




















CONGREGATION SHIR AMI

December, 2009

Dec 5 2:00 PM	Adult Ed - Intro to Judaism led by Diana Zankowsky	Jan 8-10	Kids Only Shabbaton
			
Dec 6	School	Jan 14 7:30	Rosh Chodesh
			
Dec 11 6:30 PM	Chanukah Pot Luck	Jan 15 8:00 PM	Shabbat Services led by Matt Dreffin
	Regular Shabbat Services - Led by Matt Dreffin		
	8:00 PM		
Dec 12 7 PM	Havdalah & Movie Night	Jan 16 10 AM	Bat Mitzvah Kaitlin Beckman
			
Dec 13	School Chanukah Extravaganza - 10:30 AM	Jan 17	School
			
Dec 16 7:00 PM	Rosh Chodesh - Chanukah party	Jan 21 7:00 PM	Board Meeting
			
Dec 18 7:00PM	Shabbat Services led by Suzy Stone	Jan 29 8 PM	Interfaith Service led by Suzy Stone
			
Dec 19 10AM	Bat Mitzvah Sarah Keil	Jan 30 10 AM	Religious Committee Meeting
			
Dec 20	School	Jan 30 5 PM	Tu B' Shvat Seder with dinner led by Suzy Stone and Diana Zankowsky
			

Congregation Shir Ami, 4529 Malabar Ave, Castro Valley CA 94546 - (510) 537-1787

www.CongShirAmi.org - info@CongShirAmi.org

Affiliated with the [Union for Reform Judaism](http://www.URJ.org)

President's Message
Ruth Hartman

Dear Shir Ami members and friends,

Now that we have completed our building improvements, I want to again thank our donors who helped make them possible. Many thanks are owed to the Blum, Haber, and Keil families for their generous support of the bathroom renovations in honor of Adam's, Kaitlin's, and Sarah's upcoming bnai mitzvah. Thanks to Gary Wolff for donating the water-saving dual-flush toilets. Thanks to Marion Kramer for underwriting the electrical work. Thanks to Toni Schulberg for spending several weeks onsite as our project manager. Thanks to Bonnie Frey and Mickey Lange for their help with painting and hauling. And thanks to all the Shir Ami members whose participation in e-Scrip and generous financial pledges enabled us to make these much-needed improvements to our beloved home.

We have two terrific Chanukah events coming up this month. On Friday, December 11, the first night of Chanukah, we'll have our annual potluck dinner and candle lighting, starting at 6:30. Bring a dish to share (latkes if you like) and your family's menorah (Chanukiah). Our festive dinner will be illuminated by the candles as well as by lively conversation and happy children. The women's Rosh Hodesh group will also be making a special presentation of original art work to the community on this evening.

On Sunday morning, December 13, at 10:30 am, our Religious School Chanukah party will feature a very special guest: local singer, songwriter, and Klezmer master Gerry Tenney presenting original and traditional songs. Crafts, latkes, and dreidel games will also be part of the fun. All Shir Ami members are welcome, and this is a perfect chance to introduce friends and neighbors to the magic of Shir Ami.

Also during the month of December, stop by the fabulous new Castro Valley Public Library and see the "Holidays in the Holy Land" display in the front lobby. For the past seven years, I've been partnering with a Palestinian friend to mount this annual display of Christian, Muslim, and Jewish holiday artifacts. This year, it will include a beautiful Chanukah banner created by Shir Ami's 3rd through 7th graders.

I wish you a very happy Chanukah. I hope that December brings you a chance to rest, to enjoy family and friends, and to recognize the sparks of hope and renewal that emerge in the darkest days of the year.

B'shalom, Ruth

Rabbis' Corner

Matt Dreffin
Suzy Stone

Kislev is one of my favorite months in the Jewish calendar because it means that Chanukah is right around the corner. And with Chanukah comes homemade potato latkes, sufganiot, and a lot of fried goodness!

As we know, Chanukah is a holiday chock-full of special foods. However, did you know that Chanukah, unlike most other Jewish holidays, does not require us to eat any specific, ritual foods? In other words, all of our favorite Chanukah foods are purely *minhag*, or tradition.

