Bonnie Boren, Gift Shop

707-360-3022

bonnieboren@gmail.com

Andrea Nett,

Friedman Center Director

707-360-3021

director@friedmaneventcenter.com

Edythe Smith, Invitations

707-538-3698

Officers and Board of Directors, 2014–15

Laura Alexander, President

cbapresident@sonic.net, 837-8695

Barbara McGee, Treasurer

barbara.mcgee@ffic.com, 953-2526

Betty Boyd, Secretary

bettyboyd@informingscience.org,
537-2211

Arnold Drake, Past President

gidrdrake@gmail.com, 542-1765

Myrna Morse,

VP of Administration

mrm75@att.net, 539-5457

Russ Gurevitch, VP of Facilities

russgurev@msn.com

Barbara Tomin,

VP of Youth & Education

btprojects@sonic.net, 576-1167

Mel Decker,

VP of Ways and Means,

meldecker5@gmail.com, 540-0614

Members at Large

Richard Kahn

earthin@sonic.net, 217-5265

Alan Krubiner

akrubiner@msn.com, 694-6239

Lyla Nathan

lylanathan5@gmail.com, 526-7438

Jeff Sheff,

Adult Education

jssheff@gmail.com, 539-5346

Leanne Schy,

Torah/Haftarah Readings

leanne@sonic.net, 528-4874

Members Ex Officio

Carolyn Metz, 481-3390

Jenny Levine-Smith, 360-3030

Pnina Loeb, 695-2275

Rabbi Miller, (314) 308-3672

Andrea Nett, 707-360-3021

Deadline for Jan./Feb. 2015 Shofar is Dec. 15

Jewish Community Contacts

Hillel of Sonoma County

Ilana Stoelting, (707) 795-5464

www.sonomahillel.org

JCC, Sonoma County

Beth Goodman, 528-4222, www.jccsoco.org

Jewish Community Federation

Barbara Levinson, 568-6207, www.sfjcf.org

Jewish Community Free Clinic

Donna Waldman, 585-7780,

www.jewishfreeclinic.org

Jewish Community Relations Council

Suzan Berns, 415/957-1551, www.jcrc.org

Jewish Family & Children's Services

Diana Klein, 571-8131,

www.jfcs.org/sonoma-county



RABBI'S REMARKS

Rabbi Mordecai Miller

“The Best Speech an Israeli Diplomat Ever Held”

Editor's Note: Rabbi Miller requested that, “in the place of my column, I would love to have The Shofar use the September 27, 2014 speech in Oslo by the Israeli Vice Ambassador to Norway, George Deek. It so totally makes the point of my Kol Nidre sermon.”

Thanks to our recent guest speaker at Beth Ami, Jonathan Carey, for bringing this speech to our attention, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8m6ux-IeNo4> and to Eli Cohen for providing the link to the English transcript at <http://www.miff.no/Englisharticles/2014/10/04TbebestspeechanIsraelidiplomateverheld.htm>.

George Deek, Israel Vice Ambassador to Norway:

When I walk in the streets of my home town Jaffa, I am often reminded of the year 1948.

The Alleys of the old city, the houses in Ajami neighborhood, the fishing nets at the port—they all seem to tell different stories about the year that has changed my city forever. One of those stories is about one of the oldest families in this ancient city—the Deek family—my own. Before 1948 my grandfather George, after whom I'm named, worked as an electrician, at the Rotenberg Electricity Company. He was not very interested in politics. And since Jaffa was a mixed city, he naturally had some Jewish friends. In fact, his friends at the electricity company even taught him Yiddish, making him one the first Arabs to ever speak the language. In 1947 He got engaged to Vera—My grandmother—and together they had plans to build a family in the same city where the Deek family has lived for about 400 years—Jaffa.

But a few months later, those plans changed, literally overnight. When the U.N. approved the establishment of Israel, and a few months the State of Israel was established, the Arab leaders warned the Arabs that the Jews are planning to kill them if they stay home, and they used the Deir Yassin massacre as an example. They told everyone: ‘Leave your hous-

es, and run away’. They said they will need just a few days, in which with 5 armies they promised to destroy the newly born Israel. My family, horrified by what might happen, decided to flee, with most others.

A priest was rushed to the Deek family's house, and he wedded George and Vera my grandparents, in the house, in haste. My grandmother did not even have a chance to get a proper dress. After their sudden wedding, the entire family started fleeing north, towards Lebanon. But when the war was over, the Arabs failed to destroy Israel. My family was at the other side of the border, and it seemed that the fate of the brothers and sisters of the Deek family was to be scattered around the globe. Today, I have relatives in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Dubai, the U.K., Canada, the U.S., Australia, and more.

The story of my family is just one—and probably not the worst—among the many tragic stories of the year 1948. And to be frank, you don't need to be an anti-Israeli to acknowledge the humanitarian disaster of the Palestinians in 1948, namely the Nakba. The fact that I have to skype with relatives in Canada who don't speak Arabic, or a cousin in an Arab country that still has no citizenship there, despite being a third generation— is a living testimony to the tragic consequences of the war.

According to the U.N. 711 thousand Palestinians were displaced, we've heard that before—some fled and some forcefully expelled. At the same time, because of the establishment of Israel, 800 thousand Jews were intimidated into leaving the Arab world, leaving mostly empty of Jews. As we've heard before, atrocities from both sides were not uncommon.

But it seems that this conflict was not the only one during the 19th and 20th century that lead to expulsion and transfer.

From 1821 to 1922, 5 million Muslims were expelled from Europe, mostly to Turkey. In the

Rabbi's Remarks continued...

90's Yugoslavia broke apart, leading to 100,000 people dead and about 3 million displaced. From 1919 to 1949, during the Visla operation between Poland and Ukraine, 150,000 people died, and 1.5 million were displaced. Following World War II and the Potsdam convention, between 12-17 million Germans were displaced. When India and Pakistan were established, about 15 million people were transferred. This trend also exists in the Middle East,

For example the displacement of 1.1 million Kurds by the Ottomans,

2.2 million Christians who were expelled from Iraq, And as we speak today, Yazidis, Bahai, Kurds, Christians and even Muslims are being killed and expelled in a rate of 1,000 people per month, following the rise of Radical Islam.

The chances of any of those groups to return to their homes, is almost non-existent.

So why is it then, Why is it that the tragedies of the Serbs, the European Muslims, the Polish refugees or the Iraqi Christians are not commemorated? How come the displacement of the Jews from the Arab world was completely forgotten, while the tragedy of the Palestinians, the Nakba, is still alive in today's politics? It seems to me to be so, because the Nakba has been transformed from a humanitarian disaster to a political offensive. The commemoration of the Nakba is no longer about remembering what happened, but about resenting the mere existence of the state of Israel.

