



CONGREGATION SHIR AMI

4529 Malabar Avenue
Castro Valley CA 94546

Web: www.CongShirAmi.org
Email: Info@CongShirAmi.org

Congregation Shir Ami in Castro Valley is an intimate, intergenerational Reform Jewish Community that welcomes interfaith families.
Affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism

<i>Event Calendar</i> Find up-to-the-minute event details at Shir Ami's website, www.congshirami.org				
Sun.	Nov.	1		NO SCHOOL
Sun.	Nov.	8	9; 10:30 am	Hebrew and Religious School
Sun.	Nov.	8	11:30 am	Tot Talk, a free, monthly program for children under 5 and their families
Tue.	Nov.	10	7:00 pm	Shir Ami 50th Anniversary Celebration Planning Meeting , events@congshirami.org
Thur.	Nov.	12	7:00 pm	Shir Ami Board Meeting, at Shir Ami. Open to all
Fri.	Nov.	13	6:00 pm	Children's Shabbat Service with songs and a story, led by Rabbi Bryan
Fri.	Nov.	13	6:45 pm	Potluck Dinner for all, bring a dish and enjoy the community
Fri.	Nov.	13	7:30 pm	Shabbat Service with Rabbi Bryan Zive
Sat.	Nov.	14	10:00 am	<i>Coffee & Commentaries</i> : the week's torah portion w/ Rabbi Bryan at Starbucks on CV Bl.
Sat.	Nov.	14	3:00 pm	<i>Reform Judaism's Hot Button Issues</i> : Intro. to Reform Responsa (rulings), w/ Rabbi Bryan
Sat.	Nov.	14	4:30 pm	"Office Hours" with Rabbi Bryan Zive, schedule by email at rabbi.bryan@congshirami.org
Sun.	Nov.	15	9; 10:30 am	Hebrew and Religious School.
Wed.	Nov.	18	7:30 pm	Meditation group, contact Julie Greenfield at meditation@congshirami.org
Fri.	Nov.	20	7:30 pm	Shabbat Service Welcoming New Members with Rabbi Julie
Sat.	Nov.	21	10:00 am	<i>Coffee & Commentaries</i> : the week's torah portion w/ Rabbi Julie at Starbucks on CV Bl.
Sat.	Nov.	21	3:15 pm	"Office Hours" with Rabbi Julie Bressler, schedule by email at rabbi.julie@congshirami.org
Sat.	Nov.	21	4:30 pm	<i>Jewish Rituals, Havdallah</i> , with Rabbi Julie, email rabbi.julie@congshirami.org
Sun.	Nov.	22	9:00 am	Alameda County Food Bank Volunteer Day, see Page 5, socialaction@congshirami.org
Sun.	Nov.	22	9; 10:30 am	SCHOOL: Details to follow. Older children field trip to volunteer at FOOD BANK
Sun.	Nov.	22	4:00 pm	Sisterhood Pre-Thanksgiving Dinner, details to follow sisterhood@congshirami.org
Thur.	Nov.	26		THANKSGIVING DAY
Sun.	Nov.	29		NO SCHOOL
Fri.	Dec.	4	7:30 pm	Shabbat Service with Rabbi Julie Bressler
Sat.	Dec.	5	10:00 am	Saturday Morning Shabbat Service with Rabbi Julie Bressler. Join us for <u>Saturday</u> service!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Shir Ami Community and Friends,

Now that all of the holidays are behind us for a while our Shir Ami community is focused on some major projects:

- Converting high holiday services from our old machzor, Gates of Repentance, to the new machzor, Mishkan HaNefesh;
- Implementing a financial reserve policy and identifying, prioritizing and implementing (some of the) capital improvements that Shir Ami needs;
- Shir Ami's 50th Anniversary celebration.

In future columns I will review the first two projects. This month I will catch everyone up on the 50th Anniversary Celebration. Here are the important details:

- What: Shir Ami's 50th Anniversary Celebration Brunch
- When: Sunday, March 20, 2016, 11:00 am
- Where: Crow Canyon Country Club, San Ramon
- Who: All current and past members, Rabbinic Interns, friends of members and past members.