On the other hand, during Passover we are commanded to eat matzah and maror, and to drink four cups of wine. On Purim, we are commanded to have a festive meal. On Sukkot, eating in the sukkah is part of fulfilling the commandment to dwell in it. However, I hate to admit this, but on Chanukah, we are not actually commanded to eat any special foods that we enjoy so much.

That being said, we celebrate Chanukah, and the legend of finding eight days of oil, by using plenty of oil to cook with!

As a colleague of mine taught me, in Chassidic thought, Jewish law (halakah) is equated with bread and water—the daily sustenance of life. Wine, on the other hand, symbolizes the mystical, hidden level of the Torah. While oil, represents the deepest teachings of the Torah. In fact, oil is known as *razin d'razin*, the secrets of secrets, because of its tendency to rise to the top of any combination of liquids and its overall power to illuminate.

Thus, oil symbolizes our ability to take life, our understanding of life, and our purpose in the world to the next level. It enables us to transcend daily obstacles and it helps us make sense of the world we live in. Therefore, I hope that during this holiday season, as you bite into whatever your favorite fried holiday food happens to be, that you will think less about what that oil is doing to your waistline, and more about how oil, as symbol of the power of light, allows us to re-assess the challenges and darkness of this winter season into the power for potential and transformation.

Thank you to Lea New Aizman, a Wexner fellow who shared this teaching with me about oil in Chasidic thought. I hope that her illuminations will make Chanukah a more enlightened holiday for all of us.

Chag Same'ach!

Sincerely,
Rabbi Suzy

We'd like to hear from you

Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) in Los Angeles is the graduate school that our student rabbis attend. The school, in the interests of helping our students learn and grow while at their student pulpits, has asked us to provide regular, written feedback to the students and their advisors. That means that they want to hear from us after EVERY visit by each of the student rabbis. Diana Zankowsky has taken on the job of Lay Advisor and she will collect and convey that feedback. Please communicate both positive and corrective feedback to Diana, (at dzankowsky@aol.com) no later than Tuesday after a rabbi's visit. Thank you in advance for contributing to our student rabbis' educations.



Dec. 6 – Hebrew and Religious School
Dec. 13 – Hebrew Class followed by Chanukah Party
Dec. 20 – Hebrew and Religious School
Dec. 27 – No School – Winter Break
Jan. 3 – No School – Winter Break

School Families,

I am thankful to all of you who bring your children to Shir Ami to participate in Hebrew and Religious School. It is an amazing thing to be in the building on Sunday mornings listening to the discussions and activities that are happening.

This past Sunday, Ruth Hartman came in to work with two of our classes on a project for the *Holidays in the Holy Land* display which will be at the Castro Valley Library. This effort involved three adults – Ruth Hartman, Jan Dombrower, and Rabbi Suzy, one teen – Shashana Markus, and students from 3rd through 7th grade. It represented a great example of what we do so well at Shir Ami. I heard great in-depth discussion of the topic for the display, I heard amazing planning and coordination of the art piece, and I heard wonderful interactions among everyone involved.

Sophia Blum recently wrote this essay for a college application. I am including it here because I think it speaks to the value of what our little school provides, and the future leaders we are helping to raise. It was written in answer to the question: *Tell us about something that you have done on your own in the last two years that makes you feel good about yourself.*

I attend a very large high school and, it can be hard to find your niche. Outside of school, I have found my niche in Jewish organizations. I am the Membership Vice President of my local North-American Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY) youth group. This past summer I worked as a Counselor in Training at Reform Judaism's Camp Newman Swig in Santa Rosa, California. I also teach religious school at my local synagogue. I had found where I was comfortable outside of school, but I was still looking for a feeling of belonging at school.

Castro Valley High School had many cultural clubs, but there was no Jewish student organization. I took it upon myself to found and lead a Jewish Club at CVHS. Now in its third year, Jewish Club is a place where students who are Jewish or not Jewish come together over lunch and talk. If someone is having trouble with another student or a teacher, we talk about it and usually leave the meeting feeling a lot better than when we walked in. We enjoy the Jewish holidays and learn about events happening around our community that we can be part of. We help kids find ways to get involved with local Jewish organizations.