It is demonstrated most clearly in the date chosen to commemorate it:

The Nakba day is not April 9th—the day of the Deir Yassin massacre, Or July 13th—the day of the expulsion from Lod. The Nakba day was set on May 15th—the day after Israel proclaimed its independence. By that the Palestinian leadership declared that the disaster of the Nakba is not the expulsion, the abandoned villages or the exile—the Nakba in their eyes in the creation of Israel. They are saddened less by the humanitarian catastrophe that befell on Palestinians, and more by the revival of

the Jewish state. In other words: they do not mourn the fact that my cousins are Jordanians, they mourn the fact that I am an Israeli.

By doing so, The Palestinians have become slaves to the past, held captive by the chains of resentment, prisoners in the world of frustration and hate.

But friends, the evident yet simple truth is—that in order not to be reduced to sorrow and bitterness, we must look forward. To put it more clearly: To mend the past, first you have to secure the future.

This is something I learned from my music teacher, Avraham Nov. When I was 7 years old I joined the marching band of the Arab-Christian community in Jaffa. That's where I met Avraham, my music teacher, who taught me to play the flute and later the clarinet. I was good. Avraham is a holocaust survivor, and his entire family was murdered by the Nazis. He was the only one who managed to survive, because a certain Nazi officer found him gifted in playing the harmonica, so he took him home during the war to entertain his guests. When the war was over and he was left alone, he could have easily sat, and wept and cried over the greatest crime of man against man in history, and over the fact that he left alone.

But he didn't, he looked forward not backwards; he chose life, not death;

hope, rather than despair. Avraham came to Israel, got married, built a family, and he started teaching the same thing that saved his life—music. He became the music teacher of hundreds and thousands of children all over the country. And when he saw the tension between Arabs and Jews, this holocaust survivor decided to teach hope through music to hundreds of Arab children like me.

Holocaust survivors like Avraham are among the most extraordinary people you can find.

I was always curious to understand how they were able to survive, knowing what they knew, seeing what they saw. But throughout the 15 years I have known Avraham when I was his student, he never spoke about his past, except once—When I demanded to

continued pg. 14



EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Drivers 55+—Receive a Discount on your Auto Insurance!

Mature Driver Course

Sun., Nov. 9, 9 a.m. with lunch break
11:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.—\$12.50

By completing this all day DMV approved course, you will receive a DMV certificate to be eligible to receive an insurance discount. Instructor Craig Dill is AAA certified with 35 years of traffic safety experience. Craig will provide driver awareness strategies and answer questions relating to older & wiser drivers.

Pre-registration required, call (707) 360-3000 or email office@BethAmiSR.org. Send check (made out to Craig H. Dill) to Congregation Beth Ami, 4676 Mayette Ave., Santa Rosa, CA 95405. Hosted by Congregation Beth Ami

Israeli Folk Dance— 2 Wednesdays a Month

Come dance circle dances to songs from Israel, and other places too—with varied speeds, moods and styles.



6:30–9:30 p.m.

Nov. 12 & 26

Friedman Center,

\$3 donation to Beth Ami

December TBD, please see the BethAmiSR.org calendar or call Leanne at 528-4874.

Halayla Hagadol Gala in January

The Fundraising Committee is planning a Halayla Hagadol gala at the homes of your fellow congregants.

Save the date: Jan. 24, 2015

More information as it materializes. For information, contact Mel Decker at meldecker5@gmail.com.

Biblical Hebrew at Junior College

The biblical Hebrew club which meets weekly, in the afternoon, at the Junior College, still welcomes Beth Ami members with some knowledge of biblical Hebrew. For details, contact Larry Lieberman at ls6436@sonic.net

The Sonoma County Israel Fair

FREE in the Friedman Event Center with kosher food offered for sale in the Social Hall of Congregation Beth Ami.

Sun., Dec. 7; 10 a.m.—1:30 p.m.

The Israeli Consul will open the fair and be available to talk with you one-to-one. Spend a few hours exploring Israel Culture and its opportunities while enjoying Israeli music and culture. Activities for kids of all ages. Meet and talk with representatives of organizations about their opportunities to visit, learn, and volunteer in Israel. Representatives include American Associates Ben Gurion University, Jewish National Fund Israel Missions, Masa Israel, MZ Teens Internship program, NCSY-Northern California, Sarel and Volunteers for Israel, Skilled Volunteers for Israel, Stand with Us Israel Mission, Birthright NEXT, Nativ, and more are adding each week.

In addition to showing us opportunities to visit, learn, and volunteer, the fair also offers Israeli music, food, activities for kids, and opportunities to sell and buy Judaica. This is an ideal opportunity to celebrate and learn.

Bring your friends! All supporters of the Jewish State are welcome to this free event! This program is supported by a Ma'alot Grant for Israel Education and Advocacy, a partnership of United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism and Nefesh B'Nefesh.



at the Friedman Center

Every Sunday and Tuesday
6:45pm Doors open at 4:00 pm
Win up to \$350 per game
Buy-in starts at just \$15!



RELIGIOUS SCHOOL REPORT

PNINA LOEB, Religious School Director

Save these dates

Sunday, November 2, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.—

Beth Ami & You event *Guf'ing Around*

Friday, November 7, 6 p.m.—Family Shabbat Dinner

Friday, November 21—Rockin' Shabbat

Sunday, December 7, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.—

Beth Ami & You, Israel Fair (10 a.m.–2 p.m.) and Food Drive

Friday December 5—Family Shabbat Dinner

Our next Beth Ami & You program on Nov. 2nd is: *Guf'ing Around*—Your body and how to keep it in shape. *Guf* means body in Hebrew. Includes an interactive story by Lauren, finding your fingers and toes in Hebrew, fun art activities, phrases on healthy habits for little ones and their families, and of course a snack. On Dec. 7th our topic is Hebrew for your favorite foods. The morning will include an interactive story by Lauren, hands on games and learning about Hebrew words for some of our everyday foods, and a snack. Following this you are welcome to join our community

wide Israel Fair information day in the Friedman Center.

Our religious school is growing with 23 students and our post B'Mitzvah group has a very exciting program this year as well! Ron Shelanis giving them the opportunity to gain some hands-on experience in how to invest in the stock and real estate markets; how to analyze return on the investment and learn basic principles of Jewish business practice. Dr. Arnold Drake is offering a course on Jewish Medical Ethics. Many of the topics that are being covered offer the chance to discuss issues that may well confront the students in the course of their lives. Jeff Sheff's topic is "Towards understanding the Modern State of Israel." He is exploring the events taking place in Israel and Gaza. There is a great deal of confusion and this is giving participants an opportunity to gain some clarity and depth. The group's deep thinking can lead to debates, which are very welcome!

Religious School families are warmly invited to Beth Ami's Chanukah party on December 21st at 4 p.m.

Drivers 55+ —
 Receive a Discount on your Auto Insurance!

Mature Driver Course

Sunday, Nov. 9
 Starts at 9 a.m.
 Lunch Break 11:30–12:30
\$12.50

By completing this **all day DMV approved course**, you will receive a DMV certificate to be eligible to receive an insurance discount. Instructor Craig Dill is AAA certified with 35 years of traffic safety experience. Craig will provide driver awareness strategies and answer questions relating to older & wiser drivers.