This will be a fun and memorable event with great food, music, and more. We are doing our best to make it affordable for all our members:

- Adults: \$36
- Kids 6-13 yrs: \$18
- Kids 3-5 yrs: \$9
- Kids under 3 yrs: No charge

No current member will be turned away—a confidential conversation with me is all that is needed.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP

A note from Jon Zimmerman (Congregation Shir Ami Treasurer Payable) asked us to include the following thank you to all who helped with the Sukkah:

This year's festival of Sukkot wouldn't have been possible without the hard work of several members. Thanks goes out to Mike Loss for donating the bamboo used for the Sukkah roof; to Bruce Skelly, Lee Carmack, Rick Goldhoff and Jon Zimmerman for transporting the bamboo to Shir Ami; and to Jon, Fred Zankowsky, Mickey Lange, Tom Spitzer, Peter Lewis, Elayna Contreras, Dennise Templeton, Helene Paz, Sharon Golemba, Sara Lamnin and Bonnie Frey for helping to set up and decorate the Sukkah. Special thanks to Jeremy Templeton for coordinating the Sukkah take-down.

We'll be selling ads to cover the cost of our program. See the flier in this Bulletin for details. Everyone who buys an ad will have their name or business listed in our event program, in the April 2016 Bulletin and on our website. All of us can sell ads. Just make copies of the flier and give them to friends, local businesses that you support, etc. You can even buy an ad yourself. For example Bruce and I plan to buy a small ad to wish Shir Ami a happy 50th anniversary from the Skelly Family.

The save the date Evite has already gone out. Soon you will receive the actual invitation Evite, and we hope you'll Reply YES. Don't forget to reserve the date on your calendar now: Sunday, March 20, 2016!

If you have any questions or would like to offer your talents to one of the planning teams, please get in touch with event chairs Melanie Einbund and Barbara Heimowitz at events@CongShirAmi.org.

I look forward to celebrating with you on March 20, 2016.

Harriet Skelly,
President



president@CongShirAmi.org

Just a reminder..

Hanukkah begins the evening of December 6!



RABBINIC INTERNS' CLERGY COLUMN

Each month, our Rabbinic Interns take time to share their thoughts with us. This month's column was written by Rabbinic Intern Bryan Zive

When was the last time you looked at your front lawn (or any grass area)? My guess is that it isn't as green as Dublin on St. Patrick's Day! The terrible drought that challenges our beautiful state is in full force and although El Nino is in our future, even a full winter of rain will not solve our water deficiencies. Are we optimistic that times will change so our lawns will once again look like Augusta National Golf Course?

Our journey through the Jewish calendar takes us into the month of *Cheshvan*. After a full month of High Holy Days and festivals, our reward is a month of quiet, our own holiday drought. There are no scheduled holidays or festivities on the Jewish calendar during *Cheshvan*. The Rabbis of the Talmud even name this ordinary month *MarCheshvan*, meaning "Bitter" *Cheshvan*.

Although it seems like your average month, *MarCheshvan* actually signifies an important connection to how we react to drought conditions. The *Mishnah* creates laws pertaining to our prayers for rain each year. On *Shemini Atzeret* (the day following *Simchat Torah*, we say, "*Mashiv HaRuach u'morid HaGashem*", "you cause the wind to blow and the rain to

fall," as traditionalists believe that God brings forth the precipitation. The Rabbis in the *Mishnah* state that if rain does not fall by certain deadlines in *MarCheshvan*, the community is required to fast and restrict themselves from other holy activities. They signify a major problem and drought, and the fasts are a reminder of the power of prayer to solve the issue.

