



CONGREGATION
SHOMREI TORAH
שומרי תורה

The Voice

Serving Sonoma County's
Progressive Reform Jewish Community

VOLUME XXIV NUMBER 8

WEB EDITION

SEPTEMBER 2011 — ELUL 5771

Symbols of the High Holy Days

Rosh Hashanah, the first day of the Hebrew month *Tishrei*, is the Jewish New Year, marking the beginning of the ten-day period of prayer, self-examination and repentance, culminating on *Yom Kippur*. The symbols of the High Holy Days are both meaningful and universal, creating a bond among Jews across generations and geography.

Why the shofar?

According to Leo Rosten, the *shofar* relates to the Torah portion that's read on *Rosh Hashanah* morning, "The ram's horn serves to remind the pious how Abraham, offering his son Isaac in sacrifice, was reprieved when God decided that Abraham could sacrifice a ram instead."

Why the round challah?

The round *challah*, traditional for *Rosh Hashanah*, represents the circle of life.

What about apples and honey?

These two sweet treats help to usher in a sweet year. In addition, the apples, which are perishable, are preserved and kept fresh by the honey. Dip the apples in the honey and the apples, like our thousand-year-old traditions, will remain fresh.

This month's *Voice* contains a number of stories and events designed to enhance the meaning of the High Holy Days. Rabbi George is leading a class to explain their prayers and customs. On page 4 Rabbi George also provides a comprehensive "Guide to the Holy Days." And for those planning holiday meals, turn to page 9 for two new recipes.

New Venue for High Holy Days

This year, most services will be held at the **Center for Spiritual Living**. We are grateful to our new hosts for making their large and comfortable building available so we can worship in comfort.

Intergenerational services will be held on *Erev Rosh Hashanah* and *Erev Yom Kippur* at Shomrei Torah at 6:00 PM. On *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*, everyone will worship at the **Center for Spiritual Living**. Teens will worship with Rick Concoff, preteens with Norman Eisley, and our school age children with Sherry Knazan. If possible, please carpool to the Center



THE CENTER FOR SPIRITUAL LIVING
2075 Occidental Road, Santa Rosa

to allow enough parking for everyone, since there is no street parking on Occidental Road. Security officers will direct us to available spots in the parking lot and help with *Yom Kippur*

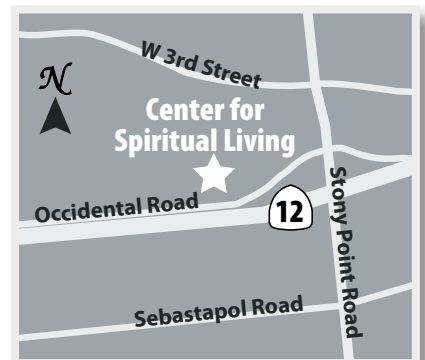
contributions to Elisha's Pantry.

A shuttle bus, for anyone who is concerned about driving to the Center for the evening services, will meet congregants at the Berger Center in Oakmont or Waterfall Towers, across from the temple. There is no fee for the bus, but contributions to help defray the cost of the bus are appreciated. **Reservations are essential to accommodate everyone.** Call the temple to reserve a spot or ask questions.

{ A complete schedule of High Holy Days events can be found on the back cover }

THE TEMPLE STAFF is working hard to ensure that your High Holy Day worship is satisfying and relevant and that the move to our new location is uneventful. I look forward to meeting and greeting you and wishing you a peaceful and healthy New Year.

Fran Brumlik,
Executive Director



THIS MONTH

Meet Rabbi Kramer at Three Different Events

Rabbi Kramer has graciously agreed to introduce herself to the congregation at three September events, so that everyone can get to know her. Let's welcome her into the *mishpuchah* with warmth, friendship and, of course, food.



▶▶Lunch and Learn

Rabbi Kramer shares one of her favorite Biblical texts.

Thursday, September 1 • 12 Noon–1:00 PM

▶▶Men's Bagel Club

Call the temple office to reserve your seat and lox and bagels breakfast

Sunday, September 4 • 9:00–11:00 AM

▶▶Women-to-Women New Member Brunch

Sunday, September 11 • 10:30 AM–1:00 PM

Whether you are a new member or a continuing member, the 4th annual brunch is a time to connect with other women in the congregation. RSVP to the EVITE by Tuesday, September 6 or contact the temple office with any questions.