Pre-registration required, call (707) 360-3000 or email office@BethAmiSR.org
 Send check (made out to Craig H. Dill) to Congregation Beth Ami, 4676 Mayette Ave., Santa Rosa, CA 95405
 Hosted by Congregation Beth Ami

Graphic Design—Tara Winkler Graphics • TaraWinklerGraphics.com





NURSERY SCHOOL NOTES

Jenny Levine-Smith
Nursery School Director

The school year is off to a wonderful start here at Beth Ami Community Nursery School. It is such a joy to walk around campus, watching the kids hard at work playing, exploring, and learning. The school is filled daily with laughter, probing questions, elaborate role playing, and music and dance.

Each Shabbat, we gather as a school to read a story with the Rabbi, and to sing in Hebrew and English with Ayala (one of our beloved three's teachers and our in-house musician).

For Rosh Hashanah, we invited our families to celebrate with us as we blessed and ate apples with honey, sang songs, and heard Rabbi Miller blow the Shofar. We spent a lot of time in our Sukkah this fall as well, and worked hard to help decorate it. During Sukkot, we combined with the CBA Religious School to host our first fundraiser of the year, a lovely event that featured crafts, face painting, food, and an amazing show by author (and father of BACNS alumni) Matthew Gollub.

But the holiday celebrations are only the start of what's been going on at school. Our four's classes have conducted experiments with turning grapes to raisins, gone on a nature walk to collect supplies for natural artwork, learned about bees from the beekeeper visit, and gone on fieldtrips to the pumpkin patch. Our three's kids have been experimenting with different art mediums, using marbles and trucks in place of paint brushes for their unique effects, and

have even discovered how to make prints. Our two's kids are playing with the properties of various sensory materials, from water to corn kernels to flubber to sand. They've painted by using apples on forks as paint brushes, and learned Hebrew songs.

We are looking forward to our next fundraising event which is fast approaching. On November 15th in the sanctuary and social hall, the nursery school will be hosting a concert featuring singer-songwriters Steve Seskin and Julia Sinclair. The doors will open (for food, wine, good conversation, and a silent auction) at 6:30 p.m., with music set to begin at 7:30. This is a community event. If you are interested in coming, stop by the nursery school office or check out the Fundraisers section of the BACNS website for more information or to buy tickets. We are also busy planning our Chanukah party, which will be held on December 17th.

Our enrollment has grown even further since the start of the school year, but we still have a few spots left in each class. If you or anyone you know may be interested in our school, please give us a call. And remember, we are open daily from 7:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.



"...the best breakfast & lunch joint around."

Jeff Cox, Santa Rosa Magazine



DIERK'S PARKSIDE CAFE

404 Santa Rosa Avenue
Santa Rosa, CA 95404
707/573-5955

Mark Dierkhising and Karen Brodsky, Owners



Carolyn Metz

Ecogreen Certified Agent

DRE # 01488014

707-537-2369 - Direct

707-481-3390 - Cell

cmetz@fhallen.com

www.carolynmetz.com



460 Mission Blvd., Santa Rosa, CA 95409



ISRAEL FROM THE LEFT COAST

Bob Raful

Memo From Jerusalem

by Caleb Jackman and Bob Raful

This summer's Gaza War has faded from the headlines; but not forgotten by those of us who follow Israeli affairs. Here is a unique first hand story.

Tiburon's Congregation Kol Shofar stays current with a varied program called Bridges to Israel. So, Second Day Rosh HaShanah, we met an Israeli Lone Soldier (a volunteer without immediate family in Israel).

Caleb Jackman, who grew up at Kol Shofar, made Aliyah to Israel in March 2012. He chose to quickly join the IDF because, "I knew if I wanted to be an Israeli citizen and part of Israel; I needed to serve in the IDF. Otherwise, I would never really be accepted."

(Back Story-Caleb had been in Israel on 2 family trips as well as a high school semester near Jerusalem-he decided on Aliyah during that semester, because "I was sitting on the balcony at the kibbutz one night, looking up at the stars and realized that my people had been on this land, looking at the stars from this place for generations. It was where I belonged.")

He spent five months in an ulpan, then moved to Kibbutz Nir Oz on the Gaza border. As a lone soldier, he was matched with a family on the kibbutz. "My family is great. They treat me like one of their own kids. I always feel welcome and comfortable with them."

He is a Light Machine Gunner in the elite Golani Brigade Battalion 13. They were on guard duty for a year on the Gaza border; deployed, for a time at Mt Hermon in the North (Syria border); and then sent back to Gaza as war approached.

"When we went into Gaza, my group traveled in armored personnel carriers, or APCs. Even though we traveled less than 10 miles, it took more than 12 hours because there was so much equipment and people being moved in.

Sometimes we were traveling on roads, sometimes the APCs just go overland. The APCs are designed for 11 soldiers but we had 14 in them."

"Our mission was to find the entrances to tunnels. We were given the location of a building and sent to secure it. The majority of the fighting was outside of Gaza City because that was where the professional Hamas soldiers were fighting. In the rest of Gaza, the soldiers were volunteers. The fighting was the most intense the first day.

We were only about 2 kilometers inside the border because most of the tunnels were there. We'd be in battle for 72 hours, fall back into Israel for about two hours to refuel, then go back in.

On the borders, Israeli civilians were waiting for us with food, clothes, phones, anything we needed. It was inspiring to see how the country supports its soldiers."

There was relief when they were ordered to withdraw. Golani 13 lost many exceptional young men, several who were friends of Caleb. "This is what I had been trained for. But it is still hard."

After the High Holidays Caleb returned to his unit in Israel. We pray for his safety and for a glimmer of hope of peace in 5775

.....

**Please Support
Our Advertisers**

Contact Congregation Beth Ami Office

office@bethamir.org

for details about advertising
in the Shofar.

Thank you!



WINNING THE PR WAR

About 45 members and nonmembers got an eye-opening lesson on perspective when BlueStar CEO Jonathan Carey came up from San Francisco to talk to us about Answering the Ten Toughest Questions about Israel. He explained why Jews lose the PR war: we're too focused on facts. We think that if Israel's accusers knew the true facts, which we are prepared to tell them at length, they would see the error of their ways. They won't.

Carey modeled effective ways to encourage those with anti-Israel sentiments to question their own assumptions. He left us with a lot to think about and with offers of materials and advice if we want to learn more about effectively advocating for Israel.

Want to learn more? Contact Esther Baruch at esther@pacific.net.

BlueStarPR, a nonprofit dedicated to empowering the next generation of Israel advocates, distributes free resources to college campuses, and creates online and other campaigns to spread information on Israel. The October 11 talk was supported by a Ma'alot Grant for Israel Education and Advocacy, a partnership of United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism and Nefesh B'Nefesh and co-sponsored by the Sonoma County Israel Committee.



