

גוֹרָנִים



G'VANIM

VOLUME 41, NO. 1

September/October 2012

From the Rabbi's Study The Holidays After the Holy Days

Rabbi Lisa Edwards



PHOTO: KENNA LOVE

Friends, maybe this is your year. Hmm, do I say this every year? Some version of it, probably, but maybe this really will be the year that you find yourself in a place to take Judaism up on its annual invitation to examine your life. Cantor Porat talks more about these traditions in his column. I encourage all of us to take the opportunity, and if you do, let me

know how it goes for you. I love to get first hand reports about the spiritual journeys people take.

Speaking of which, I want to take the opportunity to invite you beyond the Days of Awe and into two more masterfully crafted holidays that follow on the heels of Yom Kippur, and could not be more different from it — Sukkot and Simchat Torah.

We move quickly in the month of Tishrei from the somber fast day of Yom Kippur into holidays that fulfill and celebrate all the promise of the rebirth and renewal we felt at the end of the Days of Awe. We go from fast to feast, from one long day of restriction into a week

marked by indulgence (not over-indulgence, but just-right indulgence) in delicious meals, casual conversation with friends, lovely music, and a bit of learning. We go from asking for forgiveness to giving thanks not only for the forgiveness received but also for all the promises of plenty engendered by our reconnection and commitments over the Days of Awe.

So maybe this year is your year too for the delights of sitting outside in BCC's very green sukkah. Building on last year's solar powered sukkah, this year we are making a commitment to continue to "green" our holiday space, using reclaimed wood, solar lighting, and decorations made from recycled materials. If you've got some colorful recyclable items at your house that might make for good sukkah decorations (magazine photos, old calendars, artwork, etc. BRING IT!!!). Because Sukkot begins this year on a Sunday night (Sept. 30), we're choosing not to exhaust our builders and then expect them to enjoy the holiday itself, so we are going to put up the structure (without decorations) early — on Sunday Sept. 23 beginning at 1:30pm. (By the way, building the structure before Yom Kippur, though not encouraged, is permissible in certain

Continued on Page 3

Days of Awe 5773

Selichot

Saturday, Sept. 8

8:00 pm

Temple Beth Am
1039 S. La Cienega

Erev Rosh Hashanah

Sunday, Sept. 16

8:00 pm

Temple Isaiah
10345 W. Pico Blvd.

Rosh Hashanah

Monday, Sept. 17

Temple Isaiah

9:30 am Morning service

10:30 am Family service

Catered lunch (ticket required)

4:00 pm Virtual Minyan

Rosh Hashanah Second Day

Tuesday, Sept. 18

10:00 am Morning service (at BCC)

4:30 pm Tashlich at Venice Beach

6:30 pm Dinner at private home

Kol Nidre

Tuesday, Sept. 25

7:15 pm, Temple Isaiah

Yom Kippur

Wednesday, Sept. 26

Temple Isaiah

10:00 am Morning service

11:00 am Family service

1:30 pm Study sessions

2:30 pm Virtual Minyan

3:30 pm Reading of names

4:00 pm Yizkor service

5:00 pm Afternoon service

7:21 pm Havdalah/break fast

Sukkot and Simchat Torah

See page 2

Sukkot and Simchat Torah

We will be having two fun community activities in preparation for Sukkot.

Sunday September 23, 1:30 pm at BCC

Come create found object art and help build our sukkah.

1. Creating and Making Found Object Art – For all ages - come and join BCC artists and make decorations for our community sukkah out of recycled, re-used and found objects. Yes, we will be making pretty things out of throw away materials, such as old Jewish Journals, toilet paper rolls, soda cans, and plastic bottles. All materials will be provided or bring your own favorite recycled or found objects. There will be artists on hand to guide you. Our sukkah will be “green” and one of a kind.

2. Sukkah building – For teens and adults - It takes a village to build a sukkah. Come help our builders put the frame of our sukkah up. Bring power tools if you have any, we need your strength and moral support. We will also put the lights up and around the parking lot.

3. Eating and Laughing – if you are unable to build or create art, but want to come give support, bring something delicious and feed our hungry builders and artists. Or bring fruits to share and enjoy the day.

Sunday September 30, 10 am, 4:30 pm and 6 pm at BCC

1. We will finish building the sukkah by putting up palms fronds and, at 4:30, hanging up all the beautiful decorations we made on September 23rd.