Civil Discourse: A Facilitated Dialogue on Israel

Wednesday, September 7 • 7:00 PM

The first of our new series of events on the theme, Encountering Israel, focuses on building the skills to have thoughtful dialogue and discussion on issues surrounding Israel. Excerpts from the memoir, *A Tale of Love and Darkness*, by acclaimed Israeli writer Amos Oz, provide the springboard for dialogue in this discussion led by **Rachel Eryn Kalish**, past president of *The Compassionate Listening Project* and founding facilitator of *Project Reconnections*, the pioneering intra-Jewish dialogue and deliberation process. No advance work necessary; all reading materials will be provided.



September 11th: Ten Years After

Friday, September 9 • 7:30 PM

Rabbi Kramer will lead a panel discussion about the changes we've experienced as both Americans and Jews as a result of the events of September 11, 2001. Come share your memories, your thoughts and your hopes for a post-9/11 world.

Highlights of the High Holy Days Liturgy

Wednesday, September 14 • 7:00 PM

Don't miss this chance to study and discuss the key prayers of *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* with **Rabbi George**. Your deeper understanding will lead to a better experience during the Days of Awe. All levels of experience welcome. RSVP to the temple office.

Adult B'nei Mitzvah Course

Saturday, September 17 • 1:00 PM

The Adult *B'nei Mitzvah* Training Program is an opportunity for adults to learn about Judaism and Jewish life. This yearlong course led by **Rabbi Gittleman** will delve into Jewish theology, liturgy and an exposure to the Jewish cannon. For more information, please contact **Leira Satlof**, or consult the LifeLong Learning tab at www.shomreitorah.org.

S'lichot: Focus on Forgiveness

Saturday, Sept. 24 • Nosh and Chat—7:00 PM • Service—9:00 PM



Elul, the month before *Rosh Hashanah*, is a time for repentance, divine mercy and forgiveness, a time to recite *S'lichot*, prayers for forgiveness. How can we find the compassion to forgive others — and ourselves? How do we balance *chesed* (loving kindness) with *g'vura* (judgment)? Explore the practical, psychological and spiritual elements of forgiveness from a progressive Jewish perspective. The evening will begin with dessert and chat before a talk by renowned meditation teacher, psychotherapist and storyteller **Sylvia Boorstein**, followed by a beautiful, evocative *S'lichot* service led by **Rabbi George**, **Rabbi Kramer**, cantorial soloist **Leira Satlof** and **Rabbinic Pastor Judith Goleman**. Coffee and tea will be provided; please bring a nosh or dessert to share.

THIS MONTH

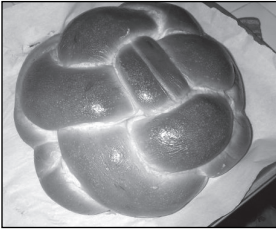
High Holy Day Mitzvah

Wednesday, September 28, 12:00 PM

Please call **Denise** or **Fran** in the office if you can help with the move to and/or from the Center for Spiritual Living for the High Holy Days on September 28 at 12:00 noon. Meet at CST. Helpers are needed for the move back on October 8 at the end of services.

First Rebbe's Tisch Shabbat Dinner and Discussion

Friday, September 30, 7:30 PM



The *Rebbe's tisch*, or Rabbi's table, is a traditional Shabbat celebration that includes a festive Shabbat meal, including all the blessings and songs, informal chatting followed by a talk and/or dialogue with the rabbi. Join **Rabbi George** and **Leira** for our first ever *tisch* as part of our celebration of Shabbat *Shuvah*, the Sabbath between *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*. At the conclusion of the *tisch* we will offer *michaberach* for those in need of healing and will say *kaddish*. Dinner will begin promptly at 7:30 PM. Catered dinner, \$15 for adults, and \$10 for kids 12 and under; bring your own wine to share. Please reserve your place at the table by calling **Denise** in the office at 578-5519.

SAVE THE DATE

Sukkot Service

Thursday, October 13 • 10:30 AM

Celebrate the harvest at the *Sukkot* service. If you've ordered a *lulav* and *etrog* (see order form on page 9) bring them to the service.

Lunch and Learn: Sukkot at Singing Frogs Farm

Tuesday, October 18 • 12:00–2:00 PM

Start with a tour of the farm (wear walking shoes). **Farmer Paul** will then talk about sustainable food and **Rabbi George** will talk about *Sukkot*. Bring your lunch and drink. The farm is located at 1301 Ferguson Road, Sebastopol; phone: 829-1389.

Warsaw • Krakow • Budapest • Prague — Informational Meeting

Thursday, October 20, 7:00 PM

See details about the trip on page 5. See Jewish historical sights and sightsee in these beautiful and memorable cities. For more information, contact the temple office.

"Social Action at the Movies"

Saturday, October 22 • 7:15 PM

Shomrei Torah's Social Action Committee will launch "Social Action at the Movies" to focus on three key projects of the SAC: Gay and Lesbian rights, immigration and Jewish-Muslim Relations. All three films are award-winning documentaries.