Castro Valley High School has a very strong Palestinian population. Jewish Club isn't based on any political stance, but last year when the Students for Justice in Palestine decided to distribute very biased information at school, members of the Jewish Club came to me with their complaints. I felt I had to say something. I went to the Advisor for the Palestinian Club and shared my concerns. The Palestinian Club still felt like they needed to share their information, but they did it in a more respectful way. The members of the Jewish Club felt that they had accomplished something good for the school. Their voices were heard when they otherwise wouldn't have been, and I was their connection.

Through this experience, I have learned something about the responsibilities involved in becoming a leader. I have learned that if I see an issue that concerns me, I have the capability to change it. Through my involvement as a teacher, camp counselor, and teen leader, I have created a safe and supportive place for Jewish youth in my local community. I hope I can take what I have learned about being a leader and have a positive influence on my college campus.

The staff of your religious school is looking forward to a fun filled December.

Respectfully Submitted, Jodi

Adult Education

In Kislev 5770, Congregation Shir Ami will have several different adult education offerings.

Introduction to Judaism: We have expanded our on-going monthly class for adults interested in conversion. We are now welcoming any member of our community interested in learning more about Judaism. We will continue to meet on Saturdays. Our next meeting will be on December 5th from 2 pm to 4 pm. At this class, we will continue to look at our liturgy in the Mishkan T'filah and we will also talk about Chanukah and look at the story. Contact Diana Zankowsky, dzankowsky@aol.com for more information.

“What does *GOD* have to do with it? Jewish Perspectives on Life, Death and the Afterlife” Rabbi Suzy Stone’s class will not meet this month. The next meeting will be in February.

Adult Hebrew: Judy Ganz continues to teach the weekly “Learning Hebrew through Prayer” class, for those who already have basic literacy skills. Please contact Judy at jbganz@aol.com if you are interested in joining.



Movies: On December 12, Shir Ami Israeli Movie night brings "To Take a Wife." (*V'Lekhta Lecha Isha*). Written and acted by the brother-sister combo of Shlomi and Ronit Alkabetz ("The Band's Visit"), this award winning drama focuses on a Moroccan family in 1979. A wife, desperately trying to express herself in a modern world, finds her situation in a traditional family to be too oppressive. This insight, into the dissolution of the bonds that tie a family together, promises to be enlightening and moving. The movie will follow Havdalah and the lighting of our Chanukiot for the second night of Chanukah. The whole evening will begin at 7pm. See you there!

Rosh Chodesh Group

Jan Dombrower



Sisterhood:

Last month's gathering was wonderful, artistic, fun, and a Mitzvah. Under the guidance of Nancy Storch, we met at Aran's Paint and Glaze studio to work on the fused glass Menorah that Nancy designed. The evening started out with bringing in the new month of Kislev with blessings and candle lighting. We shared some delicious treats and then were instructed in the art of glass cutting by the owner, Aran.

Women had the choice to make smaller fused glass items such as jewelry, mezuzahs or sun catchers. Some women painted ceramic pieces. Designs for artistic Hebrew letters were available for transferring to the ceramics.

Meanwhile, everyone contributed to the large Menorah by selecting the glass pieces that made it up. Some women worked on the flames and others on the body. Nancy and others stayed late to finish the project and now we are waiting for the finished product to be unveiled when it is done being fired.

This Menorah will be dedicated to Shir Ami and hung in the synagogue. Stay tuned to hear about the dedication. Nancy Storch said this about the project, "The fused glass menorah project could not have been conceived and done anywhere but at an open, welcoming congregation like Shir Ami. It was amazing to me, how everyone who learned of it became enthusiastic and supportive. And contributions were forthcoming... What spirit!"

Thank you very much to Nancy Storch for all her hard work and creativity and to everyone who came out and supported this project and Mitzvah: Sara, Toni, Monica, Jan, Harriet, Ellen, Toni, Sophie, Pat, Rose F, Diana, Sherilyn and Sharon G.