PRESIDENT'S PAGE Laura Alexander, President

What's that I hear? Chanukah is almost here!
Oh Chanukah, Oh, Chanukah, Come light the menorah. Let's have a party, We'll all dance the hora. Gather round the table, we'll give you a treat, Sevivon to play with latkes to eat.
And while we are playing, The candles are burning low. One for each night, they shed a sweet light, To remind us of days long ago.
One for each night, they shed a sweet light, To remind us of days long ago.



YOUR USY Alex Mazakas

Hello Beth Ami!

My name is Alex Mazakas and I am your new United Synagogue Youth Advisor!

A little bit about me: I am originally from Southern California and now I am studying Food Science at UC Davis. In high school, I was deeply involved with the Far West USY region and went to every event that I could. I am so excited to be a part of the Beth Ami community and I am looking forward to an action packed USY year!

Last month, our chapter attended the USY Leadership Training Institute weekend in San Jose, where we met tons of Jewish teens from all over the Bay area and even from Reno, NV. While there, we learned essential leadership skills and tools to help make our programs and events the best our region has ever seen!

Looking ahead on the calendar, in November we have Fall Kinnus in Sacramento, which will feature the theme *Back to the Bass-ics* and an awesome show by LA's premiere Jewish Punk Rock band, *The Groggers*. In December, we will be flying to the beautiful Atlanta, Georgia attend the biggest USY International Convention ever! Stay tuned for more USY updates.

Can't you just hear the music in your head? How can you keep from singing it out loud? Well, I can't stop singing it and I can't wait for Chanukah! Chanukah is a time for families to come together to share latkes and stories, light menorot and enjoy the glow of the candles during the dark nights, spin dreidels and most importantly spend time together.

Come join us on December 21st at 4 p.m. for our Board sponsored Chanukah party! The Board will make lots of yummy latkes, we'll light our menorot together, play lots of games and of course there will be plenty of dreidels to spin! We hope that to see you and your family there. Look for more details in the Cybershul.



MITZVAH MOMENTS

Tish Levee

Trees naturally remove CO₂ from the atmosphere.

We're cutting down so many trees, that each year the loss of forests worldwide contributes more to global emissions than transportation. Reducing deforestation is a highly cost-effective method to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

One way to do that is to reduce the use of products from trees. Americans use 3 billion pounds annually of paper towels, which come from trees. If each of us used just one less paper towel a day, we could save the equivalent of 5.7 million trees; if each household replaced just one 500 count package of paper napkins with 100% recycled ones, it would save one million trees.

Another way is to plant trees.

There are a number of ways to calculate how much carbon a tree sequesters, but one that Trees for the Future uses estimates that trees they plant in tropical climates will sequester atmospheric carbon dioxide at an average of 50 pounds of CO₂ per tree annually, the amount produced by burning 2 ½ gallons of gas.

Trees also filter the air and prevent run-off, allowing water to seep into the soil and recharge the groundwater. They reverse impacts of erosion, and provide food, energy, and income, creating long-term economic and environmental sustainability.

While planting trees in Israel is a mitzvah, you may also want to consider some organizations which plant trees in impoverished countries, on a large scale for a low cost/tree, such as www.treesforthefuture.org, 10 cents/tree; the Canopy Project at www.earthday.org/, and www.treesforlife.org, \$1.00/tree.

© Copyright Tish Levee, 2014. All rights reserved. Permission to reprint given to Congregation Beth Ami.



ADULT EDUCATION

Adult Education is back starting November 6. For five Thursdays in November through December 11 from 7:30–9 p.m., Beth Ami will sponsor a class in room 12/13 (no class on Thanksgiving) on *Early Christianity from a Jewish perspective*, taught by Beth Ami member and former Resident Head of the Christian Mission in Jerusalem, Ishie Petlock.

The course will cover the time-span from the start of Christianity as a Jewish sect to its adoption by the Roman Emperor in the 4th century as the state religion.

There will be no required reading, but most material will be taken from the writings of Professor Amy Jill Levine of Vanderbilt University, especially her edition of *The Jewish Annotated New Testament, Oxford University Press, 2011. (with Marc Brettler).*

There will be no charge for the course.

For any questions e-mail Jeffrey Sheff (jssheff@gmail.com)

BETH AMI GIFT SHOP

Hanukkah Candles, Menorahs,
Dreidels, Mezuzahs
and all gifts Judaica!

A Purchase from the
Beth Ami Judaica shop
is a donation to our Synagogue.



M–W 10–4:30 • Th 10–6 • F 10–2
Located in Beth Ami Gift Office



SOCIAL ACTION SCOOP

Ellen Mundell (for Lyla Nathan)

Hoping that everyone had joyous Holidays. Wishing everyone a Healthy and Sweet New Year from the Social Action Committee.

First, a great thank you for all the food that was brought to Beth Ami during the holidays. As always we provided Jewish Family and Children Services the opportunity to refill their pantry for which they are very thankful. Please remember that hunger is a year round problem so continue to bring an item or two everytime you come to shul. Thanks

We will be going to the Redwood Empire Food Bank on Wed., Nov. 5th from 10 a.m.–12 p.m. We have a core of people who have been volunteering. Thanks so much for your efforts. Please consider doing this mitzvah. Help is always needed and it is a good way to connect with friends and with the community.

This year during the High Holidays we had community conversations on Rosh Ha Shana and Yom kippur. On Rosh Ha Shana we were able to greet each other and share our hopes for the holidays. On Yom Kippur we had very interesting conversations sharing our personal experiences about the holidays. People talked about fond memories as a children as well as recent memories here at Beth Ami. We talked

about love, connection, food, smells and sounds and much more. We shared our stories and when we finished we knew more about each other and hopefully our relationships were deepened.

It would be wonderful to have more opportunities to have these conversations and the board as well as the social action committee will be discussing different venues in which to meet. If you have any ideas please let us know.

I heard from many people who attended services who mentioned how welcomed they felt at Beth Ami. They told me they felt it the moment that they walked in the door. It has been the goal of the Social Action Committee and the Beth Ami Board of Directors to become a welcoming and caring community. Thanks to everyone in the congregation who have helped making Beth Ami really a loving community. It shows!

As the days shorten and become cooler heading into winter please start collecting blankets and warm clothes for the annual winter clothing drive that we co sponsor with Shomrei Torah. More information to follow.

SHABBAT DINNER RSVP

Shabbat Dinner:

Friday, November 7

Friday, December 5

of Beth Ami Member Adults ___@ \$18 = ___

of Non-member Adults ___@ \$22 = ___

of Youth (ages 6–17) ___@ \$10 = ___

of Families ___@ \$46 = ___

Please return payment and forms to:

Congregation Beth Ami
4676 Mayette Ave.
Santa Rosa, CA 95405

Name _____

Phone _____

I want to volunteer for (indicate which event)

Total amount enclosed

Check Visa/MC

Credit Card # _____

Expiration Date ____ / ____

Billing Zipcode _____



THE KITCHEN CORNER

Jeffrey & Janet Stein-Larson (Co-Chairs)

What's happening in the Beth Ami Kitchen? How about something to keep us warm for this fall & winter? We had some great soups made last year for Shabbat potlucks and we are hoping for more again this year!

