



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

Event Calendar All events are held at Shir Ami, unless otherwise indicated.

Find up-to-the-minute event details at Shir Ami's website, www.congshirami.org/monthly-calendar

Thur.	Mar.	2	7:00	pm	Shir Ami Board Meeting, held at Shir Ami. Open to all members
Fri.	Mar.	3	7:00	pm	Erev Shabbat Service led by Rabbi Liora Alban with Rowan Lepkowsky
Sat.	Mar.	4	10:00	am	Shabbat Service and Bar Mitzvah of Rowan Lepkowsky at Eden UCC, Rabbi Liora Alban
Sun.	Mar.	5	9, 10:30	am	SCHOOL: Hebrew School, 9 am; Religious School, 10:30 am
Sun.	Mar.	5	10:30	am	Parent Meeting. Join other parents at our school meeting. Held from 10:30-11:30 am
Tue.	Mar.	7	6:00	pm	Hamentashen making! Sharon Golembo will be hosting a simple dinner at her home for those who help with hamentashen making. Please RSVP to Sharon
Fri.	Mar.	10	7:00	pm	Erev Shabbat and Purim Service led by Rabbi Bryan Zive. Come in costume, if you wish
Sat.	Mar.	11	10:00	am	Coffee and Commentaries: <i>Megillat Esther</i> , with Rabbi Bryan Zive
Sat.	Mar.	11	1:00	pm	Men's Club will tour the Blackhawk Car Museum in Danville
Sat.	Mar.	11	7:00	pm	Teen Mixer for middle and high school students hosted by local BBYO chapter. There will be a presentation for teens and parents at 7:00 pm, followed by a teen mixer at 7:30 pm
Sun.	Mar.	12	9, 10:30	am	Hebrew School, 9:00-10:15 am Purim Festival, 10:30 am-12:30 pm, fun for all. See flier
Sun.	Mar.	12	10:30	am	Tot Talk will join the Purim festival from 10:30 am-12:30 pm. See flier
Sun.	Mar.	19			NO SCHOOL
Sun.	Mar.	19	10:00	am	Lox and Bagel Brunch and Discussion: <i>Meet Your Muslim Neighbor. Guest Speaker, Moina Shaiq.</i> See flier. Information and reservations, events@congshirami.org
Sun.	Mar.	26	9, 10:30	am	SCHOOL: Hebrew School, 9 am; Religious School, 10:30 am
Tue.	Mar.	28	7:00	pm	Rosh Chodesh/Sisterhood, check email for details or contact Jan, sisterhood@congshirami.org
Fri.	Mar.	31	6, 7:30	pm	Potluck Dinner and Kabbalat Shabbat Service led by Rabbi Liora Alban with K-3 children
Sat.	Apr.	1	10:00	am	Coffee and Commentaries: <i>Torah Study, this week's portion, Vayikra</i> , w/ Rabbi Liora Alban
Sat.	Apr.	1	6, 7:30	pm	Housewarming at Sara & Jon's new home. See flier: Make your own pizza dinner at 6:00 pm
Sun.	Apr.	2	9, 10:30	am	SCHOOL: Hebrew School, 9 am; Religious School, 10:30 am
Sun.	Apr.	2	10:30	am	Parent Meeting. Join other parents at our school meeting. Held from 10:30-11:30 am
Thur.	Apr.	6	7:00	pm	Shir Ami Board Meeting, held at Shir Ami. Open to all members

COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Each month we use this column to spotlight one of the committees (or groups) that help make Shir Ami special. This month's column features Mike Kasin, Vice President of the Board.

VICE PRESIDENT MIKE KASIN

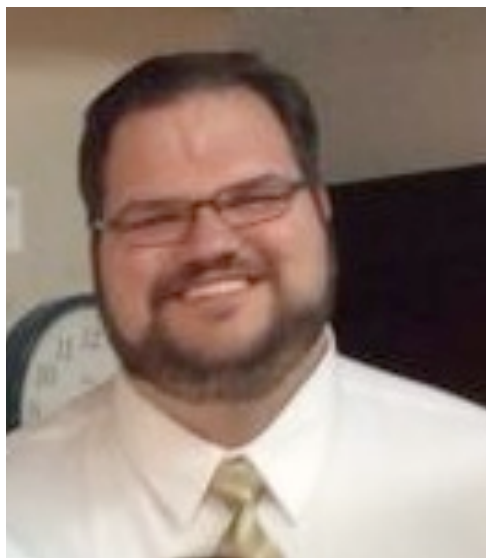
At our February Board meeting, the Board appointed Mike Kasin to fill our vacant Vice President position. A little about Mike...