Next month we will meet for our Hanukkah Party on Wednesday, Dec 16th, at 7:00 at the home of Ellen Gave in Pleasanton. Car-pooling is encouraged. Look for the email for address and directions.

We will have Latkas, light our Menorahs, and have a gift exchange (\$15.00). So, please bring your Menorah, and candles for the 6th night along with a lovely gift. We'll have a great time.

Registration is now open for our annual women's retreat, scheduled for March 5-7, 2010. This year we'll be at a new location in Alamo, less than a half-hour drive from Shir Ami. See flier in this bulletin for details.

The Community Page

December, 2009

Yahrzheits:

December 11, 2009 (Chanukah Service)

John Blum, father of Jeff Blum
Larry Dean, father of Tyler Dean
Inez Gautreaux, aunt of Toni Schulberg
Lazarus Lewis, father of Peter Lewis
Max Schulberg, father of David Schulberg

December 18, 2009

Sheila Arthur, long time former member of Shir Ami
Ann & Michael Bruser, active early members of Shir Ami
Joseph & Meshka Druker, grandparents of Alex Druker
Elisabeth Levin, mother-in-law of Ruth Levin
Jan Okoniewski, husband of Marion Kramer
Isaac Rosenberg, grandfather of Alex Druker

Kaddish List: (to be read both services in December)

Jack Farbstein, uncle of Ruth Rosenthal
Sarah Leona Markus, grandmother of Noah Markus
David Sapper, father of Danielle Keil
Alyce Nasatir, mother of Cary Nasatir
Jacob Ross, father of David Ross
Doris Greenfield, mother of Julie Greenfield
Jack Skelly, father of Bruce Skelly
Jean Skelly, mother of Bruce Skelly
Bridget Laky, past president and long time former member of Shir Ami
Zac Cohen, long time member of Shir Ami

May their memory be a blessing...

Ever wonder how the names read out loud for Yahrzeit and Kaddish at Friday night services get on that list? If you are a member of Shir Ami, and want a personal reminder for the Yahrzeit of a loved one, just send Toni Schulberg the following information: the name of the deceased; the relationship of that person to the member of Shir Ami; the full date (month, day, year) that person died; and whether you want to use the Hebrew or English calendar for their Yahrzeit (Toni will look up the Hebrew date for you). Questions? Call Toni at 278-1695 or e-mail her at Yarzheit@congshirami.org.

TODAH RABAH FOR THESE GENEROUS DONATIONS:

- From Irina & Alex Druker: in Memory of Dora Alperovich at her Yahrzeit.
- From Maryann Leshin: in Memory of her father, Sydney Leshin at his Yahrzeit.

A contribution to Shir Ami is a great way to honor, remember, or show appreciation for someone special. It's easy. Send a check and note to:
Florrie Finkle (her address is included on Shir Ami's roster). Florrie will send a card to the person you are honoring and your dedication will appear on this page.

Thank you to our Oneg Hosts:

November 6th : Diana & Fred Zankowsky
November 20th: Harriet & Bruce Skelly

What's Nu?

Have you seen the newly remodeled bathrooms at Shir Ami? We have Mike Scanlon, of Scanlon Development in Castro Valley, to thank for doing such an outstanding job. Mike is a licensed plumbing contractor who can do everything. He completed both bathrooms in less than two weeks, doing all the work himself! He's honest, quick, dependable, and a quite talented, hard working young man. His prices are very reasonable. If you need any plumbing work or remodeling done, I highly recommend calling Mike at (650) 333-1533.

B'Shalom, Toni Schulberg, Bathroom Project manager

A URJ Biennial Report from Leah Hartman

A few weeks ago two friends and I loaded up my car and made the drive from Boston to Toronto to attend URJ Biennial. We met up with two more of our classmates who had opted to fly and camped out in a (more or less clean) youth hostel near the convention center. Besides being a fun trip, Biennial was an interesting experience because it was my first encounter with a Jewish institutional gathering of that scale outside of a youth setting. In this column I'll give you a few highlights of my weekend.