Clearly, I am not asking you to follow the exact laws of the *Mishnah* if we don't see rain by the end of *MarCheshvan* (certainly not fasting!) However, we can use this ordinary month to remind ourselves of the important and necessary issues facing our larger community. Since we have no holidays to celebrate, we have the opportunity to shift from only ourselves (as we did during the High Holy Days) to communal issues, like our drought. The next time you pray, during the *Amidah*, when we ask for rain, say the words with meaning and intent: *Mashiv HaRuach u'morid HaGashem!*"

Who knows? Our prayers might just work and we can rejoice again soon on our beautiful, bright green lawns! (Hardly a bitter idea!)

Student Rabbi Bryan Zive

BOOK CLUB SELECTION FOR JANUARY 9 BOOK CLUB W/ RABBI JULIE

***The Periodic Table* by Primo Levi**

"Every chapter is full of surprises, insights, high humor, and language that often rises to poetry.

-The New Yorker

The Periodic Table is a complex and beautifully rendered memoir by the author of *Survival in Auschwitz*. Primo Levi (1919-1987), a chemist by profession, uses the elements as a frame for stories of his childhood in the Jewish community of Turin, his work with the Partisans, and some extraordinary experiences after the War. Levi writes in an approachable and welcoming style as he paints a picture of his extraordinary life.

This memoir is the 2015-2016 book club selection for **One Bay One Book**, a project of the Jewish Community Library that aims to connect Jewish book groups and communities across the Bay Area through literature. Throughout the year, there will be many events and discussions related to the book and the topics it discusses. Check out more information and see other

upcoming events at their website - <http://www.jewishlearningworks.org/one-bay-one-book/>.

The discussion of ***The Periodic Table*** will take place during **Rabbi Julie Bressler's** January 8-10, 2016 visit. Stay tuned for more information.

Rabbinic Interns

Julie Bressler

rabbi.julie@congshirami.org

Bryan Zive

rabbi.bryan@congshirami.org



RABBINIC INTERNS' SCHEDULE

Nov. 13-15 with Rabbi Bryan Zive

Fri., Nov. 13, 6 pm, Children's Service: Student Rabbi Bryan will be leading a children's service, complete with fun music, prayers and a story! Appropriate for all children (and children at heart!). Bring your *ruach!* (spirit!)

Fri., Nov. 13, 6:45 pm, POTLUCK

Fri., Nov. 13, 7:30 pm, Shabbat Service: Bryan will lead a festive musical service with a Torah service and a short sermon featuring some insight on the week's Torah portion, *Toldot*.

Sat., Nov. 14, 10 am: Coffee and Commentaries: Enjoy your Shabbat morning with Student Rabbi, Bryan Zive. Sip on your latte or a spot of tea while we study the weekly Torah portion in an relaxed setting (Nothing formal, just fun!) **Location: Starbucks on Castro Valley Blvd (Next to The Posh Bagel)** (Prerequisite: Come ready for an engaging conversation!) This week's edition:



Parashat Toldot: What if John Wayne and Steve Jobs both lived in your house?!

Sat., Nov. 14, 3:00 pm: Reform Judaism's Hot Button Issues: Our introduction to Reform Responsa (Rabbinic committee rulings) will include the most pressing, controversial and hot topic issues facing the Reform Movement.. We'll use Responsa to help clarify some of your burning questions! Bring topics for future discussions! *This session's topic: The newly passed "Right to Die" law. What do the rabbis say about it?* **Location: Shir Ami**

Sat., Nov. 14, 4:30-5:30 pm: Office Hours with Student Rabbi Bryan Zive: Have something specific on your mind? A question? A challenge? Need advice or someone to talk to? Or want to share some great news or just want have a nice conversation about anything at all? **Come meet with Student Rabbi Bryan Zive at Starbucks** (next to Posh Bagel on Castro Valley Blvd). Please schedule in 15 minute blocks to reserve your time by emailing rabbi.bryan@congshirami.org.

Nov. 20-22 with Rabbi Julie Bressler

Fri., Nov. 20, 7:30 pm, Shabbat Service
Please join us for a Shabbat service honoring new members and joyously welcoming them into our community.