Introducing our Vice President:

Mike is married to Trisha Kasin, his beautiful wife of 10 years, and has a very rambunctious daughter, Abigail, who is a 1st grader at Golden Oaks Montessori here in Castro Valley.

Mike holds a BFA from NYU and a JD from John F. Kennedy University. While working towards passing the bar, Mike works as a substitute teacher for the Castro Valley school district, as a lighting and sound engineer for the Danville Village Theatre, teaches improv at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, drives for both Über and Lyft and

occasionally still manages to serve as a real estate agent at Dino Riggio and Associates, based in Lafayette. Mike also is an award-winning playwright and director. Mike greatly appreciates the opportunity to serve Shir Ami and hopes to be a beneficial addition to the Shir Ami board.



ARE CHANGES COMING TO THE SHIR AMI BULLETIN?

Changes to the bulletin *are* coming.

Have you contacted the Communications Committee to let them know your thoughts on the website, the bulletin, the weekly email "blasts"?

The Communications Committee continues to focus on quality communication at Shir Ami, and as we've said before, we **WANT** and **NEED** to hear from you.

Email Communications@CongShirAmi.org

HAMENTASHEN BAKING!

A note from Sharon G.:

I will be doing the Oneg for March 10th (Purim). I am looking for Hamentashen bakers. I will be hosting a simple dinner at my home followed by the Hamentashen baking on Tues. 3/7/2017. We will begin at 6 pm. Please RSVP to golembo09@aol.com if

you plan to attend. If you prefer to do the baking in your own homes, please bring your creations to the service on 3/10.

Sharon G.

SARA & JON HAVE MOVED: HOUSEWARMING IS APRIL 1

Sara Lamnin & Jon Zimmerman have moved. There will be a housewarming and Havdallah service at their home on Saturday, April 1. The evening includes

Make-Your-Own Pizza at 6:00 pm and Havdallah at 7:30 ish. See flier.

RABBINIC INTERNS' CLERGY COLUMN

It is hard to believe that this year is moving so quickly. When I made my first visit to Congregation Shir Ami in the fall, we had not yet celebrated Simchat Torah. By now, we are already getting ready to read from Leviticus. In fact, during my visit at the end of March (March 31-April 1) Jews across the world will read from Parshat Vayikra, the first portion of Leviticus.

The Book of Leviticus departs thematically from Genesis and Exodus. *The Torah: A Modern Commentary* states, "If we say that Genesis and most of Exodus create a cascading river of narrative, then Leviticus is a still, deep pool" (658). Whereas Genesis and Exodus are narratives that teach about Creation, the lives of our early matriarchs and patriarchs, slavery in Egypt, the Exodus, and Revelation, Leviticus is essentially a set of laws. It contains the ritualistic laws that the Israelites are expected to follow within their portable sanctuary ("Tabernacle" or "*Mishkan*") in the Sinai Desert.

Parshat Vayikra teaches about making offerings to God. This includes burnt offerings of cattle, birds, sheep, and goats that must be offered according to specific methods and must be of "pleasing odor" to God (Leviticus 1:17). A midrash on Leviticus comments on this direction about the odor, stating that whether one offers much or little does not matter as long as one's heart is directed towards God.

March 3-5 with Rabbi Liora Alban

Fri., March. 3, 7:00 pm, Kabbalat Shabbat Service.

Rabbi Liora looks forward to welcoming Shabbat with the Shir Ami community. The service will include new musical tunes and some thoughts on the week's Torah portion, Terumah. Rowan Lepkowsky will be leading parts of the service in honor of his bar mitzvah. We hope to see you all there!

Sat., March 4, 10:00 am:

Shabbat Morning Service & Bar Mitzvah of Rowan Lepkowsky Eden United Church, Pioneer Chapel

Please join us as Rowan Lepkowsky is called to the Torah as a bar mitzvah. He will be reading from the Torah and from Prophets and will share his thoughts on the week's Torah portion. The service will be facilitated by Rabbi Liora.

March 10-12 with Rabbi Bryan Zive

Fri., March. 10, 7:00 pm, Erev Shabbat and Purim Service. Join Rabbi Bryan for a lovely Erev Shabbat service. Bring your singing voices and laughter and make the most out of this fun, family-friendly service and holiday!

In other words, as long as the offering smells good to God, the amount makes no difference.