"GenSilent," the first film in the series, is a powerful look at LGBT aging with universal applications to anyone who is aging, elderly, disabled, ill or alone, and is being co-sponsored by Jewish Family and Children's Services. More information on page 7.

Hebrew Series

Begins Saturday, October 29 • 1:00–2:30 PM

Rabbi George, along with occasional guests, will teach an eight-session Hebrew class on Saturdays 10/29; 11/5; 11/12; 11/19; 12/3; 12/10; 12/17 and 1/7/2012 in the Kolbo room. The cost for the series is \$150, including the textbook. Contact **Denise** in the office to register.

Exciting News! Shomrei Torah Food Fest

June 3, 2012

Our synagogue is in the beginning planning stages for our first Jewish Food Fest, a day of great Jewish food and lots of fun activities. This event will be open to the community. Many other synagogues around the country hold this type of food fair, and it is a profitable fundraiser. An ambitious project like this requires hundreds of synagogue volunteers. In a few months, we will be holding a dinner explaining the event and all the volunteer opportunities. Watch for details in *The Voice* and *Chai Lites*.

The Shomrei Torah Voice is a periodical issued monthly except for the combined June/July issue.

It is published by Congregation Shomrei Torah, 2600 Bennett Valley Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95404 and is distributed free of charge to members and supporting advertisers. Subscriptions are available for \$30 per year. Please direct inquiries to the Shomrei Torah office, 578-5519; office fax number 578-3967.

TEMPLE NEWS

Rabbi's Message

A Guide to the Holy Days



By Rabbi George Gittleman

By definition, Reform Jewish practice is hard to summarize. Nevertheless, I thought it would be helpful to have an outline of the essentials.

The Month of Elul

We often think of the Holy Days as beginning with *Rosh Hashanah* and ending with *Yom Kippur*. In fact, the *Yamim Noraim* (The Days of Awe) officially begin a month before the start of *Elul*. I think of *Elul* as the month of conditioning before the big climb, not up Mount Sinai, but rather inside ourselves. The primary task of *Elul* is to perform a *Heshbone Ha'nefesh*: An accounting of the soul, a time to ask the tough questions: Where have I gone wrong? Whom have I hurt? How have I let myself down? It is traditional during this time of year to ask people if you have offended them and to ask for forgiveness. Related to asking for forgiveness is the *Elul*: The tradition of New Year's greetings. As you send out your cards this year, note to whom you do and to whom you don't send cards.

Please also consider attending our *S'lichot* service on September 24 at 9:00 PM. A nosh at 7:00 PM and program with Sylvia Boorstein at 8:00 PM will precede the service. *S'lichot* comes from the Hebrew root "to be sorry." Our *S'lichot* services are a wonderful way to begin the process of

opening our hearts to who we are and who we want to be in the year ahead.

Rosh Hashanah

First, please set the time aside to actually go to services! Also, remember a festive meal before services and after is an important part of the celebration. It is traditional to eat apples dipped in honey (the apple symbolizes the earth and the honey our wish for a sweet year). It is also traditional to include a round and sweet *challah* in your meal. If you're at a loss as to what to cook, there is a plethora of Jewish cookbooks on the market (including *Oy to Joy*, available in the Shomrei Shop and on the website) and there's always the web! Another important element of the observance of *Rosh Hashanah* is *Taschlich*. We gather at Lake Ralphine in Howarth Park at 4:30 PM to symbolically throw our sins into the water.

The Days in Between

According to tradition, during this intermediate time, The Book of Life is still open, and our fate for the year has yet to be sealed. We may not take this concept literally, yet the image works well as a metaphor for our work during these holy days. This is the time when our own *heshbone ha'nefesh*, accounting of the soul, intensifies. Whatever you have put off — reaching out to a loved one from whom you are estranged, paying a debt, telling someone "you care" — this is the time to do it! It is also traditional during these days to contribute to the Jewish Community and to give *tzeddakah*. Are you paying your fair share? Are you giving enough to the needy in our community or elsewhere? This is the time to make an *honest accounting*.

Finally, one of the holiest *Shabbatot* of the year falls between *Rosh Hashanah* and

Yom Kippur. It is called *Shabbat Shuvah*, the Sabbath of Return. Make every effort to come to services that Friday evening and Saturday morning.

Yom Kippur

As with *Rosh Hashanah*, the first thing you need to do is make sure you show up! If you have control over your work, plan to be absent. The same is true of school and any other activities that conflict with the observance of this holiest of holy days. Also, plan to stay for the whole day. I know it is long, but without going through the whole process, you won't have the full experience. For those who can, fasting is also a must! Fasting really does elevate and deepen the experience of contrition and renewal during this most awesome of days.