The first highlight for me was that my registration fee was paid by the Small Congregation Resource Fund, a project of the URJ that provides assistance to congregations of 250 members or less. Needless to say, Shir Ami qualified. This meant that aside from gas and the youth hostel, my trip was free. I appreciated that the URJ had the resources and the thoughtfulness to provide this support. I was struck, however, by the extent to which money played a role in the doings at Biennial. Though there was no official request for donations, watching the high-ups small talk and network their way through every activity gave me pause. At NFTY Convention, my point of reference, these sorts of machinations would have been unthinkable, unless you count trying to get a date to the post-Havdallah dance. At Biennial, though, it was clear to me that one of the purposes of the conference was to obtain the funding necessary to continue the movement. One URJ Camp Director with whom I spoke said (and I'm paraphrasing) "This is what we have to do to be able to do what you see at camp." Although the donor-focused air of Biennial troubled me, this seemed a more than fair justification.

As a college student, a lot of my Biennial was spent in a private conference room rented by KESHER, the URJ college program. Keshet has had mixed success because of its blurry relationship with Hillel, and in the last round of budget cuts its URJ staff members were cut completely. At Biennial my friends and I joined a group of students from a handful of other colleges across the country try to rebuild and reclaim their movement. In an effort to make Keshet more successful and perhaps even win back URJ funding, we rewrote the Keshet constitution, wrote a basic service outline that could be used by any Keshet chapter, shared successful programs we had run on our own campuses, and heard presentations from other relevant URJ programs such as the Reform Action Center (the political branch), Netzer Olami (the international youth movement of which NFTY is a part), and the Interfaith Youth Core (an interfaith organization the URJ supports). At Brandeis, Jewish campus life functions very differently from that of other universities, so it was exciting for me to be a part of the mainstream college Reform community and help them with the struggles they're facing.

As a whole, URJ Biennial was an enlightening experience in that it showed me the larger processes at work behind the Reform movement. I was able to both see what goes on in the establishment and understand the reasons behind it and be a part of a national college initiative and learn how such programs are created. In the process I got a trip to a foreign country and the chance to represent Shir Ami on the national scene. Thanks for the opportunity!

Yours,
Leah Hartman

The Tzedakah Box
A Social Action Column
Daryl Berman, Julie Greenfield, Sara Lamnin

A Perspective from Cate Steane, Executive Director, FESCO (the Family Emergency Shelter Coalition)

The theologian Deterich Bonhoeffer said that the measure of the morality of society is how it treats its children. We at FESCO believe that, at a minimum, for a community to be able to face itself in the mirror, no child should ever be homeless. Yet on any given night, there are about 1,000 homeless children in Alameda County. As a community, we have the ability and the responsibility to stop it.

FESCO, similar to social service nonprofits all over the country, is in serious financial crisis. There is no question that the recession has made matters worse. But this recession, as severe as it has been, is not what has put social service nonprofits in a survival crisis. That issue is the lack of government funding for safety-net social services for those most in need.

In the 60s and early 70s, our nation came to a new consensus around issues of poverty - as a nation, we should allocate our resources toward ending poverty. This consensus shifted in the 80's when wealth was prioritized over justice. Leaders were able to manipulate the fears of the middle class and implement a strategy of distraction and disinformation to disassemble the concept of societal responsibility for providing resources to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.

30 years on, we have so limited government revenues by abandoning a progressive tax structure that there are no resources to provide for the needs of the growing ranks of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. Especially in California, those who prioritize personal wealth over the well-being of the society as a whole have largely succeeded in their goal of "starving the beast" of government, leaving us with a government infrastructure so weakened that it can barely perform the most basic functions, much less provide resources for effective poverty reduction programs.

In most areas of life, people understand the direct connection between value and cost. If you want to have some material good or service, you understand that you will have to pay for it. When you turn on the tap at your home and clean water flows out, you understand that the bill at the end of the month is proportional to how much water you used. But when it comes to the goods and services we purchase collectively through this thing called a government, we completely lose that sense of connection. Among the industrialized nations, the United States has one of the lowest tax rates and the highest child poverty rates. We spend less than any other country on the common good and we have the worst societal results. It's sort of like that water bill. You can wrestle that water bill down to almost nothing if no one in your family is allowed to drink, wash, cook, have pets, or keep a yard or garden. But do you really want to live that way?