Oh, and how about the baking? Besides the conversations going around about the wonderful Challah made; there has been another interesting baking topic that is being discussed—making bagels.

Are there any more workshops in the planning? Who knows, maybe we'll have a workshop on bagels.

And we have the upcoming Chanukah celebration coming with latkes! Mmmm, we challenge you to find something that smells better than latkes on the griddle. And last year, everyone got into the act to make latkas at Beth Ami. We had our Board, the Religious School, the 13th tribe, and the nursery school, all making latkas in the kitchen. It's never too soon to start planning for Chanukah.

You may have noticed more variety in the foods offered at our potlucks; kugels, potato salads, pasta salads etc. They were there because they were cooked in the Beth Ami kitchen following our kosher guidelines. Would you like to make a cold salad made with pasta or rice you'd like to add to the Potluck table? Then come and cook with us in the Beth Ami Kitchen. Check out the pamphlet, *Guidelines for Kitchen Use*.

If you want to bring food from home, just

follow the pamphlet that has the *Food and Potluck Guidelines*.

And if you don't have an idea of what to make, just check out the *Shabbat Potluck Recipe Pamphlet* that Mienke Drake put together for some simple ideas.

Whether you are planning to use the kitchen for a big event or small, check out the newest pamphlet that is now available for you. It's the *Special Events, Use Of Kitchen*, and it gives you an idea of what needs to be done if you plan on using the Beth Ami Kitchen whether you are planning for a major event like the Scholarship in Residence Program or the Board's famous latkes party or even a small event like coming in to make a special dish to be served at the next potluck or planning a tea for your next Chavarah meeting at Beth Ami.

All of the above pamphlets from the CBA Kitchen Committee are available for you, either by email (in PDF format), or in the Beth Ami Office. You just have to ask.

A special thank you for all of you who have participated in making the CBA kitchen a happening place. Whether you brought in food to share for our events, donated food or equipment or money for food for our Shabbat lunches, donated your time and labor to be a Mashgiach for one of our events, to organize and clean the kitchen, to fix our elderly freezer or to getting our knives sharpened (and you all know who you are) we appreciate you one and all.



Wine Country Kosher
...still trendy after 3000 years

MODERN • GOURMET • KOSHER
• Flavors of the Wine Country
• International Jewish Cuisine

Andrea Nett **CATERING**
707/206-8686 We specialize in B'nei Mitzvah
winecountrykosher@sbcglobal.net

Have Faith!
Braces are only temporary...
The smile you achieve will last a lifetime!



Proudly Supporting Local Community and Youth Programs
CALL (707) 575-0600 for your FREE CONSULTATION!
Santa Rosa • Windsor • Petaluma
WWW.BERNSTEINBRACES.COM

Larry Gregg

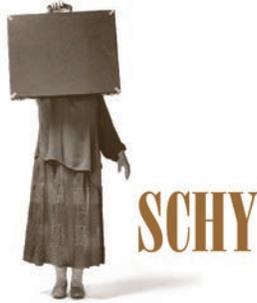
Bujinkan Santa Rosa Dojo

Traditional Martial Arts -
Self Defense

phone: 707 481-7370

email: srbd@att.net

web: santarosabujinkan.com



Leanne Schy
Graphic Design
& Copywriting
1145 Murray Ct.
Santa Rosa,
California 95404
707-528-4874
L.Schy@Sonic.net



earth
in
upheaval
e. i. u., inc.

outstanding service
and repair for your vehicle

on the web at:

earthinupheavalautorepair.com

an unusual name
with
unusual excellence

1970-2013

Forty-Three Years Of Quality Service

We know and are equipped to work on:

Acura	Lexus	Volvo
Audi	Mazda	VW
BMW	Mercedes-Benz	Domestics
Honda	Mini	Hybrids
Hyundai	Nissan	
Infiniti	Subaru	
Kia	Toyota	

5300 Sebastopol Rd.
Santa Rosa, CA 95407

Open Monday - Saturday
rental cars available
earthin@sonic.net

Richard Kahn (707) 523-3777



Buy your Thanksgiving & Chanukah groceries at Safeway & Oliver's to benefit Beth Ami!

For the first 8 months of 2014, supporters of eScrip earned \$1,479 for Beth Ami. This generous donation was achieved by shopping at Oliver's, Safeway (or Vons in Southern California) and other merchants. If you are not an eScrip supporter, now is the time to sign up...then all you have to do is SHOP! Thank you & welcome to the Elizalde family who became CBA eScrip supporters this year.

If you shop at Oliver's Markets in Santa



Rosa or Cotati, remember to get your Community Card at the store and choose BETH AMI to get the eScrip proceeds. Anyone can participate in eScrip and contribute; you do not have to be a CBA member & you

do not have to live in Sonoma County. Ask your friends & relatives! Just go to escrip.com and put in ID# 136921119. For sign-up help or any eScrip questions, contact Nancy Sherman at (707)538-9388 or nancysherman06@gmail.com or Lauren Newman at (707)525-9029.

NOTE: Safeway purchases paid for with a credit card will no longer earn eScrip contributions for Beth Ami. Accepted payment types include check, cash, debit card and Safeway gift card. So, just purchase a Safeway gift card with your credit card and then use that to make your purchases. This will ensure that Beth Ami will receive your eScrip contributions.

Rabbi's Remarks continued...

know. What I came to realize was that Avraham was not the only one, and that many Holocaust survivors did not speak about those years, about the holocaust, even to their families, sometimes for decades, or even a lifetime.

Only when they had secured the future did they allow themselves to look back at the past. Only when they had built a time of hope they permitted themselves to remember the days of despair. They built the future in their old-new home, the state of Israel. And under the shadows of their greatest tragedy, Jews were able to build a country that leads the world in medicine, agriculture and technology –

Why? Because they looked forward.

Friends, this is a lesson to every nation that wishes to overcome a tragedy—including the Palestinians. If the Palestinians wish to redeem the past, they need to first focus on securing a future, on building a world as it should be, as our children deserve it to be.

And the first step in that direction, without a doubt, is to end the shameful treatment of the Palestinian refugees. In the Arab world, the Palestinian refugees—including their children, their grandchildren and even their great-grandchildren—are still not settled, aggressively discriminated against, and in most cases denied citizenship and basic human rights. Why is it, that my relatives in Canada are Canadian citizens, while my relatives in Syria, Lebanon or the gulf countries—who were born there and know no other home—are still considered refugees?

Clearly, the treatment of the Palestinians in the Arab countries is the greatest oppression they experience anywhere. And the collaborators in this crime are no other than the international community and the United Nations.

Rather than doing its job and help the refugees build a life, the international community is feeding the narrative of the victimhood. While there is one U.N. agency in charge of all refugees in the world—the UNHCR, another agency was established to deal only with the Palestinian ones—UNRWA. This is no coincidence—while the goal of the UNHCR is to

help refugees establish a new home, establish a future and end their status as refugees, the goal of UNRWA is opposite: to preserve their status as refugees, and prevent them from being able to start new lives.

