

Sh'vat/Nisan
5778

February 2018



CONGREGATION
SHIR AMI
Castro Valley

4529 Malabar Avenue
Castro Valley, CA 94546

www.CongShirAmi.org
Info@CongShirAmi.org

All events are held at Shir Ami unless otherwise noted.

Find up-to-the-minute event details at: www.CongShirAmi.org/monthly-calendar

Thu, Feb 1	7:00 PM	Board of Directors Meeting. Open to all members.
Sun, Feb 4	9:00 AM	Hebrew School
Sun, Feb 4	10:30 AM	Religious School
Sun, Feb 4	11:30 AM	Tot Talk
Fri, Feb 9	7:00 PM	Family Shabbat Service , led by Rabbi Sam Klein, assisted by younger students
Sat, Feb 10	10:00 AM	Adult Ed: Torah Study , led by Rabbi Sam Klein
Sat, Feb 10	1:30 PM	Adult Ed: Learn Your Roots , led by Rabbi Sam Klein
Sat, Feb 10	6:00 PM	BBYO Event at Shir Ami
Sun, Feb 11	9:00 AM	Hebrew School
Sun, Feb 11	10:30 AM	Religious School
Tue, Feb 13	7:00 PM	Core Committee Meeting
Thu, Feb 15	7:30 PM	Rosh Chodesh Adar
Sun, Feb 18		NO SCHOOL
Tue, Feb 20	7:00 PM	Adult Ed: Mishkan T'Filah , led by Diana Zankowsky
Fri, Feb 23	5:00 PM	SISTERHOOD RETREAT , Feb. 23 – Feb. 25. See flier for details.
Sun, Feb 25		NO SCHOOL
Thu, Mar 1	7:00 PM	Board of Directors Meeting. Open to all members.
Fri, Mar 2	7:00 PM	Purim Shabbat Service , led by Rabbi Mira Weller
Sat, Mar 3	10:00 AM	Adult Ed: Mussar and Meditation , led by Rabbi Mira Weller
Sun, Mar 4	9:00 AM	Hebrew School
Sun, Mar 4	10:30 AM	Religious School
Sun, Mar 4	11:30 AM	Tot Talk
Sun, Mar 11		NO SCHOOL

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Sun, Mar 11	10:00 AM	Adult Ed: Lox & Bagel Brunch. See flier for details.
Thu, Mar 15	7:00 PM	Core Committee Meeting
Fri, Mar 16	7:30 PM	Shabbat Service , led by Rabbi Sam Klein
Sat, Mar 17	10:00 AM	Adult Ed: TBD
Sun, Mar 18	9:00 AM	Hebrew School
Sun, Mar 18	10:30 AM	Religious School
Tue, Mar 20	7:30 PM	Rosh Chodesh Nisan
Sun, Mar 25	9:00 AM	Hebrew School
Sun, Mar 25	10:30 AM	Religious School
Sun, Mar 25	11:30 AM	Tot Talk
Sat, Mar 31	4:30 PM	Community Passover Seder , led by Rabbi Mira Weller

Rabbinic Intern Message
February 2018

The candied hearts and sentimental greeting cards have already begun to line the aisles of supermarkets and grocery stores. February has come and Valentine's Day beckons.

This commercialized celebration of love evokes complex emotions amongst us. For some, this day offers an opportunity to honor the most precious relationships in our lives. For others, this is not a holiday of love at all, but a holiday of lack. Why haven't I met that special someone in my life?

Valentine's Day might even be a holiday of loss. For those whose special love has left their lives, the chocolate hearts and rose bouquets are but a bittersweet reminder of a feeling and a someone that can only be yearned for.

As a community of Jewish practice and prayer, we need not succumb to the dominant cultural assumptions about Valentine's Day. We need not feel those pigments of elation, sorrow, or loneliness which color the day. Let us not forget the full name of the holiday - Saint Valentine's Day. Recall that the holiday began in commemoration of a Christian saint. I certainly don't write this to berate Valentines Day. There is nothing more special than sharing a special night with your beloved, and I'd have to be crazy to turn down a giant box of chocolates.

But perhaps, just perhaps, a day like St. Valentine's Day is foreign to Jewish tradition. In our tradition, we need not mark our calendars to place love in the center of our hearts and minds. For every day in Jewish practice upholds this tenderest of feelings: love for our creator (Deut. 6:5), love for our neighbor (Leviticus 19:18), love for the stranger (Deut. 19:18), love for all beings and the world which holds our living community (Psalm 136). We are commanded to love, with all our hearts, with all our minds, and with all our souls. (Deut. 6:5, the V'ahavta)

A kabbalistic teaching tells us that God created the world because love needs another to love. Our world beckons us to love, to deepen our capacity to receive the compassion, empathy, and care that radiates from a universe which, according to the Talmud, was made for each and every one of us (Mishna Sanhedrin 4:5). The love of Jewish tradition is not exclusive love. It leaves no person behind. Rather, this love is a reflection of the divine imprint within us. A famous Jewish proverb teaches: "Only love can give us a taste of the eternal."