To me, this midrash teaches a pleasant and applicable lesson for our time. How many of you have given a gift to a loved one, not being completely sure that this loved one will like the gift? Often when this happens, the recipient of the gift says that the gift does not actually matter. It is the thought that counts. This is the lesson of our midrash. Our intentions matter just as much, if not more, than our actions. Nobody has the ability to be perfect all of the time, yet we cannot let this reality get in the way of aiming for greatness nevertheless. This includes how we act towards others, as well as what we expect in our treatment towards ourselves. We should strive to treat others with dignity, respect, and even appreciation. We should aim for our own personal bests in our endeavors. God did not need perfection when accepting offerings at the time of Leviticus. We do not need to be perfect today either but neither are we exempt from aiming as high as possible.

Student Rabbi Liora Alban

RABBINIC INTERNS 2016-2017

Rabbi Liora Alban
rabbi.liora@congshirami.org

Rabbi Bryan Zive
rabbi.bryan@congshirami.org



Sat., March 11, 10:00 am: Coffee & Commentaries

Join Rabbi Bryan for a more "Adult Education" style of discussion about Megillat Esther, the scroll that includes the Purim Story. It's fascinating, dramatic, even a bit risqué! Have some coffee and a small nosh and learn a little more about Shushan!

Mar. 31-Apr. 2 with Rabbi Liora Alban

Fri., March. 31, 6:00 pm, Potluck and Kabbalat Shabbat Service. We will open this Shabbat with a community Potluck beginning at 6:00 PM. This will be a chance to bring your favorite foods and unwind from the week. Afterwards, Rabbi Liora will lead a Kabbalat Shabbat service with help from Shir Ami's K-3 students.

Sat., April 1, 10:00 am, Coffee & Commentaries

Come to Shir Ami for a morning of coffee, friends and Torah study! Rabbi Liora will lead a discussion on the week's Torah portion, Vayikra. She cannot wait to hear your thoughts.

Sat., April 1, 7:30ish pm, Havdallah Rabbi Liora will be leading Havdallah at Sara & Jon's housewarming. See flier.

SCHOOL NOTES

Editor's Note: This article about school was submitted on time for last month's bulletin. Somehow, I overlooked it. My apologies to Bonnie and Jane.

Congregation Shir Ami Religious School Parent Meeting on January 15, 2017, led by Rabbi Bryan

At the Parent Meeting on January 15, Rabbi Bryan shared his experience as a Jewish father doing Jewish rituals with his son. He then opened up the discussion for others to share their experience with something that is intimidating or uncomfortable as Jewish parents.

We discussed one of the hardest issues for Jewish parents in our culture-- dealing with Santa Claus and the Christmas holiday season. Some parents shared creative solutions that they used successfully in their families. On that topic, we watched a hilarious episode of the TV show, *Friends*, featuring Ross as the Holiday Armadillo. Here is the youtube clip for those who missed it: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VH-6u-3qgLY>

We also discussed the difficulties in observing Shabbat and saying

the Shema prayer at night with our families. Rabbi Bryan focused on the goal of dividing the week from Shabbat, and on our creating something meaningful that works for us and for our families. He shared his own rituals, and we heard the unique ways that others incorporate "Jewishness" into their families, whether in ritual or by identity.

This was an open and honest discussion about the struggles and issues we have as Jewish parents. Many of us struggle with the "shoulds" of being Jewish and all the things that we think we "should" do. Rabbi Bryan refocused us as Reform Jews into thinking about the "coulds" and about what we "could" creatively envision to add to our Jewish family life. We explored the benefits of being together in a Jewish community and its positive effects on our children and their Jewish identity. Rabbi Bryan noted that some of the responses to his questions seem to fall flat, indicating that the children have not fully incorporated the Jewish values that they are learning and suggesting that we have more work to do.

Moving forward, we realize that we need to talk more about anti-

Semitism and our concerns about how it affects our children and families.

TOT TALK

Sunday, March 12, 10:30 am-- Purim Fun! Tot Talk will join with the religious school children and their families to celebrate Purim.

ROSH CHODESH

The next Rosh Chodesh, celebrating the month of Nisan, will be held on **Tuesday, March 26**. Look for details by email.

Interested in Sisterhood events? **Contact** Jan Dombrower Chimpky at sisterhood@congshirami.org

LETTER TO LEGISLATORS

The Shir Ami Board, at the February meeting, determined that a letter articulating our concern about border closures and travel restrictions would be appropriate. The letter, sent from Shir Ami to Senators Harris, Feinstein, Rep. Swalwell and office of the president, can be seen on pages 9 and 10 of this bulletin.

Photo from Women's Rereat, February 2017 (See another picture on page 10.)