The International community cannot seriously expect the refugee problem to be solved, when it is collaborating with the Arab world in treating the refugees' as political pawns, denying them the basic rights they deserve. Whenever the Palestinian refugees were granted equal rights—they prospered and contributed to their society—In South America, in the U.S., and even in Israel. In fact, Israel was one of the few countries that automatically gave full citizenship and equality for all Palestinians in it after '48.

And we see the results: despite all the challenges, the Arab citizens of Israel built a future. Israeli Arabs are the most educated Arabs in the world, with the best living standards and opportunities in the region. Arabs serve as judges in the Supreme Court; Some of the best doctors in Israel are Arabs, working in almost every hospital in the country. There are 13 Arab members of parliament who enjoy the right to criticize the government—a right that they exhaust to the fullest—protected by the freedom of speech; Arabs win popular reality shows; And you can even find Arab diplomats—and one of them is standing in front of you.

Today, when I walk the streets of Jaffa, I see the old buildings and the old port,

But I also see children going to school and university; I see flourishing businesses; and I see a vibrant culture. In short, despite the fact that we still have a long road ahead of us as a minority, we have a future in Israel.

This brings me to my next point — Time has come to put an end the culture of hatred and incitement- because Anti-Semitism, I believe, is a threat to Muslims and Christians, as much as for Jews. I arrived to Norway just over two years ago, and here was the first time that I interacted with Jews as a minority community. I'm usually... used to seeing them as a major-

ity. And I have to say, it looks very familiar. I grew up in a similar environment, in the Arab-Christian community in Jaffa. I was part of the Orthodox Christians, who are part of the Christian community, who are part of the Arab minority, in the Jewish State of Israel, in the Muslim Middle East. It's like those Russian dolls, you open a big one and there's a smaller one inside? I'm the smallest piece.

A Jew in Norway or an Arab in Israel, being a minority means that you are always a part of a small community where everyone cares for each other and supports each other; It's a beautiful thing to know that no matter what, you always have a community that will care about you. Being part of a minority community has been a blessing throughout my life. But friends, the life of a minority is also a life of constant struggle for fair treatment. Sometimes you are discriminated, and might even be a victim of hate crimes. Even in a democracy like Israel, being an Arab minority is not always easy. Just over a year ago, a bunch of price tag bullies walked into the Arab Christian cemetery in Jaffa, and they desecrated the graves with writings "death to the Arabs", and one on the graves in that cemetery, was my father's.

Being a minority my friends is a challenge anywhere, because being a minority means being different. And no nation has ever paid a heavier price for being a minority, being different, than the Jewish people. The history of the Jewish people added many words to the human vocabulary: words like expulsion, forced conversion, inquisition, ghetto, pogrom, not to mention the word holocaust. Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks explains accurately, that the Jews suffered throughout the ages, because they were different. Because they were the most significant non-Christian minority in Europe, And today the most significant non-Muslim minority in the Middle East. But friends, in fact—aren't we all different? The truth is: being different is what makes us human! Every person, every culture, every religion is unique, and therefore irreplaceable. And a Europe, or a Middle East, that has no room for Jews, has no

room for humanity.

Friends, let's not forget - Anti-Semitism may begin with Jews, but it never ends with Jews. Jews were not the only ones to be forcefully converted under the inquisition; Hitler made sure that gypsies and homosexuals, among others, suffered alongside the Jews; And it is happening now again, this time in the Middle East. The Arab world seems to have forgotten that its greatest days in the last 1,400 years were when it showed tolerance and openness towards those who are different. The genius mathematician Ibn Musa el-Khawazmi was Uzbeki, The great Philosopher Rumi was Persian, The glorious leader Salah a-din was Kurdish, The founder of Arab nationalism was Michel Aflaq—a Christian, And the one who brought the Islamic rediscovery of Plato and Aristotle to the rest of the world was Maimonides—a Jew.

But rather than reviving the successful approach of tolerance, Arab youth are being taught to hate Jews, using anti-Semitic rhetoric from medieval Europe, mixed with Islamic radicalism. And once again, what started as hostility towards Jews has become hostility towards anyone who is different. Just last week more than 60,000 Kurds fled from Syria towards Turkey, afraid of being slaughtered. On the same day, 15 Palestinians from Gaza drowned in the sea trying to escape the claws of Hamas; Bahai and Yazidis are at risk. And on top of it all, the ethnic cleansing of Christians in the Middle East is the biggest crime against humanity in the 21st century. In just two decades Christians like me have been reduced from 20% of the population of the Middle East to a mere 4% today.

And when we see that the main victims of Islamist violence are Muslims, it is getting clear to everyone—At the end of the day, hate destroys the hater. So friends, If we wish to succeed in protecting our right to be different, if we want to have a future in that region, I believe we should stand together—Jews, Muslims and Christians: We will fight for the right of Christians everywhere to live their faith without fear, with the same passion with which we

continued. pg. 18



November Yahrzeits

Secular dates correspond to Hebrew date of death.

Observance of yahrzeit begins at sundown the previous day.

All yahrzeits observed at Beth Ami.

Announced on Nov. 7 & 8

- Nov. 9 Berkeley Garrison,
Grandson of Tish Levee
- Nov. 9 Irv Judd, Son of
Lillian Judd
- Nov. 9 Harold Zeamans,
Grandfather of
Judith Helman
- Nov. 10 Charles Cohen, Father of
Eli Cohen
- Nov. 11 Anny Myerfeld,
Grandmother of
Patty Bernstein
- Nov. 12 Malka Wachsberg Miller,
Mother of Eli Miller
- Nov. 13 Max Malk, Father of
Phyllis Shapiro

Announced on Nov. 14 & 15

- Nov. 16 Norman Schloner, Brother
of Carol Swanson and
Fred Schloner
- Nov. 17 Belle Rosen, Mother of
Mark Rosen
- Nov. 18 Samson Hochfield, Father
of Malvina Tsipan
- Nov. 18 Max Sucher, Husband of
Sylvia Sucher
- Nov. 18 Mayer Wegman, Father of
Jack Wegman
- Nov. 19 Hans Biberstein, Father of
Susanne Batzdorff
- Nov. 20 Helen Margolese, Mother
of Michelle Zygielbaum
and Sister-in-law of
Irwin Margolese

Announced on Nov. 21 & 22

- Nov. 23 Moshe Tzaig, Husband of
Branangan
- Nov. 24 Florence Goodman,
Mother of
Andrea Goodman
- Nov. 24 Joseph Harrosh, Uncle of
Dr. Mark Sutter
- Nov. 25 Dorit Epstein, Mother of
Shacharit Rosenthal

- Nov. 25 John Metz, Son of
Florence Metz
- Nov. 26 Alvin Dove, Brother-in-law
of Betty Franks
- Nov. 27 Minnie Friedman, Mother
of Harry Friedman
- Nov. 27 Clara Glass, Mother of
Gussie Levine
- Nov. 27 Kees Rijnveldt, Stepbrother
of Mienke Drake