The next essential element of *Yom Kippur* (and the rest of the *Yamim Noraim*) is an open and contrite heart. If what you do during the Holy Days doesn't touch you "inside," it is all for naught! Thus, I'll share here the Holy Day wishes of a friend: "May you be like a filleted fish before God." Now *that* is open!

One last thing: *Breaking-the-Fast*. Fasting is important, as is getting together with family and friends afterwards to break-the-fast, share your Holy Day experience and celebrate the New Year. Try to plan some kind of fast-breaking celebrating with family and/or friends. If you are at a loss as to where to go, know that the congregation always breaks the fast together right after services.

I look forward to the privilege of sharing the *Yamim Noraim*, the Days of Awe, with you in the coming weeks.

Shanah Tovah!
Rabbi George

TEMPLE NEWS

Legacy Circle and Major Gifts

Ruth Robinson Joins Legacy Circle



Ruth Robinson and her husband Rabbi Michael relocated to Sonoma County in 1989 when Rabbi Michael assumed the pulpit at Congregation Shomrei Torah. Ruth and Michael had years of experience working together in various congregations across the United States — he as a rabbi and she as a soloist and choir leader. Their involvement in the Jewish and secular communities of Sonoma County is legend to all who know them.

At Michael’s side, Ruth devoted her life to issues of social justice and belonging. “I need to be part of something strong that contains the powers of creativity , constructive forces in the world, peace and a love of God that is greater than we can understand.”

Ruth’s generous gift was presented with the hope of furthering the Jewish ideals of peace and social justice. She hopes that, by having the ability to hold these ideals in our minds, the Congregation will continue through the years furthering cooperation among all faiths in our community.

We Remember Rabbi Michael

Rabbi George, Reverend Hugh Stevenson of St. Patrick’s Church in Kenwood, and Larry Robinson, former Sebastopol Mayor, shared their memories of working with Rabbi Michael Robinson at the 5th annual memorial lecture in August. Ruth Robinson introduced the speakers. Stories were warm, funny and engaging of the man who worked as a social activist for many years. The event was hosted by the Social Action Committee, with co-chairs Larry Carlin and Stephen Harper.

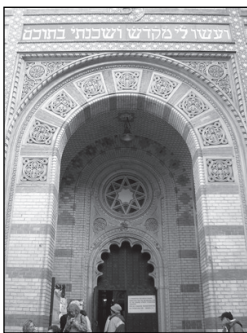


Larry Carlin, Rabbi George, Ruth Robinson, Larry Robinson and Reverend Hugh Stevenson

Generous Members Increase Pledges

The following members have added their names to the list of generous members who, as of August 4, 2011, have been able to increase their 2011-2012 membership pledges. Can you increase your pledge, even a little bit? We would love to print your name in the next issue of *The Voice*.

- Meryl Fischer
- Janet and Ira Gelfman
- Beth and Garry Goodman
- Judith Helman and Warren Davis
- Alissa Hirshfeld Flores and Danny Flores
- Flo and Dan Hoffenberg
- Alan Hyman
- Laura Rodman and John Jackson
- Kara Jacobs and Al Redwine
- Susan Langer and Robert Herbstman
- Miriam and Bill Marlin
- Lorna and Neil Myers
- Mary and Danny Neustadt
- Iris and Robert Ostling
- Guevara and Emery Rowand
- Cindy and Jonathan Skolnik
- Barbara Tomin
- Alejandro Wainer
- Deborah Waller
- Jill and Stefan Zechow



Entrance to Doheny Synagogue

Warsaw • Krakow • Budapest • Prague

INFORMATIONAL MEETING... Thursday, October 20 at 7:00 PM

Learn about an exciting trip of a lifetime! Join Rabbi Gittleman and members of Shomrei Torah on a trip to Eastern Europe September 29–October 10 of 2012.

Visit historic Eastern European cities including the town of Strakonice, where our Torah originated. See Jewish historical sights and sightsee in these beautiful and memorable cities. For more information, contact the temple office.



Kazimierz

TEMPLE NEWS

President's Message

“Whatever your reason to belong, Shomrei Torah belongs to you.”



By Bruce Falstein
CST President

Perhaps you've seen that phrase on a postcard or in a *Voice* ad, and, if you're like many members, maybe you've taken it to heart. How else to explain why so many of you have chosen to take personal responsibility for our community by volunteering your time and increasing your pledges?

So far, about half of our members have renewed their membership and responded to the survey that was included in your renewal packets. Pledges are running well ahead of last year, with the vast majority of members either increasing or maintaining their financial commitment.

Whatever your reason to pledge, Shomrei Torah depends on you.