2. Sukkot service will be on September 30 starting at 6 pm with a vegetarian potluck dinner

Simchat Torah, Sunday, October 7 at BCC

Yizkor service at 5 pm, Simchat Torah service at 6 pm. Come and join us in our celebration of completing the yearly Torah reading and starting the cycle anew. We'll dance with our Torahs as we complete a month full of holy days and holidays.

Our 40th Anniversary Continues

We've been celebrating BCC's 40th anniversary all year, but we're not finished yet. Cantor Porat is planning another concert in December to cap off the year. In the meantime, we look back on our July 22 gala garden party with a full report and photos (page 11), and we reflect on all our past accomplishments with a 40-year history of our unique congregation. You'll find the first installment starting on page 12. Enjoy!

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G'vanim Advertising Rates

Rates

(Rates in bold are discounted 20% for BCC members)

1 issue **3 issues: 10% disc.** **6 issues: 20% disc.**

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1/4 PG:

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\$80 \$216 \$384

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e-mail: bcc@bcc-la.org

website: www.bcc-la.org

Rabbi Lisa Edwards is available for private appointments.

Please call at least a week in advance, if possible, to schedule.

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G' VANIM

G'vanim "Hues (of the rainbow)" is the monthly newsletter of

BETH CHAYIM CHADASHIM

6090 West Pico Blvd., L.A. CA 90035

Founded in 1972 as the world's first gay and lesbian synagogue, today BCC is an inclusive community of progressive lesbian, gay, bi, trans, and heterosexual Jews, our families, and friends. Everyone is welcome to attend weekly Friday evening services at 8:00 p.m.

Editor: Larry Nathenson. Graphics & Layout: Lentini Design. Articles submitted should be typed, emailed or attached as Word documents to Larrynath@aol.com, by the 15th of the month before publication. To subscribe to G'vanim, send name and address and a check or money order for \$18 per year, attention: Subscriptions. Free to members.

BCC is affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism, World Congress of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Jews: Keshet Ga'avah and the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles.

On Gratitude and New Beginnings

Cantor Juval Porat

PHOTO: KENNA LOVIE



The month of Elul is a kind of an introspection boot camp, the final month of the Jewish year, leading Jews all over the world into the High Holy Days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

I love, and am in awe of, that month of Elul for its myriad resources, tools and rituals to help us figure out the events of the past year. 29 days to recalibrate, to sort out our failings,

our hidden personas, our unfulfilled potential. And we are encouraged to do it on our own, as well as in community. Not that we shouldn't pay attention to our inner worlds during the rest of the year and be mindful of the choices we make, our patterns and interactions with others. We should.

At the end of any given day, I wish I could look back on it through a lens of introspection and be able to silently reflect and draw conclusions on how to improve and progress. Sometimes I'm able to do it and sometimes I fail. Sometimes days become weeks, which become months that fly by before I realize that once more I fell into a steady routine, having been on autopilot for so long that I somehow forgot to evaluate my deeds and promises, my hopes and fears.

Hillel's famous quote from the tractate of the fathers, Pirke Avot, says in part: "...And if not now, when?" While it's true that finding the time for "cheshbon hanefesh" (accounting of the soul) during the Jewish months of Tishrei through Av can be challenging, Elul is the traditional

time to do it. It's an open invitation to help us find a way to stay spiritually solvent in the coming new year.

And on a different note, during the recent weeks I've been working to complete a music album to be released towards the end of the secular year. My studio sessions started simultaneously with my online campaign, which was a result of my first flirtation with the crowd-sourcing platform indiegogo.com. In less than 3 weeks (!), with your help, I was able to raise the set amount of funds. Thank you all for your support! I cannot wait to share the music with you and hope you will enjoy the finished product. The campaign is still running and you can still make contributions, which all will benefit the production of the CD, the release concert and future musical events at BCC. Find out all about the perks involved on the campaigns page -

<http://igg.me/p/172952>. For contributions, please contact the BCC office.

I look forward to seeing many of you during the opportunities to prepare ourselves in the remaining days of 5772, and during the coming Days of Awe. In the meantime, I wish you inspiration, insight and many blessings!

B'Shalom
Cantor Juval

Author AJ Llewellyn was kind enough to ask me a few questions about my album. An abbreviated version of the interview is on page 15 below. The full interview can be read at <http://tinyurl.com/jjuval-interview>.

(continued from page 1) From the Rabbi's Study: The Holiday after the Holy Days

circumstances). If decoration making is more to your liking than actual building, we'll be doing some of that the same afternoon, and then hanging them right before Sukkot begins on Sept. 30. And if neither building nor decorating is your thing, just come at 6 pm on Sept. 30 for a vegetarian potluck followed by study, music, and a festive service, and then come again on Friday night October 5 for the Shabbat of Sukkot.