Sat., Nov. 21, 10 am: Coffee and Commentaries: Spend your Saturday morning sipping on coffee or tea and digging your teeth into this week's Torah portion with Rabbi Julia. First timers and seasoned pros welcome! This week, learn more about Jacob's famous ladder dream as we take a closer look at *Vayeitzei*. **Location: Starbucks on Castro Valley Blvd (Next to The Posh Bagel)**

Sat., Nov. 21, 3:15 pm: Office Hours with Rabbi Julie- Enjoy some one-on-one time with Student Rabbi Julie to ask a question, seek some guidance or just share a chat! No agenda necessary! Sign up for 15-minute slots by emailing rabbi.julie@congshirami.org. I look forward to chatting with you. **Location: Starbucks on Castro Valley Blvd (Next to Posh Bagel)**

Sat., Nov. 21, 4:30 pm: Sharpening Our Jewish Gears – Havdalah. In the second session of our ongoing series about ritual, we will turn our attention towards one of our favorite Jewish ceremonies – Havdalah. We will dive deep into its meaning, different resonances and talk about the power of separation and distinction. Of course, we will end this session with Havdalah! **Location: Shir Ami.**



SCHOOL NOTES

We began religious school with nineteen children. They are divided into four groups. Diana teaches fourth through eighth grade. Jan teaches second graders. Helene and Gabi are teaching the preschool and kindergarteners. Leah is a teacher's assistant. We also began our school year with a parent meeting to discuss ideas for the school year.

On September 29th students learned about Sukkot and finished up some decorations to hang from the sukkah. Bonnie and Helene made a wonderful cardboard sukkah for the youngest children in Tot Talk. During the third annual Sukkah sleep over, Liam and Marlo loved playing in that sukkah. Nine children and six adults spent the night after services.

We have started a new program this year. Religious school starts with fifteen minutes singing together. Then children break into their groups and spend forty five minutes learning about a particular topic. After one they take an elective course which includes mixed ages. This quarter they had three choices; cooking, arts and crafts, and videotaping community members. School has gotten off to a nice start.

TOT TALK

Our next Tot Talk is coming up quickly, on **Sunday, November 8th, at 11:30 am**

Photos from last month's Tot Talk have been shared on Congregation Shir Ami's Facebook Page in the timeline and the photos section. Here is the link: <https://www.facebook.com/CongShirAmi>. "Like" our facebook page and check out all the cute pics.

SHP FALL BOUTIQUE

South Hayward Parish (SHP) will hold a fall boutique at its New Bridges event center on **November 7**. If you are an arts or crafts person, a cook, baker, writer, etc. who would like to sell your wares to the faith based social action community, this looks like the place to be. SHP is offering tables for only \$20. If you are looking for gifts for giving this fall, plan to attend. The boutique will be open from 10:00 to 3:00. The address is 27287 Patrick Avenue, one block north of Tennyson. Contact Tom Spitzer, socialaction@congshirami.org

FOOD BANK VOLUNTEER DAY

Congregation Shir Ami members have the opportunity to pack food at the Alameda County Community Food Bank on **Sunday November 22 at 9:00 am**. As in the past, we are encouraging all students, 11 years of age and older, to attend. This is a wonderful opportunity to show tzedakah first-hand, donating our time to help those less fortunate. Prior to the 22nd, we will have forms to sign that release the Food Bank for responsibility for our well-being while we're on their premises. We will need to have those completed in advance, particularly for minors not coming with their own families. Also keep in mind that you will be in a refrigerated environment where there is heavy equipment so dress accordingly; you'll especially want to have sturdy (and close-toe) footwear. We have been doing this for the past few years, and it's always a lot of fun, and very rewarding. Please let Tom Spitzer know if you can attend so we can give the Food Bank an accurate head count. socialaction@congshirami.org

SHP THANKSGIVING DINNER

SHP will be serving a

community Thanksgiving dinner, on Thanksgiving, of course, from noon to 2:00 pm at the New Bridges event center, 27287 Patrick Ave in Hayward. Volunteers are needed to set up, serve, and clean-up, starting from around 9:00. If you want to participate, Tom Spitzer will be helping coordinate volunteer efforts.

socialaction@congshirami.org

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR WINTER SHELTER

For the past three years, South Hayward Parish has run a winter shelter on cold or rainy nights for people living on the streets of Hayward. Last year that did not amount to a huge number of nights. With El Niño expected this year, it becomes likely that we will need to open the shelter much more frequently. The city of Hayward realizes this, and has asked us what it will take to triple the shelter's capacity, which is currently about twenty people.