The survey results are equally encouraging. While three-fourths of members are satisfied with their involvement in synagogue life, one in five of you are looking for ways to increase your participation in Shomrei Torah activities. Now, with our new Connections Committee led by **Paula Duran**, getting involved is easier than ever. With a simple email or phone call, the Connections folks will help you find a volunteering opportunity that suits your interests, skills and schedule. Ask any of the hundreds of fellow congregants about their volunteering experience and you'll find how rich are the returns on even a small investment of your time and talent.

Whatever your reason to volunteer, Shomrei Torah has a job for you.

With the approach of the High Holy Days, many of us are reminded of the importance we place on being a part of this community. This annual rite is at once broadly communal and intensely personal, a time to gather

strength from the group while we turn our gaze inward. Perhaps we need the safety we find in numbers to perform the hard work of individual reflection.

For some of us, the High Holy Days are a chance to explore our personal relationship with God. For others, it's a chance to renew our relationships with one another. And for some, it's a chance to better understand ourselves.

Whatever your reason to participate, Shomrei Torah has a place for you.

If you haven't yet renewed your membership, please make the effort to do it soon. Your renewal is required to enroll in Religious School and to receive a seating card for High Holy Day worship services. It's also required for our community to continue to provide all of the reasons we joined in the first place: learning, prayer, fellowship, tradition, *tikkun olam*, and, of course, play. We each have our reasons to belong to this community, to support and sustain it, to shape its future, and to make it our own.

Whatever your reason to belong, Shomrei Torah belongs to you.

B'shalom,
Bruce

The Purpose of This Congregation:

- To worship God in accordance with the beliefs and teachings of Reform Judaism.
- To cultivate and nurture in ourselves and our children a love and understanding of Jewish heritage.
- To develop a sensitive, caring and supportive congregational community where all are welcome and included.
- To act with responsibility and compassion in our community.
- To support the principles of equality, freedom and shalom among all peoples.

TEMPLE NEWS

“Social Action at the Movies” Debuts Saturday, October 22 • 7:15 PM



Shomrei Torah’s Social Action Committee will launch “Social Action at the Movies” to focus on three key projects of the SAC: Gay and Lesbian rights, immigration and Jewish-Muslim Relations. All three films are award-winning documentaries.

“GenSilent,” the first film in the series, is a powerful look at LGBT aging with universal applications to anyone who is

aging, elderly, disabled, ill or alone, is being co-sponsored by Jewish Family and Children’s Services.

The other films include “Sin Pais” (Without a Country), about

immigration, December 3, and “My So-Called Enemy,” about Jewish-Muslim Relations, January 21. All of the films will start at 7:15 PM and, after each showing, a panel of professionals in various fields will take audience questions.

Susan Daniel, co-chair of the Social Action Film Series Committee, explains, “The project is a direct outgrowth of our Social Action Retreat this past February” and supports the group’s goals for the year by spotlighting gay rights, immigration and Jewish-Muslim relations and creating “more involvement in social action for the Congregation.” All of the films are provocative and enormously engaging commentaries on important human rights subjects, Daniel said.

Other members of the SAC Film Series Committee include Ed Berger, co-chair Bruce Berkowitz, Katy Lusson, Madeleine Rose, Asher Sheppard, Stephen Harper and Larry Carlin.

Board Report

At its regular meeting on August 11, the CST Board:

- Received the year-end financial report for fiscal year 2010–11 and noted a year-end deficit of \$38,866, \$4,470 less than had been projected, resulting primarily from greater than expected income from religious school, fund-raising, facility income, general donations, *Voice* and escrow income. As noted previously, pledge income was significantly below budget.
- Heard a report from the Executive Director that plans are well underway for High Holy Days services at the new location, the Center for Spiritual Living. Membership renewals must be received before any seating cards for services will be issued. Seating cards will be mailed mid-September. Volunteers are needed to help move to the Center for Spiritual Living; contact Fran Brumlik if you can help.
- Received information about ongoing changes in the CST website and planned changes for *The Voice*. Also learned that the new photo directory will be available for distribution at the initial sessions of religious school and at the upcoming Women to Women brunch.
- Heard from Rabbi Kramer that plans for the start of religious school are well underway. Several additions to the program are planned; families who have not yet registered their children should do so as soon as possible.
- Reviewed preliminary results from the survey sent out with the membership renewal packet. Of the 200+ responses received thus far, 20% rated themselves as very active or involved, 32% as somewhat involved, 39% as a little involved and 6% as not at all involved. 72% were satisfied with their current level of involvement, while 21% would like to become more involved. The Connections Committee will be working to help those who would like more involvement to find activities of interest to them.