Announced on Nov. 28 & 29

- Nov. 29 Vivian Kearns, Aunt of
Vivian Salmon
- Nov. 29 Marcella Liverman, Aunt of
Marc Bernstein
- Nov. 29 Bernard Shelan, Father of
Ronald Shelan
- Nov. 30 David Spiegelman, Cousin
of Ronit Glickman
- Nov. 30 Gaye Spiegelman, Aunt of
Ronit Glickman
- Nov. 30 Mark Spiegelman, Cousin
of Ronit Glickman
- Nov. 30 Sylvia Spiegelman, Cousin
of Ronit Glickman

- Dec. 1 Leonard Klein, Brother of
Lillian Judd
- Dec. 2 Joe Goldberg, Father of
Richard Goldberg
- Dec. 4 Phil Epstein, Father of
Shacharit Rosenthal
- Dec. 4 Miriam Malk, Mother of
Phyllis Shapiro
- Dec. 4 Isadore Wiesenthal, Father
of Natalie Friedman
- Dec. 5 Joaquin Boadella, Father of
Lillian Shelan
- Dec. 5 Jennie Goldberg, Mother
of Betty Franks
- Dec. 5 Rose Schneider, Mother of
Evelyn Gurevitch

November Birthdays

- 1 Roslyn Edelson
- 1 Vivian Salmon
- 6 Janice Sternfeld
- 8 Bonnie Gee
- 9 Vivian Klein
- 9 Erik Uriarte
- 11 Harry Friedman
- 13 Jane Rogan
- 19 Joseph Minuskin
- 20 Fara Elizalde
- 21 Edee Sternfield-Squires
- 22 Gloria Glickman
- 23 Claire Miller
- 26 Nancy Fleming
- 26 Sherrill Golemb
- 28 Dr. Russ Gurevitch

November Anniversaries

- 8 Erik & Chelsie Uriarte
- 16 Leanne Schy &
Mark Stoelting
- 18 Jack & Patie Wegman
- 21 Stuart & Ethel Schy
- 23 Eli Cohen & Betty Boyd

SIMCHA BOARD TREE OF LIFE

Honor thy mother...also thy aunt, uncle, cousin, child, best friend, teacher with an engraved leaf on our Simcha Board commemorating any joyous occasion, bestowal of an honor, or cause for thanksgiving.

Leaf \$360
Small Stone \$1000
Large Stone \$2500



We also provide the opportunity for you to memorialize loved ones.

Yahrzeit Board
A plaque is \$450



December Yahrzeits

Secular dates correspond to Hebrew date of death.

Observance of yahrzeit begins at sundown the previous day.

All yahrzeits observed at Beth Ami.

Announced Dec. 5 & 6

- Dec. 6 Jacob Goldman, Father of Ethel Schy
- Dec. 7 Alma Shapiro, Mother of Raynore Paule
- Dec. 8 Rochelle Adler, Sister of Judith Dzik
- Dec. 8 Raymond Nett, Father of Stephen Nett
- Dec. 8 Abraham Schwaber, Father of Fredrika Gross
- Dec. 10 George Kaplan, Father of Rhonda Rosenbach
- Dec. 12 Frances Ross, Mother of Stuart Ross

Announced on Dec. 12 & 13

- Dec. 14 Anna Barta, Mother of Ivan Barta
- Dec. 15 Elsa Ballo, Grandmother of David Ballo
- Dec. 16 Dr. Eduard Vrijdag, Father of Mienieke Drake
- Dec. 17 Noah Minuskin, Father of Joseph Minuskin
- Dec. 18 Mary Minuskin, Mother of Joseph Minuskin

Announced on Dec. 19 & 20

- Dec. 20 Henry Lotsoff, Father of Cheryle Miller
- Dec. 21 Leo Schweitzer, Father of Blair Pleasant
- Dec. 21 Irving Winkler, Father of Ben Winkler

- Dec. 22 Olive Cordill, Mother of Kim Cordell
- Dec. 22 Jack Guttenberg, Father of Michele Guttenberg
- Dec. 22 Joseph Schussheim, Father of Karen Herskovic
- Dec. 22 Max Stein, Father of Janet Stein-Larson
- Dec. 25 Rose Kovar, Grandmother of Dr. Gary Herzberg

Announced on Dec. 26 & 27

- Dec. 29 Carol Cohn, Mother of Henry Cohn and Mother-in-Law of Stuart Ross
- Dec. 29 Gertrude German, Mother of Ellen Mundell
- Dec. 29 Evelyn Schwaber, Mother of Fredrika Gross
- Dec. 30 Gert Cohen, Mother of Eli Cohen
- Dec. 30 David Kerben, Husband of Claire Miller
- Jan. 1 Dean Fleming, Father of Andy Fleming
- Jan. 1 Benjamin Strudler, Nephew of Susan Miller

December Birthdays

- 1 Susan Brown
- 2 Anya Por
- 3 Bonnie Meltzer
- 6 Harold Boren
- 8 Ronald Shelan
- 9 Max Graff
- 10 Ronit Glickman
- 13 Eleanor Cohen
- 14 Michael Kupperberg
- 15 Debra Chapman
- 18 Melvin Decker
- 19 Carolyn Metz
- 19 Dan Pleasant
- 20 Stanley Feingold
- 22 Todd Elizalde
- 24 Natalie Friedman
- 27 Fredrika Gross
- 29 Marilyn Sommer
- 30 Deborah Hight Kramer
- 31 Regina Marvan

December Anniversaries

- 5 Bill & Suzie Friedman
- 9 Iosif & Marina Voulfson
- 18 Ron & Lillian Shelan
- 18 Bob & Charli Silverman
- 23 Howard & Adrea Moss
- 31 David & Sherri Kahn

**Thank you all for your generous donations—
We hope to list them in the next issue!**

ALEF isn't enough
BET isn't tough
 Study Modern Hebrew from
 the source with a native Israeli.
 All levels. The easy way.
 Prayers, Chanting Torah Tropes
call: Ahuva Simon-Sa'ar
545-2454

א
ב
ג
ד
ה
ו
ז
ח
ט



Joel Nelson
 PRODUCTIONS

SOCIAL & CORPORATE EVENT PRODUCTION
 DJ'S | BANDS | SPECIALTY ENTERTAINMENT

www.joelnelson.com

Rabbi's Remarks continued...

will fight for the right of Jews to live without fear.

We will fight against Islamophobia, but we need our Muslims partners to join the fight against Christianophobia and Judeophobia.

Because the thing at stake is our shared humanity.

I know that this might sound naïve, but I believe that it's possible, and the only thing that is standing between us and a more tolerant world is fear. When the world changes, people start worrying about what the future holds. This fear makes people shrink themselves into the passive position of victims, rejecting reality, and looking for someone to blame for being behind all this.

It is true today as much as it was true in 1948.