Sitting, singing, eating, talking — that was fun — now it's time to get up and dance! We promise you terrific dance music and an energetic Simchat Torah as we finish our annual reading of the Torah scroll, roll it right back to the beginning and start again with the creation of the world. The last verse of Torah, Deuteronomy 34:12, ends *L'ai-nai kol Yisrael* — "In the eyes of all Israel." And then we roll it right back to Genesis 1:1 and read "God began to create heaven and earth" *Bereshit bara Elohim et ha-shamayim v'et ha-aretz*. So even though

we weren't there in the beginning, every year in the eyes of all Israel God creates again the heavens and the earth. What better reason to celebrate? Hold a Torah in your arms, bring the kids and your dancing shoes. We'll see you at BCC on Sunday night, October 7. Yizkor (a brief memorial service) at 6 pm, followed by a delicious oneg, and then dance the night away.

Juval and I look forward to seeing you at all our Tishrei celebrations, as we walk and pray, sing and dance our way into 5773!



News From The Adult Education Committee

Adam Barron and Jessica Donath

BCC has a proud tradition of excellence in adult education. We know this because we both benefitted immensely from classes and study sessions at BCC before we agreed to become the new co-chairs of the Adult Education Committee. Now, with your help, we will do our best to uphold this tradition. Our goal for Jewish learning is an individualized and active approach to gaining the knowledge each of us desires.

We have a four-part definition of Jewish learning? Informational classes such as learning to read Hebrew or about the meaning of holidays and customs are one part of the picture.

Second, we seek to offer experiential classes that are less about learning facts and more about active participation. Included in this category of are Jewish dance, sing-alongs, movie screenings, cooking, and Talmud study.

In what might be labeled transformative classes, we may find a new connection to our inner selves or to God. Sessions in Jewish prayer, spirituality, meditation, or gay-centered poetry come to mind.

Fourth, we would also like to host speakers on social action and social justice related topics such as homelessness among LGBT youth or universal health care. These may inspire us to engage in tikkun olam. Of course, one class or event may fit more than one category.

Recently, we welcomed back educator Todd Shotz to teach beginning Hebrew, for those just learning the

alphabet. Stay tuned after the High Holidays for Todd's intermediate class where we will practice reading prayers and learn to understand the words.

Those who want to take their newly acquired language skills to the next level may be able to study towards adult B'Nai Mitzvah with Cantor Porat if enough members are interested. It has been several years since we've had this at BCC. A B'Nai Mitzvah, or group Bar Mitzvah, is neither a marathon reading nor a prolonged exposure in the limelight. Rather, it's a chance to celebrate publicly what we have learned— we'll each chant a few verses and give a short drash.

After the High Holidays, short study sessions covering topics in Judaism taught by BCC clergy and, hopefully, by interested and qualified BCC members, will satisfy a wide range of interests. We will take your suggestions and submit a wish list of desired topics to our teachers. Classes will begin at 7:30 pm, allowing an easier drive. Then, at 8:30, Rabbi Edwards will lead us in a focused weekly Torah study. Participants can enjoy two learning experiences in one evening!

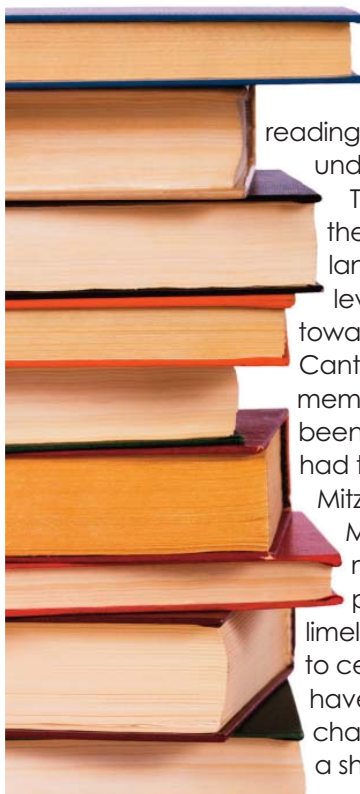
Here are a few more projects we are working on bringing to you in the not too distant future: Jewish dance workshop with Bruce Bierman on Sunday afternoons and a series of classes taught by BCC's former scholar in residence, Rabbi Rachel Adler, beginning in Early 2013. Her possible topics are: the books of Samuel about the kingships of David and Saul, the books of Kohelet or Job, or the Talmudic tractate Pirkei Avot (chapters of the fathers).