Clean Out Those Garages!

REMINDER: Keep saving quality items you’ve been meaning to get rid of and donate them to CST for an on-line auction to be held in the spring. We’re looking for like-new items that originally cost over \$50, so we can sell them for at least \$20. Looking for items such as jewelry, small appliances, home decorator items, art, tools, small antiques, sporting equipment and collectibles. No furniture or large items.



TEMPLE NEWS

Volunteer Opportunities

Environmental Action Committee

Tip-of-the-Month

L'shanah tovah

tikatev v'taihatem...

“May you be inscribed
and sealed for a good year.”

1-2-3

Make a New Year's commitment to practice **The Big Three** to eliminate waste and protect our environment:

- 1. Reduce...** Buy and use less. Avoid waste!
- 2. Reuse...** Instead of throwing things away, reuse them yourself or pass them on to others.
- 3. Recycle...** Put recyclables in your blue bin or take them to recycling centers, to be either remade or turned into something new.

► <http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/recycle.htm>

► <http://www.renew-reuse-recycle.com/>

LifeLong Learning Committee Needs Volunteers

The LifeLong Learning Committee is looking for new committee members interested in working on bringing speakers, classes and other special events to Shomrei Torah. The committee meets the fourth Wednesday of most months, and discussion is lively. The events you'll help plan serve every group within the congregation: young and old, scholars and those exploring Judaism for the first time, regulars and those just wanting an occasional “taste” of study. Interested or want to know more? Contact the temple office.

Matchmaker, Matchmaker

Do you enjoy getting to know people and connecting them with other people they might like? If so, the *Chavurah* program needs you. The coordinator (or coordinators) match people interested in joining *Chavurot* with appropriate ongoing groups as well as helping to organize new ones. Contact the temple office if you are interested.

Chemo Caps Reaches 100

With the latest production of 12 hats, our total has reached 100. Thank you to all who made them and a special thanks to Helga Spizman who supplies some every month!

When a committee member suggested that a group of knitters get together, the group started meeting monthly to deliver finished hats and start new ones. If you are interested in participating, please contact the temple office.

The GLUE of Jewish tradition

Curious about Jewish beliefs and ideas? GLUE, the congregational group that studies Jewish ideas and beliefs about God, Life, the Universe and Everything, will start exploring *Kabbalah* and mysticism (K&M) this fall. This group is separate from and unaffiliated with LifeLong Learning. We study topics layer by layer, like peeling an onion — so participants dig deep or stay close to the surface, as they choose. It all depends on one's curiosity and available time. No previous knowledge is necessary, and there's no fee for the first year of participation. How long will we study K&M? As long as it takes. We stick with a topic until we're satisfied, usually about a year.

The beginning of a unit is the best time to join GLUE. We meet monthly on Sunday afternoons and schedule sessions as a group. Specific starting date will be published on the website and the weekly Chai-lites.



**Some congregations tithe.
We ask only 2%.**

Whatever your reason to belong, Shomrei Torah belongs to you.
When you renew, please pledge your 2% fair share.

TEMPLE NEWS

Holiday Recipes

As with most Jewish holidays, *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* remind many of us of special foods we grew up with or adopted as adults. Check out *Oy to Joy* for recipes for *challah*, brisket, side dishes and foods for Break-the-Fast.

Honey Cake

This recipe for honey cake, adapted from Joan Nathan's recipe that was published in *Jewish Holiday Kitchen* and the *New York Times*, showcases the sweet honey that symbolizes a sweet year.

- 1 cup strong coffee
- 1¾ cups honey
- 3 T Cognac or 1 t. vanilla
- 4 eggs
- 4 T vegetable oil
- 1¼ cups dark brown sugar
- 3½ cups sifted all-purpose flour
- 3 t. baking powder
- 1 t. baking soda
- 1 t. cinnamon
- ¼ t. ground cloves
- ¼ t. nutmeg
- ½ t. ginger
- ½ t. cup chopped toasted almonds or walnuts

- ½ cup white raisins
- ¼ cup chopped candied citron or lemon peel (optional)

Directions:

Preheat oven to 300°. Generously grease and flour two 9 x 5-inch loaf pans.

In a 2-quart saucepan, combine the coffee and honey and bring to a boil. Let cool, then stir in the optional Cognac.

In a large mixing bowl, beat the eggs. Stir in the oil and brown sugar.

In another large mixing bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg,

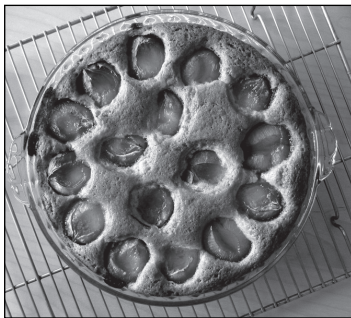
and ginger. Stir in the nuts, raisins, and citron, if using.