Once you comprehend what has happened in this country over the past 30 years, someone with progressive values has two emotional choices. You can become overwhelmed, feel defeated, and yield to the inaction of hopelessness. Or you can get mad.

Let me suggest you direct some energy towards local and state government. Think just for a moment about what priorities the City Council or Board of Supervisors would set if it knew that its most observant, vocal, precinct-walking, voting constituents have a passion for social justice. Maybe it's time to let them know that they have active constituents who care deeply about children, about homelessness, about the needs of the most vulnerable residents of this city. If you think that the measure of the greatness of the community is how it treats its children and its members who have the least, it's time to let your local government representatives know that.

Or you could get involved in the state constitutional reform process. Services for the vulnerable and disadvantaged, which have already been slashed deeply, will go away entirely if we do not restore reasonable powers of taxation to state and local governments.

We need your voices. We need you to educate your family, friends, colleagues, and above all, your elected officials about exactly what kind of a society we are living in. You need to speak up if you believe it is morally unacceptable for children to be homeless. You need be part of a tide of truth against the waves of disinformation about how much we pay in taxes compared to the rest of the world and whether, as a nation, we should allocate our resources toward ending poverty.

There's plenty to do. Let's get to work.

FESCO helps homeless families move toward self-sufficiency. For more information or to help a family, call (510) 886-5473 or visit www.FESCOfamilyshelter.org

Other ways to get involved:

Tarps and Sleeping Bags Needed. The Hayward Community Action Network is collecting tarps of any size and sleeping bags for individuals who are homeless in Castro Valley and Hayward. To volunteer, donate, or for more information, email haywardcan@gmail.com or call (510) 432-7703.

Food and Toys are needed by the South Hayward Family Resource Center: (510) 782-2947

SHIR AMI BULLETIN BOARD



Safeway eScrip Renewal

It is time to renew your Safeway eScrip for Shir Ami.

Shir Ami's Store on CafePress.com

Our latest and greatest fundraiser is our very own store on [CafePress.com](http://www.cafepress.com/CongShirAmi).

Thanks to the talents of Jeff Blum who designed the stained glass panel in our front door, and David Holsey who developed Jeff's design into our new logo, we have items for sale that have the official Congregation Shir Ami logo.

You may have seen a small sample of them at the year-end picnic where the teachers were given their very own Shir Ami mugs. But wait, there's more. If you go online to our store at <http://www.cafepress.com/CongShirAmi> you will find a wide variety of products, including t-shirts, sweatshirts, hoodies, not to mention cool gift ideas like mugs, travel mugs, note cards, journals, tote bags, and more.

When you purchase an item from our store, 25% of the purchase price goes directly to Shir Ami. Do yourself a favor, and do Shir Ami a favor, by taking a few minutes to go to our online store and start shopping.

Used Cell Phones Wanted

Barbara Heimowitz is still collecting used/old cell phones that you leave at Shir Ami to be sent in for cash. You can bring in your cell phones to Shir Ami anytime – just leave them in the box in the kitchen. Any questions? Please call Barbara.

Shir Ami Contacts

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Donations:

General Funds, Special Funds,
Wall Plaques
Florrie Finkle
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Latkes, Latkes, latkes, latkes, latkes
Plus a Potluck and Chanukah latke competition!
Friday, December 11 at 6:30 PM
Services start at 8:00 PM



Please participate in Shir Ami's rotating food assignment

L to Z

Main dish

A to K

Salad or side dish

Services will be Led by

Matt Dreffin



CHANUKAH



EXTRA VAGANZA!!!



JOIN US AT CONGREGATION SHIR AMI FOR A MORNING OF CHANUKAH FESTIVITIES! LOCAL SINGER, SONGWRITER, AND KLEZMER MASTER GERRY TENNEY WILL TREAT US TO A SHOW OF ORIGINAL AND TRADITIONAL SONGS, MENORAH LIGHTING AND BLESSING. CRAFTS, LATKES, AND FRIENDS WILL MAKE THIS A PARTY NOT TO BE MISSED! FOR MORE INFORMATION

EMAIL: EDUCATION@CONGSHIRAMI.ORG

Sunday, December 13

10:30 AM TO 12:30 PM

FREE ADMISSION!