We are looking into a daytime option for those who aren't able to attend evening classes. We are also considering having a visiting scholar join us for an extended weekend of study and prayer. Again, we welcome your suggestions.

In the meantime, BCC's regular Torah study groups always welcome those interested in learning more about Judaism. Please note: with the exception of Hebrew, almost every class given at BCC is free to our members.

Making adult education meaningful and fun depends on all of us. One member has already generously offered her home for a weekly lay-led Torah study in the San Fernando Valley area. Please contact us with your comments, ideas, questions, encouraging words or criticism at adamwindbarron@gmail.com or jessica.donath1@gmail.com. And don't be surprised if you receive a short survey sometime in the next year.

We hope that each one of us has a positive experience in Jewish learning this year. Together we can make the year just as successful as our previous ones.





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From Generation to Generation, In Both Directions

Leah Zimmerman, Education Director



This fall we begin our sixth year of Ohr Chayim, BCC's innovative intergenerational school. Some of our students have been with us since our first or second year. Because this is a small program, I, as the director, do a lot of the teaching and get to know students personally. Our classes are small

and we give our students a lot of individual attention. I can coach them on their learning as they work on reading Hebrew phonetically, learn to sing t'filot, and think deeply about Torah. With the teaching staff, we track their individual learning milestones and plan how to challenge each student in the coming lesson.

The classroom situation is more akin to a group coaching session than a teacher in front of a class. The teachers circulate, working with and challenging each student at his or her appropriate level. We have deep discussions about the Torah portion, asking questions and creating personal interpretations. As a small group of students, parents and teachers, we build a strong sense of community around Torah study and

celebration of Shabbat. There is continuity in the personal relationships and knowledge of each individual's learning history and learning curve.

While I love teaching the children and watching them grapple with the text and develop over the years, the most amazing thing about working with this group has been how much I learn from them. The insights and ideas that they bring to interpreting text excite me and energize me about studying Torah. As we sing l'dor vador in this year's services, I will be thinking not only of how BCC has created a learning program for children, of an older generation sharing with a younger generation, but also how we have created an opportunity for our children to teach us. At Ohr Chayim, l'dor vador, from generation to generation, also means from the younger generation to the older generation. The light of Ohr Chayim, the light of our lives, comes from the sparks and flames of Torah lit by the younger generation of students. As we enter our sixth year with students who have been studying Torah for just as long, we will be finding ways for our students to share their "ohr" with the rest of the community – l'dor vador.

Tour Jewish and LGBT LA with BCC

In honor of BCC's 40th anniversary, our own Steve Sass, President of the Jewish Historical Society of Southern California, and Estaire Press, JHS tour guide extraordinaire, will conduct a guided tour of unique Jewish and LGBT sites extending from Downtown to Boyle Heights and Silver Lake. This unique experience is sponsored by BCC's



Women's, Men's and 20s/30s Havurot and the Book Group.

We will meet at BCC on Sunday, October 21, at 9:00 am for coffee and refreshments, and the bus will leave promptly at 9:30 am. A pay on your own lunch stop will be made and we'll return to BCC at 3:30 pm.

Invite your friends and other temple members. The tour fee is \$36 for BCC members and \$40 for non-members. Limited spaces available. To reserve your bus seat, the tour fee must be paid by Monday, October 15. Send a check to BCC, 6090 Pico Blvd. LA 90035, attention Victoria, or to use a credit card, phone Victoria at 323-931-7023- Ext. 205.

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News from the Tzedakah Council

Robin Baltic, Steve Hochstadt, Nicholas Mestas, Jim Potter and Estaire Press

PHOTO: JIM POTTER



The proceeds from the current BCC tzedakah coin drive, concluding September 28, will provide donations to four organizations, two local and two international. Each of the charities selected addresses one of two issues: world hunger or HIV/AIDS. Our collective shekels will be donated to Food Forward, Project Leket, SEROVie and

AIDS Project LA. Also, we will be making an additional donation to Jerusalem Open House.

To join in the BCC tzedakah coin drive please return your pushkes, however full, when attending BCC High Holiday services at Temple Isaiah or anytime during the month of September to the BCC office. In advance, many thanks for your generosity.

Issue: World Hunger

Over 1.2 billion people or 14.9% of the global population is undernourished. In the United States hunger is a reality for one in every six people. In Israel 10% of the population is undernourished and 2% suffer from severe hunger.

Organization: Food Forward

Location: Los Angeles and Ventura Counties

In a nutshell: Teams of volunteers harvest fruits and vegetables from private homes then donating 100% of the gleaning to Southern California food pantries. Distribution partners include Sova, The Downtown Women's Center, Project Chicken Soup and many others.