March 2017 Yahrzeit List

March 3, 2017

Bobbie Clark,
Beatrice Dombrower,
Clara Finlay,
Dalton Gautreaux,
(Pronounced "GO -TRO")
Fannie Heimowitz,
Elsie Maas,
Joslyn Miner,

sister of Marci Loss
mother of Jan Dombrower-Chimpky
mother of Todd Finlay
uncle of Toni Schulberg,
mother of Stan Heimowitz
grandmother of Toni Schulberg
former member of Shir Ami,
and wife of Syd Miner, past president of Shir Ami



March 10, 2017

Esther Cooper,
Shirley Cooperman,
Harold Dombrower
Faye Felgoise,
Florence Lewis,
Jean Skelly,
Stella Small,
Matthew Zankowsky,

aunt of Ann Blank
cousin of Melanie Einbund
father of Jan Dombrower-Chimpky
aunt of Melanie Einbund
mother of Peter Lewis
mother of Bruce Skelly
grandmother of Toni Schulberg
father of Fred Zankowsky

March 31, 2017

Sidney Black,
James Finlay,
Lee Edelstein,
Matt Ganz,
May Ganz,
Sam Ganz,
Al Swanson,
Edna Vanous,
Sylvia Weingarton,
Ruth Zelezny,

father of Melanie Einbund
father of Todd Finlay
brother of Joan Edelstein
long-time active member and former president of Shir Ami,
and husband of Judy Ganz
former member and mother-in-law of Judy Ganz
former member and father-in-law of Judy Ganz
partner of Joan Edelstein (and father of her daughter, Dora)
long time active member of Shir Ami
aunt of Stan Heimowitz
grandmother of Julie Greenfield

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

Selma Edelstein,
Les Golembo,
Marvin Schuelke,
Sam Blank,
Debra Blum,
Travis Mahoney,
Loren Simpson,

mother of Joan Edelstein
brother of Sharon Golembo
father of Susan Spitzer
husband of Ann Blank and long time member of Shir Ami
mother of Jeff Blum
nephew of Wendy Crow
husband of Sidney Simpson, prior member of Shir Ami,
and cousin of Toni Schulberg

PURIM AND MITVAH PROJECT, SUNDAY, MARCH 12



Congregation Shir Ami Purim Mitzvah Project

Help Shir Ami to support our community and fulfill a Purim tradition. Our upcoming Mitzvah project will be assembling gift bags of personal care items for those in need.

Items needed: toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, deodorant, wash cloths, combs, disposable razors, men's socks, soft granola bars, water bottles, lotion, shampoo, tissue packets, wet wipes.

Please bring supplies throughout this month. If possible, please sign up what you will bring on this link:

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080D4AA5A92AA46-purim>

The gift bags will be assembled at the Shir Ami School Purim Carnival **on Sunday, March 12th**.

Congregation Shir Ami Purim Tailgate Carnival



Sunday March 12, 2015

10:30 am to 12:30 pm
(Hebrew School 9:00 to 10:15 am)

Come join the fun with games, crafts and activities and a delicious, "make your own ice cream sundae" bar.

Please bring donations for the mitzvah project gift bags for the needy.



Shir Ami Bagel and Lox Brunch and Discussion:
“MEET YOUR MUSLIM NEIGHBOR” by Moina Shaiq



Sunday, March 19, 2017
10:00 am – 12 Noon
Congregation Shir Ami
4529 Malabar Ave, Castro Valley, CA 94546

Moina Shaiq has been living in the United States for 38 years. She is a mother of four children and a grandmother of one. She has been a community activist for over 16 years, devoting herself to building bridges of understanding. Moina has served as a Human Relations Commissioner for the city of Fremont and is currently a member of the Alameda County Human Rights Commission.

This will be an open discussion, so please bring your questions about Islam and the Muslim community.

**All Shir Ami members and their guests are
welcome to attend free of charge.
Refreshments will be provided.
Donations are welcome to help defray event costs.**