Perhaps our task in life is to learn from the natural models which surround us, to learn to love our fellow beings from the most intimate relationships in our lives. Only then can we hold both the joys and the sorrows evoked by each person's heart, come February 14.

Rabbi Mira Weller

Adult Education
February 2018

Shabbat, February 10, 10:00-11:30am

Torah Study: Parashat Mishpatim

Highlights include: Treatment of slaves and strangers, the Sabbatical Year, festivals, the original law that led to the prohibition of cheeseburgers, and encountering God...

Shabbat, February 10, 1:30pm-3:00pm

"Learn Your Roots!"

Calling one and all, beginner, middle, and advanced Hebrew language learners! Looking to improve your Hebrew, seeking more meaning from Hebrew prayers, or hoping to understand the ties between biblical and modern Hebrew? A unique characteristic of the semitic language family is the "root", a series of consonants that form connections of meaning across the rich Hebrew vocabulary -- both ancient and modern. The system also provides a brilliant model to learn the Hebrew language. [Israeli snacks and drinks included!]

Tuesday, February 20, 2018 7:00 pm. - 8:30 pm

A little bit of help with our prayer book, Mishkan T'filah. Taught by Diana Zankowsky

Do you have questions about our prayer book, Mishkan T'filah? Do you wonder about why certain prayers are included, what they mean and how to participate comfortably in the Shabbat services? Then this class is made for you. We will meet Tuesday evening, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at Shir Ami. We will work with the prayer book, primarily in English and make our way through the Friday night service. Diana Zankowsky is offering this class. Please reach out to her at diana.zankowsky@gmail.com with any questions.

Sunday, March 11, 2018 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Bagel & Lox Brunch

Topic: Was DNA Researcher Dr. Rosalind Franklin denied the 1962 Nobel Prize because she was an outspoken advocate for women's rights and because she was Jewish? Three male scientists were awarded the Nobel Prize for their determination of the structure of DNA. Yet, Dr. Franklin was not honored although her research on DNA double helix was crucial to an understanding of DNA.

Our speaker, Dr. Ron Bachman, practiced clinical genetics at Kaiser Permanente for over 38 years and is currently Co-Medical Director of the Genetic Counseling Program. He will discuss the latest research in genetics and DNA and Dr. Franklin's superlative contributions and numerous worldwide honors. He will also offer his opinion on the DNA program "23 and Me."

Donation: \$10.00 for Shir Ami members; \$15.00 for non-members. Bagels and lox included. Reserve by March 7, by EVITE.

Membership Spotlight for Feb 2018 Bulletin
Submitted by Barbara Heimowitz, Membership Chair

Our members are our Shir Ami community! As our mission statement states:

Congregation Shir Ami in Castro Valley, California is an intimate, inclusive, intergenerational Reform Jewish community that welcomes interfaith families. We nurture our members' spiritual growth and cultural identity, and we make Jewish education fun and joyful for children and adults alike. We strive to embody the Jewish values of lovingkindness and righteous action. Shir Ami is a place where people feel wanted and where they want to be.

We warmly welcome:

New Members: Joanna and Lee R and family from Castro Valley
Eric and Shree from Newark.

Returning: Ann C from Hayward
Todd F from Castro Valley

Shir Ami has different meanings to all of us. Here are ways we participate in our greater community and at Shir Ami.



Martin Luther King Day 2018



Sisterhood celebrating Thanksgiving together 2017



Shir Ami helped sort foods at the Alameda County Food Bank.



Welcoming a new Hebrew learner at a Shabbat service, led by Rabbinic Intern Mira.



Our youngest students learning about Sukkot during a Tot Talk session.

School News
February 2018

On January 21st, students were shown a video of Camp Newman. Some kids have never been and may be ready to try a session. This year it will take place in Vallejo. It's not too early to think about summer plans. Please note that Shir Ami will be awarding up to \$400 in camperships for those attending a Jewish camp!

On February 11th we will have Gerry Tenney, from KlezCalifornia come sing some Yiddish songs with the students.

On April 15th we are having a family/school field trip to the Contemporary Jewish Museum. We will be led through the contraptions exhibit as well as the Rube Goldberg exhibit. We need to be there by 10:00 so we will need to be at BART early. More details to come as we get closer to the date.