Stir the flour mixture and honey mixture alternately into the egg mixture. Pour the batter into the prepared pans and bake 70 minutes, or until the cakes are springy to the touch. Do not serve for 24 hours, so that the flavor of the honey has a chance to develop.



Plum Cake

The prune plums ripen in Sonoma County and arrive in the stores in September, just in time for the holidays. Like honey cake, plum cake is traditional in families with Eastern European roots.



Batter:

- ¼ lb (1 cube) unsalted butter
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 t. baking powder

Topping:

- 10 Italian (prune) plums, halved and pitted
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 t. cinnamon

Preheat oven to 350°. In mixer or food processor, cream butter and sugar. Add eggs and mix thoroughly. Add

flour and baking powder and mix to form stiff, smooth dough. Transfer greased 8" pie or cake pan. Arrange plums, skin side down on the batter. Sprinkle with cinnamon sugar mixture. Bake 30 minutes, until center is cooked through. Cool on a rack before serving. Freezes well.

Need a *lulav* and *etrog* for *Sukkot*?

Sukkot is coming! And what is *Sukkot* without a *lulav* and *etrog*? Order your set and receive it right after *Yom Kippur*.

Orders and payment for each set need to be received by the Shomrei Torah office no later than September 21. Please submit payment of \$33 for each set. Checks should be made out to CST and clearly marked "*lulav* and *etrog*." ***Lulav* and *Eetrog* sets may be picked up from the temple on Sunday, October 9.** Please call Judith Goleman 829-1670 for more information.

ORDER FORM

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____ My check is enclosed _____

Please charge my credit card, MasterCard, or Visa _____ Expiration Date _____

YOUTH NEWS

Meaningful *Mitzvah* Corps Experience

This summer, I spent two weeks in New Orleans on a program for Reform Jewish teens called *Mitzvah* Corps of the South (MCS). Over the course of the trip, we worked with five different community service organizations: NOLA Green Roots, which teaches participants how to build and maintain community gardens to provide free fresh vegetables; Lower Ninth Ward Village, the worst hit part of New Orleans in the storm (80% of the homes became uninhabitable) where we did some weeding, organizing and clearing of adjacent lots; Boys Hope Girls Hope, where we met at-risk



teenagers living in New Orleans; Habitat for Humanity in Birmingham, Alabama, where we did various construction jobs to hurricane ravaged houses and the St. Bernard Project in New Orleans where we restored other houses in the area that was worst hit by Katrina.

The other teens in MCS were a great group of people from all around the country,

mainly the East Coast. We had a fun educational unit every night, as well as free time when we could rest, go swimming or just hang out with our new friends. We also went to the French Quarter

three times and spent our first Shabbat at Camp Jacobs, a URJ camp in Mississippi.

Mitzvah Corps of the South 2011 was one of the greatest experiences of my life. Check it out for next summer. You won't regret it!

(Editor's note: Isaac's story has been edited for length. See the CST website for the entire story.)

By Isaac Kort-Meade

Tot Shabbat

In July, the annual Tot Shabbat Friday evening experience was special because of everyone who participated and shared food. Special love and thanks to Rabbi George and Rabbi Stephanie and her family, who attended the event. My deepest appreciation to Tricia and Sam Goldberg, Yarrow and Lily Kubrin for all of their hard work with set up and clean up. Without you, I couldn't do my work without your help. So no you = no event!

Everyone in the community gives something to someone else (food, helping in some way, a kind word, a ride, being there and sharing sacred space). These are all beautiful and treasured gifts. On this note, there are some Tot Shabbat families going through hard times. If anyone wants to assist, I will gladly pass on Safeway gift certificates, cash donations and non-perishable food donations. Please call me about food donations for dietary information.

My blessings and love to all of you,
Lauren

B'nei Mitzvah



EMMA MARGUERITE LEVINE

September 3, 2011 34 Elul 5771

We would like to invite you to share in this lovely moment as Emma Marguerite Levine is called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah.

*Jennifer Hirshfield-Levine
and Jay Levine*



ANNA RACHEL KAUFMAN

September 17, 2011 18 Elul 5771

We would be honored to have you join us as our daughter Anna Rachel is called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on September 17 at 10:30 AM. Please join us for an Oneg following the service.

Sarah Hart and Michael Kaufman

YOUTH NEWS

The Magical Gifts of the New Year



By Rabbi Stephanie Kramer
ASSISTANT RABBI
AND EDUCATION DIRECTOR

As the beginning of the school year rapidly approaches, almost all children (and parents!) feel excitement, anticipation and nerves. A new school year offers our children a fresh beginning, with new teachers, new supplies, new attitudes and, hopefully, a clean slate. Thankfully, children are not the only ones who reap the benefits of beginning a new year.