Like everything else SHP does, running the shelter relies on volunteers. We are looking for people who can commit to being available on specific nights of the week, so that when we have to open the shelter on those nights, we can call you to come in. We usually have a pretty good idea that the shelter will be open a day or two ahead of time, based on the weather forecast. Volunteer activities include checking people in, checking their belongings, transporting people, bedstuffs, and other supplies, cleaning up in the morning, and doing laundry. There's a lot that goes into this, and Betty could use some help! If you can offer a particular day it would be most appreciated.

Contact Tom Spitzer, socialaction@congshirami.org

MEDITATION GROUP

The meditation Group will meet Wednesday, November 18th, 7:30 pm. Contact Julie Greenfield, meditation@congshirami.org

SHIR AMI 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION EVENT PLANNING

Shir Ami 50th Anniversary Planning is moving forward!

Volunteer Updates!

Photography –Milton Palmer has accepted the chairmanship. Thank you Milt!

Printed Event Program – Valerie Goldman, Harriet Skelly & Melanie Einbund will be working on this committee!

Areas that need Volunteers are:

If you are interested in volunteering please contact the committee chair and/or Barbara or Melanie. Your skills and expertise are truly needed!

Web Site: Volunteers for Content and Graphics and A chairperson

Event Program: Volunteers for Content and Graphics and A chairperson

2 additional **Photographers** to take pictures in shifts at the event

Project Management skills to help Melanie and Barbara make calls to committee members and chairs, help with meeting minutes.

Children's Committee - volunteers to help develop childrens' material for the event. This group will display our children/school program and what they achieve.

Hospitality - to welcome guests at the event, make certain all is in place for the event, answer questions of attendees.

Publicity Sponsorship - public relations and obtaining ads for the event program, as well as working on the event program and web site. Sponsorship program.

Invitation - to assist with contact listings, follow up on invitations. Monitor attendance and payments. Create attendance listing. Follow up with invitees and rabbinic interns to determine interest.

Important Information

Members and/or community wishing to submit photos send them to David Schulberg in care of Shir Ami. It was requested that electronic files not be sent as the resolution will be poor. For those wanting their photos be returned, please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope. Please put your identification on the photos that you submit. Photos can also be left at Shir Ami by the kitchen entry way counter.

MEETING DATES-- all meetings at Shir Ami, 7 pm

Dec. 8, 2015; Jan. 5, 2016; Feb. 2, 2016;
Mar. 8, 2016; Mar. 15, 2016 – event run through;
March 29, 2016

Please come to our next meeting, learn what we are doing, see what interests you and volunteer! Big or small, your input and skills are welcome.

B'Shalom, Melanie and Barbara

NEXT MEETING, Tues., November 10, 2015, 7 pm

SHIR AMI ANNIVERSARY EVENT SPONSORSHIP

2016 SHIR AMI 50th Anniversary Event



Congregation Shir Ami will be celebrating our 50th anniversary as a synagogue in Castro Valley on March 20th, 2016 at the Crow Canyon Country Club. There are several sponsorship opportunities. Your sponsorship will increase your visibility among the attendees and Shir Ami Community and invited guests. You will have special recognition in the event program and a mention on the Shir Ami website.