February 2018 Yahrzeit List

(as of 1/16/18)

February 9, 2018

Paul Bergel, father of Marci Loss
Beatrice Dombrower, mother of Jan Dombrower Chimpky
Selma Edelstein, mother of Joan Edelstein
Florence Lewis, mother of Peter Lewis
Jacob Small, grandfather of Toni Schulberg
Syd Kramer, uncle of Jan Dombrower
Leon Meier, founding member of Shir Ami
Jacob Small, grandfather of Toni Schulberg
Ingrid Weinberg, founding member of Shir Ami
Susan Weinberg Andersson
Shellie Cohen
Sherrie Kidwell
Sy Mober,
Chris Partridge,
Civia Rudman

Kaddish List (those who have died during the past 11 months)

Muriel Small, aunt of Toni Schulberg
Gerald Ross Kasin, father of Mike Kasin
David Bensinger, step-father of Ruth Hartman
Amy Eva Schuelke, sister of Susan Spitzer
Bernard Jadeson, father of David Jadeson

Todah Rabah
February 2018

Donations:

Ruth Hartman/Gary Wolff
Barbara-Ann Lewis

Join us for our 22nd Annual

Shir Ami Women's Retreat: Finding Light in the Darkness

Friday, February 23 - Sunday, February
25, 2018

At the beautiful San Damiano Retreat Center in
Danville

Connect with your Shir Ami sisters and have a great getaway! Join us for this annual weekend of women's friendship, worship, creativity, music, and play. Rabbinic Intern Mira Weller joins us to share her spiritual leadership. Newcomers are *warmly* invited.

The cost for the weekend is \$275/double room, \$300/single room, \$100/Saturday only (9 am to 8 pm).

Please register online at <http://tinyurl.com/haw477e> and mail your check, payable to Ruth Hartman, the same day. (Mailing address is at the online registration site.)

Register ASAP, no later than February 1.

Questions?

*Contact Ruth Hartman: 510-543-6902 or
retreat@congshirami.org*

Support Camperships

2018

Dear Shir Ami Community,

With the terrible fires last fall and the heartbreaking destruction at URJ Camp Newman in Santa Rosa, we are reminded of how precious our Jewish summer camps are in building Jewish connection and identity across generations. Research has repeatedly shown that children who attend Jewish camp are more likely to remain intimately engaged with Judaism throughout their lives.

For many years, Congregation Shir Ami has offered modest camperships to help families with the cost of Jewish summer camp programs. This year, we set a goal to boost those camperships so we can help send more of our youth to Jewish camps, including both Camp Newman and Camp Tawonga. We're assured that there will be a 2018 Camp Newman season, so we're launching a special fundraising project focused around camperships.

At our High Holiday services, as you enjoyed the wonderful liturgy in our new Mishkan HaNefesh prayer books (machzorim), you may have noticed that some of the books have dedication plates on the inside cover. These were underwritten by congregants whose generosity helped us purchase the books. But now, the books are paid for, and many of them haven't yet been dedicated.

Please consider making a special donation to support camperships for Shir Ami youth. With your donation, you can also dedicate copies of Mishkan HaNefesh in honor or memory of a loved one or a special occasion. See the attached flier for details, and return it with your check to the address shown. Contact Jon Zimmerman if you have any questions, mishkan@congshirami.org or 510-220-3345.

Thank you!

מחזור לימים הנוראים
משכן הנפש
MISHKAN HANEFESH
Machzor for the Days of Awe



Congregation Shir Ami now uses new High Holy Day prayer books called **Mishkan HaNefesh**, which have modern and gender-equality content, updated translations, rich commentary, and a beautiful selection of poetry. Each regular print 2-volume set can be sponsored for a donation of \$50 and large print for \$75. This year, all proceeds will support camperships to Jewish summer camps for Shir Ami youth. Your donation is a great way to recognize important people and events in your life.

To sponsor a set of Mishkan HaNefesh prayer books, please fill out and send in the form below.

Questions? Contact mishkan@congshirami.org, or call Jon at 510-220-3345.

Make check payable to: **Congregation Shir Ami**. Send to: HHD Prayer Book, c/o Congregation Shir Ami, P.O. Box 2099, Castro Valley, CA 94546

Enclosed is a check for \$_____ for _____ set(s) of Mishkan HaNefesh
(please include as many types & inscriptions as appropriate)

Name: _____

Set Type (Regular/Large Print): _____

Inscription #1: _____

Inscription #2: _____

Note: For large print set, please include a 3rd inscription.



Our High Holy Day cantorial soloist, Jessica Leash, is now an ordained Cantor!! Mazel Tov!!

Shir Ami Bagel and Lox Brunch and Discussion:

“Dr. Rosalind Franklin and her role in the understanding of DNA” by Dr. Ron Bachman



Sunday, March 11, 2018

10:00 am – 12 Noon

Congregation Shir Ami

4529 Malabar Ave

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Was DNA Researcher Dr. Rosalind Franklin denied the 1962 Nobel Prize because she was an outspoken advocate for women's rights and because she was Jewish? Three male scientists were awarded the Nobel Prize for their determination of the structure of DNA. Yet, Dr. Franklin was not honored although her research on DNA double helix was crucial to an understanding of DNA.

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Reserve by March 7, by EVITE.

IRVINGTON CONSERVATORY THEATRE PRESENTS

Fiddler on the Roof

BOOK
BY JOSEPH
STEIN

LYRICS
BY SHELDON
HARNICK

MUSIC
BY JERRY
BOCK

APRIL

14, 15, 22

2:00 PM

13, 14, 19, 20

7:00 PM



Valhalla Theatre
48000 Diacow Rd.
Fremont, CA 94538

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT
ihsdrama.com