As Jews, we celebrate a new beginning each year with apples, honey, services and soul searching. We often feel the same excitement and anxiety during this time of year that our students feel about school. *Rosh Hashanah* literally translates to “Head of the Year”; however, it is actually only one of four New Year celebrations in Judaism. *Pesach*, another New Year celebration, focuses on the beginning of the Jewish people, where *Rosh Hashanah* is a celebration of humanity, celebrated on Adam’s birthday.

Many look at *Rosh Hashanah* as a new year for spiritual renewal focusing our attention towards our behavior with others and God. During the month of *Elul* preceding *Rosh Hashanah*, we take the time to reflect backwards on the year and think about past wrongs and how we can improve. Often it is the time leading up to any event that is more anxiety provoking

than the actual event itself. To counteract the anxiety preceding *Rosh Hashanah*, it has often been noted that “*Elul*” is an acronym for the phrase “*Ani ledodi vedodi li*,” meaning “I am my beloved’s and my beloved is mine.”

Elul represents the unconditional love God has for all of us. *Elul* is not a time to cover up our flaws but rather to be vulnerable enough to be honest and open with ourselves. By opening up, we reflect on the past year as a way to get ready for our new beginning. *Elul* is a time when we should view ourselves as loved enough to start over.

Beginnings are magical gifts we are given. I am exhilarated, and honored to share such an exciting beginning with all of you, both during *Rosh Hashanah* and for the start to a new year at STaRS.

Shanah Tovah!
Rabbi Stephanie Kramer

Chaverim Corner

JCC Countywide Teen Program and *Chaverim* 2011–12 Kicks Off!!

What’s staying the same?

- Popular *Chaverim* dinner discussions for each age group once or twice a month. Visit jccsoco.com for registration, dates, etc. We’re expecting approximately 100+ members this year.
- Great social activities, *Shabbatons*, campouts and celebrations throughout the year including: second annual Teen Talent Night, annual high school Casini Ranch campout, 8th grade bowling, indoor gymnastics dates, third annual teen-run Purim carnival, Monte Carlo casino nights

What is new this year?

- Aaron Selya joins Rick as Assistant Director of JCC Teen Programs and brings his experience and enthusiasm to all aspects of our program
- Teen-led Social Action Committee
- Outreach plans to identify and engage unaffiliated Jewish teens county-wide

- A special opportunity to do some advanced Jewish learning with Rabbis Gittleman and Kramer
- Shabbat dinners for members

All events are county-wide, and encourage Jewish teen members as well as new prospective members. If your teens have been involved, and you have not signed them up, we encourage you to do so. If your teens have not been involved, call Aaron or Rick at the JCC at 707-528-4222 for more information. They will be glad to make a connection with your son or daughter.

Check out Rick’s blog on the JCC website for inspirational writings about and for Jewish teens and parents on all kinds of issues. The current offering, called “God Space,” represents some of what we do in *Chaverim* and JCC Jewish Teen Programs.

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Affiliated with the
**UNION FOR
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High Holy Days Schedule

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

S'lichot — At Congregation Shomrei Torah, 2600 Bennett Valley Road, Santa Rosa

- 7:00 PM Potluck dessert nosh
- 8:00-9:00 PM Sylvia Boorstein
- 9:00-10:00 PM S'lichot service

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

Erev Rosh Hashanah

- 6:00-7:00 PM Intergenerational service at **Congregation Shomrei Torah**
- 8:00 PM Erev Rosh Hashanah service at the **Center for Spiritual Living, 2075 Occidental Road, Santa Rosa**

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

Rosh Hashanah

- 10:30 AM Adult, Teen and Preteen services at the **Center for Spiritual Living**
- 4:30 PM *Taslich* at Lake Ralphine — Howarth Park

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

2nd Day Rosh Hashanah

- 10:30 AM Service and pot luck lunch at **Congregation Shomrei Torah**

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7

Kol Nidre

- 6:00-7:00 PM Erev Yom Kippur — Intergenerational service at **Congregation Shomrei Torah**
- 8:00 PM Kol Nidre service at the **Center for Spiritual Living**

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18

Yom Kippur — All services at the Center for Spiritual Living

- 10:30 AM Adult, teen and pre-teen service
- 12:45-2:00 PM Jewish Journeys
- 2:15-3:00 PM Meditation and reflection
- 3:15-4:15 PM Torah service
- 4:30 PM Yizkor service
- 5:30 PM Neilah service