CONGREGATION
SHIR AMI
www.congshirami.org

4529 Malabar Ave. • Castro Valley
(off Redwood Rd.)



Congregation Beth Emek presents



Akiva Tor

Consul General of Israel for the Pacific Northwest Region

Israel Challenges & Opportunities

Sunday, December 6th

7:00 PM at Congregation Beth Emek

3400 Nevada Court, Pleasanton, CA 94566

Free

Akiva Tor has been the Consul General of Israel for the Pacific Northwest region since August 2008. He has served as World Jewish Affairs Adviser to the President of Israel, as Director of the Israel Economic and Cultural Office in Taipei, as Deputy Director for Palestinian Affairs in the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs and as Press and Information Attache at the Israel Embassy in The Hague. He is a graduate of the Harvard University Kennedy School of Government, and holds degrees from Hebrew University in Jewish political thought and from Columbia University in general philosophy. Tor has written and lectured extensively on Jewish values in the foreign policy of Israel and on ethical considerations in international relations. He served as a paratrooper in the Israel Defense Forces and as an infantry captain in the IDF reserves.

This will be Mr. Tor's first appearance in the Tri-Valley and all are welcome.

For further information, please contact Jim Holtz at jimholtz@comcast.net.



*A presentation of the Israel & World Jewry Committee of Congregation Beth Emek
in collaboration with TVTC Midrasha.*

Please join us in our Fourteenth Annual
Shir Ami Women's Retreat

Delight In Your Soul

Friday, March 5 – Sunday, March 7, 2010

At the beautiful Westminster Retreat Center
In Alamo, California (new location)

Come share in a weekend of discovering what delights your soul. Uncover your inner spark, refresh and renew your spirit. Join us in a weekend of women's friendship, worship, creativity, inspiration, and play. Rabbinic Intern Suzy Stone joins us once again as a scholar-in-residence. Our new site makes the retreat more accessible than ever, and this year's cost is lower than the past several years! Newcomers are *very* welcome.

*Space limited to 20 women. Register ASAP, no later than **February 15**.
Contact Ruth: 510-582-3379 or ruth@wordcraft.com.*

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Please register online at <http://www.CongShirAmi.org/wr2010.php>, and mail your check (payable to Ruth Hartman the same day to 18850 Cull Canyon Road, Castro Valley, 94552. Or complete this form and mail with your check. Deadline is February 15.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

I enclose a check for \$245, OR

I enclose a deposit of \$____. I will pay the balance on ____.

I need a ride.

I have the following special needs (mobility, vegetarian, etc.):

Jewish Family & Children's Services of the East Bay

**JFCS/East Bay is proud to have been selected as a
2009 Kung Pao Kosher Comedy beneficiary!**

A portion of the show's proceeds will directly benefit JFCS/East Bay's Refugee & Immigrant Services department, serving Russian, Afghan, Bosnian, Iranian, and Latino refugees and immigrants.

[TICKETS](#) ARE ON SALE NOW!

**The 17th Annual Kung Pao Kosher Comedy:
Jewish Comedy on Christmas in a Chinese Restaurant**

Dec. 24 to 27, 2009

**Headliner: Jonathan Katz
(Dr. Katz, Professional Therapist)**

Also featuring

Brian Malow, Hilary Schwartz, and Lisa Geduldig

Two shows each day:

Dinner shows at 6pm (5pm on Dec. 27) - \$62

Cocktail shows at 9:30pm (8:30pm on Dec. 27) - \$42

New Asia Restaurant

772 Pacific Ave.

between Grant & Stockton in Chinatown

San Francisco, California

No age limit for shows.

(Teens are welcome; keeping in mind that it's a comedy show, use your discretion about bringing children.)

Whet your taste buds with the Kung Pao Kosher Comedy [menu](#).

Kung Pao Kosher Comedy is a uniquely Bay Area tradition. Don't miss a great night of comedy and Chinese cuisine!