The Arab world can overcome this mindset, but it requires the courage to think and act differently. This change demands that the Arabs realize that they are not helpless victims. It demands that they open up to self-criticism, and to holding themselves accountable. Up to this day, not a single history book in the Arab world questions the historic mistake of rejecting the establishment of the Jewish state. No prominent Arab academic has come out saying that if the Arabs would've accepted the idea of a Jewish state, there would've been two states, there would've been no war, and there would've been no refugees' problem.

I see Israelis like Benny Morris who is with us today, who dare to challenge the narratives of their leadership in Israel, taking personal risks in the quest of a truth that is not always comfortable for their people. But I fail to find their Arab equivalents. I fail to see a debate questioning the wisdom of the destructive leadership of the Mufti of Jerusalem Hajj Amin al-Hussaini; or the unnecessary war launched by the Arab league in 1948, or any of the wars against Israel, in the years that followed until today; And I fail to see self-criticism in the Palestinian mainstream today about the use of terrorism, the launching of the second intifada, or the rejection of at least two Israeli offers in

the last 15 years to end the conflict. Self-reflection is not a weakness; it is a sign of strength. It brings forth our ability to overcome fear and face reality. It demands us to look sincerely into our decisions, and take responsibility for it.

Only the Arabs themselves can change their reality. By stopping the leaning on conspiracy theories and the blaming of outside powers—America, the Jews, the West or whoever—for all the problems. By learning from past mistakes, and by making wiser decisions in the future.

Just two days ago the U.S. President Obama stood at the U.N. podium in front of the General Assembly and said: "The task of rejecting sectarianism and extremism is a generational task—a task for the people of the Middle East themselves. No external power can bring about a transformation of hearts and minds".

Lately I've read a very interesting article by Lord Sacks about rivalry among brothers in the bible. There are four stories about rival brothers in the book of Genesis: Cain and Abel, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, and Joseph and his brothers. Each story ends differently - In the case of Cain and Abel, Abel lies dead. In the case of Isaac and Ishmael, they are standing together at their father's grave. In the case of Jacob and Esau, they meet, embrace and go their separate ways.

But the case of Joseph ends differently. For those who are not familiar with the story: Joseph was the 11th of Jacob's 12 sons and Rachel's firstborn, in the land of Canaan. At some stage, because of their jealousy of him, his brothers decide to sell him to slavery. However, after a while Joseph rose to become the second most powerful man in Egypt next to Pharaoh. When famine struck Canaan, Joseph's father Jacob and Joseph's brothers came to Egypt. And there, instead of punishing them for what they have done to him, Joseph decides to forgive his brothers. This was the first recorded event of forgiveness and reconciliation in literature. Joseph provides his brothers with all their needs. They prosper, they grow

in numbers, and they become a great nation. At the end of the story, Joseph says to his brothers “You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good, to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.” By that, he meant that by our acts in the present we can shape the future, and by that redeem the past.

Jews and Palestinians, we might not be brothers in faith, but we certainly are brothers in fate. And I believe that just like in the story of Joseph, through making the right choices, by choosing to focus on the future, we can redeem our past.

Yesterday’s enemies can be tomorrow’s friends. It happened between Israel and Germany, Israel and Egypt, Israel and Jordan. It is time to start in making a ray of hope in the relations between Israelis and Palestinians, so that we can put an end to the replaying of old grievances, and focus on our future and the exciting possibilities it holds for us all, if we’d only dare.

I still didn’t tell you the rest of my family’s story in 1948. After a long journey towards Lebanon, most of it by foot, my grandparents George and Vera reached Lebanon. They stayed there for many months. And while there, my grandmother gave birth to her first son, my uncle Sami. When the war was over, they realized that they had been lied to—The Arabs did not win the war, as promised. And at the same time, the Jews did not kill all the Arabs as they were told that would happen.

My grandfather looked around him and saw nothing but a dead-end life as refugees. He looked at his young wife Vera—not even 18 yet, and his newborn son, and knew that in a place stuck in the past with no ability to look forward, there is no future for his family. While his brothers and sisters saw their future in Lebanon and other Arab and Western countries, he thought otherwise. He wanted to go back to Jaffa, his hometown. Because he worked with Jews in the past and was a friend to them, he was not brainwashed with hatred.

My grandfather George did what few others

would have dared—he reached out to those that his community saw as their enemies. He got hold of one of his old friends from the electricity company, and asked for his help to get back. And that friend, of whom I’ve heard through my father’s stories, and never knew his name, not only was able and willing to help my grandfather get back, but in an extraordinary act of grace, he even helped him get his old job back at what has become the Israeli electricity company, making him one of the very few Arabs who work there.

Today, among my siblings and cousins we have accountants, teachers, insurance agents, Hi-tech engineers, diplomats, factory managers, university professors, doctors, lawyers, investment consultants, managers of top Israeli companies, architects and even electricians.

The reason that my family have succeeded in life, the reason that I’m standing here as an Israeli diplomat, and not as a Palestinian refugee from Lebanon—is because my grandfather had the courage to take a decision that was unthinkable to others. Rather than falling into despair, he found hope where no one dared to look for it; He chose to live among those who were considered his enemies, and to make them his friends; For that, I and my family owe him and my grandmother eternal gratitude.

The story of the Deek family should serve as a source of inspiration to the Palestinian people.

We cannot change the past. But we can secure a future for our next generations, if we want to mend the past some day; We can help the Palestinian refugees have a normal life; We can be sincere about our past, and learn from our mistakes; And we can unite—Muslims, Jews and Christians—to protect our right to be different, and by that preserve our humanity; Indeed we can’t change the past, But if we do all that, we will change the future.





Congregation Beth Ami

4676 MAYETTE AVENUE, SANTA ROSA, CA 95405

Address service requested

November Shabbatot

November 1

Parshat Lech Lecha: Gen 14:1–15:21 (Pg 77)

Candle Lighting—5:54

Havdalah—6:52

November 8

Parshat Vayera: Gen 19:1–20:18 (Pg 12)

Candle Lighting—4:47

Havdalah—5:45

November 15

*Parshat Chayei Sarah: Gen 24:10–24:52
(Pg 104)*

Candle Lighting—4:41

Havdalah—5:40

November 22

Parshat Toledot: Gen 26:23–27:27 (Pg 152)

Candle Lighting—4:36

Havdalah—5:36

November 29

Parshat Vayetzei: Gen 30:14–31:16 (Pg 176)

Candle Lighting—4:33

Havdalah—5:34

December Shabbatot

December 6

Parshat Vayishlach: Gen 34:1–35:15 (Pg 206)

Candle Lighting—4:32

Havdalah—5:34

December 13

Parshat Vayeshev: Gen 38:1–38:30 (Pg 233)

Candle Lighting—4:33

Havdalah—5:35

December 20

Parshat Mikeitz: Gen 41:53–43:15 (Pg 257)

Candle Lighting—4:35

Havdalah—5:37

December 27

Parshat Vayigash: Gen 45:28–46:27 (Pg 279)

Candle Lighting—4:39

Havdalah—5:41