Yes! I would like to commit to being a sponsor at the 2016 50th Anniversary Event for Congregation Shir Ami at the following level:

- 1/8 page Ad - \$25 1/2 page ad - \$90
 1/4 page Ad - \$50 Full page ad - \$150

Contact Person _____ Office Name _____

How would you like your sponsorship ad to read as? _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Enclosed is my check (payable to Congregation Shir Ami) in the amount of \$ _____

Yes, please contact me for artwork _____

Deadline for ordering an ad is December 10, 2015. Contact events@congshirami.org with questions.

Return via mail to Congregation Shir Ami – PO Box PO Box 2099, Castro Valley, CA 94546

November 13, 2015

Henry Ball,
Joseph Foreman,
Freda Hansen,
Ralph Loss,
Martin Michelson,
Lorraine Golembo,

very active former member of Shir Ami
father of Lorraine Lewis
aunt of Toni Schulberg
father of Mike Loss
brother-in-law of David Schulberg
step-mother of Sharon Golembo

November 20, 2015

Dora Alperovich,
Lazarus Lewis,
Ada & Jack Rubenstein,

aunt of Irina Druker
father of Peter Lewis
mother and father of Ron Rubenstein

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

Sonja Romero
Karl Felperin,
Florrie Finkle,
Sara Belenki
Irwin Martin Mitchell,
Hillie Levine,
Beatrice Dombrower,

birth mother of Lori Knopf Santora
member of Shir Ami
long time member of Shir Ami
mother of Arkady Massen
father of Helen Markus
charter member and mainstay of Shir Ami for many years
mother of Jan Dombrower

DONATIONS

From Judy Ganz,

in memory of Florrie Finkle and in honor of Toni Schulberg,
Vicky Sapper & Joseph Lamnin

From Lynn Gardner,

in memory of Florrie Finkle

From Ruth Hartman & Gary Wolff,

in honor of Toni Schulberg's birthday

From Sharon Golembo,

in memory of her mother

From Gloria Michelson,

in honor of David & Toni Schulberg and honoring Toni on her 70th
Birthday

**SHIR AMI
SISTERHOOD/
ROSH CHODESH**

The women of Shir Ami took a field trip to welcome the month of Cheshvan. We gathered at the beautiful Oshman Jewish Community Center to view a film that was part of the Silicon Valley Jewish Film Festival. The film was about a young Jewish man who was randomly kidnapped in Paris in 2006. The film followed the theme of darkness and reflection for the month of Cheshvan. We welcomed 4 guests (Evelyn, Juanita, Marian, and Susan) to share in our experience. We enjoyed ritual candle lighting and a prayer for Rosh Chodesh. We followed with a discussion of the film that brought with it many thoughts, opinions, and raw emotion. We reflected on the *dark* subject matter and the situation of growing anti-Semitism in Europe. Our



evening concluded with coffee, tea, and decadent desserts.

Our next event will be the **Sisterhood 2nd Annual, Pre-Thanksgiving Dinner, Sunday November 22nd at 4 pm**. Look for more information and sign-ups by email.

Contact Jan Dombrower Chimpky, sisterhood@congshirami.org, for information and to be added to our email list.

SAVE THE DATE for the 2016 Women's Retreat

February 26-28, 2016
San Damiano Retreat Center,
Danville

Connect with your Jewish sisters and have a great getaway! Join us for this annual weekend of women's friendship, worship, creativity, music, and play. Rabbinic Intern Julie Bressler joins us to share her spiritual leadership. Newcomers are *very* welcome. More details to follow soon. Contact Ruth Hartman, events@congshirami.org, if you have questions.





SAVE THE DATE!

**Congregation Shir Ami's
50th Anniversary**

March 20, 2016 at 11:00 AM

**Crow Canyon Country Club
711 Silver Lake Drive Danville, CA 94526**

Why attend?

To reconnect with former and current members

To enjoy live music and a fabulous brunch!

To celebrate the role our wonderful congregation has played
in the lives of ourselves, our families, and our community.

To have fun!

Adults - 14 and over: \$36

Kids - 6-13 years old: \$18, 3-5 year olds: \$9

Kids under 3 - no charge

Questions? E-mail: events@congshirami.org