RSVP: e-mail: events@congshirami.org or by E-vite

**HOUSEWARMING AND HAVDALLAH AT SARA & JON'S NEW HOME,
SATURDAY, APRIL 1, 7:30 PM**



**Please join Rabbi Liora and Jon Zimmerman/Sara Lamnin
for a Housewarming Havdallah ceremony
*Saturday, April 1***

6pm Make-your-own Pizza Party

7:30ish Havdallah

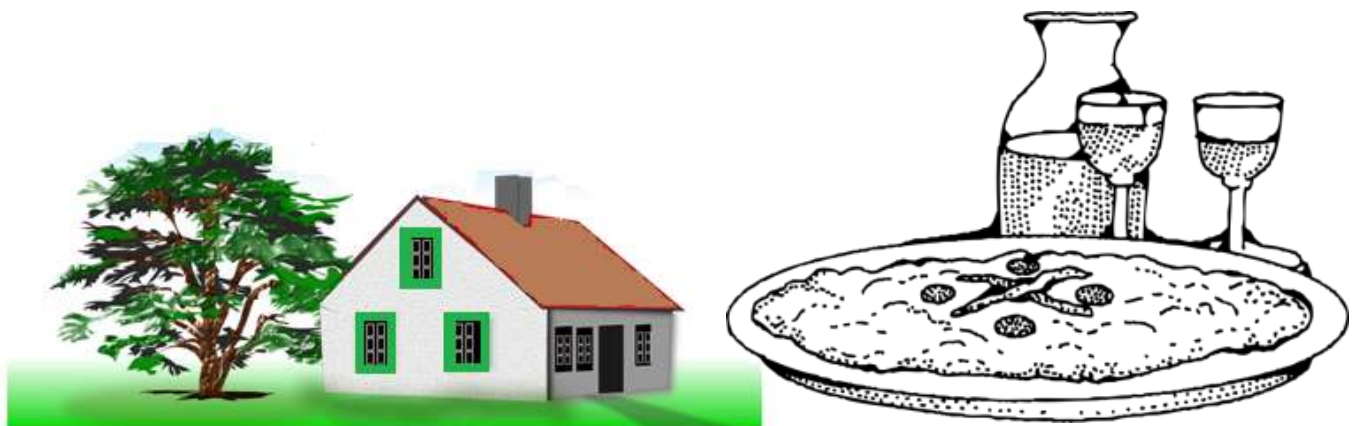
Shir Ami members of all ages are welcome to attend

See current roster or contact us for address.

**Please RSVP if you are coming for dinner so that we have enough
pizza crust! ledorvdor@yahoo.com or (510) 432-7703**

**Please bring some of your favorite vegetarian topping to share.
Pizza crust, sauce, and cheese will be provided.
Beverages or dessert are welcome.**

No gifts needed. We are simply delighted to have you!



LETTER TO LEGISLATORS

At the February meeting, the Shir Ami Board determined that a letter articulating our concern about border closures and travel restrictions would be appropriate. The following letter was sent to Senators Harris and Feinstein, Rep. Swalwell, and the president's office.



February 21, 2017

The Honorable Eric Swalwell
129 Cannon House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

Dear Representative Swalwell,

As a Reform Jewish congregation in Castro Valley, California, Congregation Shir Ami welcomes all Jewish families, including interfaith families. Our members include first and second generation immigrants (many of whose families arrived as refugees) as well as families who can tie their roots to Native Americans. Regardless of their specific backgrounds, we make a sincere effort to nurture all our members' spiritual growth and cultural identity. In addition, we strive to be an asset to our larger community far beyond the geographic boundaries of Castro Valley by promoting values of inclusion and participation in that larger community.

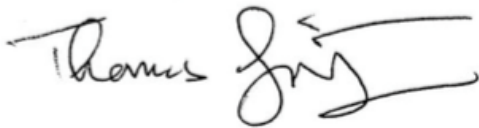
Per our mission statement, we support policies at local, state, and federal levels that ensure nondiscriminatory immigration, employment, and adult marriage regulation. We understand the need to manage the delicate balance of resources and opportunities in our country and support data-driven approaches to improve safety and economic security. Broad border closures and travel restrictions applied to entire countries and their residents would not be consistent with either our moral position or the political-economic interests of the United States in the world order. Nor would the diversion of significant resources to build a physical barrier along the border between the United States and a country we have long considered a strong ally.

Congregation Shir Ami is an intimate, inclusive, intergenerational Reform Jewish Community that welcomes interfaith families. Congregation Shir Ami is exempt from tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and qualifies for the maximum charitable contribution deduction by donors. Our Federal Identification Number is 94-6108507. Affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism.

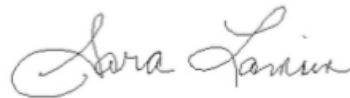
LETTER TO LEGISLATORS, PAGE 2

We are aware of the need for sensible reform of certain governmental policies and urge careful consideration of existing policy and solid, research-based solutions that promote family unity and protect employment and access to healthcare. Such approaches improve our country and systems for all residents regardless of when and where they or their ancestors came from.

Thank you, and Regards,



Thomas Spitzer, Social Action Chair
510-397-2845
tk@spitzer.us



Sara Lamnin, President
(510) 432-7703
saralamnin@sbcglobal.net

SISTERHOOD RETREAT, FEBRUARY 2017: FRIENDSHIP