Impact: Since 2009 three-quarters of a million pounds of fresh produce have been harvested, which otherwise would have been wasted, and then donated to food pantries for distribution.

Example of what a \$750 Tzedakah donation could fund: 1 orchard ladder (\$250), 1 hand truck (\$150), 10 fruit pickers, (\$10 each), 10 tree pruning shears (\$10 each), 20 pairs of gardening gloves (\$5 each) and 5 tubes of sunscreen (\$10 each).

More info: www.foodforward.org

Organization: Project Leket

Location: Israel

In a nutshell: Sends thousands of volunteers into Israel's fields and orchards to gather produce donated or that would otherwise be left to rot.

Impact: Since 2009, 9 million pounds of fruits and vegetables from over 300 farms have been delivered free

of charge to over 290 non-profits serving Israel's needy.

Example of what a \$750 Tzedakah donation could fund:

Cultivation of 1980 pounds of food (\$500) and the cost, preparation and delivery of 1,000 sandwiches for needy kids (\$250).

More info: www.leket.org.il

Issue: HIV/AIDS

Worldwide over 35 million people are living with HIV/AIDS. Every 12 seconds, another person contracts HIV and every 16 seconds, another person dies from AIDS. In the United States 1.2 million people are living with HIV/AIDS and over 120,000 in Haiti.

Organization: SEROVie

Location: Port-au-Prince, Haiti

In a nutshell: Grassroots organization providing HIV and AIDS prevention and support services to gay and bisexual men living in Haiti, the most impoverished nation in the Western Hemisphere. When the 2010 earthquake struck the SEROVie office was destroyed and 14 staff and clients were killed. SEROVie is currently working to rebuild its operations in Port-au-Prince.

Impact: SEROVie works where no one else works, with people no one else will touch and tirelessly advocates for their right to be counted as fellow human beings.

Example of what a \$750 Tzedakah donation could fund: Provide medication for 36 people for 30 days (\$400) and enable SEROVie to conduct a 2-day skills-building workshop for 18 people (\$350).

More info: www.serovie.sharepoint.com

Organization: AIDS Project Los Angeles

Location: Los Angeles

In a nutshell: HIV prevention and care

Impact: Provides a wide spectrum of social services for low-income people living with HIV/AIDS. Services include a food bank, dental care, mental health counseling, housing assistance, home healthcare, return to work counseling and access to how to receive public benefits. Their advocacy work develops and defends HIV-related government programs that save lives locally and abroad. **Example of what a \$750 Tzedakah donation could fund:** HIV screening (rapid test) for 1200.

Info: www.apla.org

Organization: Jerusalem Open House.

In a nutshell: JOH is an organization many BCC members have visited. JOH provides direct services for the LGBT community within the city of Jerusalem and works toward securing LGBT rights in Israeli society at large.

Info: www.joh.org.il/

BCC Live Brings our Temple Into the 21st Century

Bracha Yael

BCC Live is an innovative multimedia program funded in part by a \$5,000 incubator grant from the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ). It now encompasses several distinct ways to keep in touch with us. If you are out of town, too ill to attend, or just too tired to drive to BCC, you can view services and some other events remotely by computer or smartphone as they occur. If you missed a service or event, look for it in the archives on our website. Or, you can be a part of our "virtual minyan" and participate by telephone in separate services and Torah study sessions.

BCC Live has also helped raise our profile in the Jewish community. On Friday, June 8, Jewish Journal.com broadcast to its 400,000+ monthly viewership our historic Pride Shabbat/40th Anniversary celebration. Also, the URJ, the largest Jewish organization in North America, highlighted BCC Live for the fifth time in the past year. Our article *Becoming "A Temple "Without Boundaries"* on the URJ blog can be found at:

<http://blogs.rj.org/blog/2012/06/20/becoming-a-temple-without-boundaries>.

Our footprint in the larger Jewish, LGBT, feminist, and religious communities hopefully will grow a little more with a chapter I'm writing for an anthology on the use of technology to shape religious life from a queer/feminist perspective. This Routledge publication, intended for upper division undergrads and graduate students, will feature BCC Live's contribution in this area.

In addition, BCC Live has had a series of "mosts" in the past few months. We had our highest viewership of a single video, Rabbi Rachel Adler's "Texts that Don't Let People Live." She says we need to "reinterpret" texts, including Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, which have been used to oppress LGBT folks "because we are the ones who must determine what a text means in our time." The video logged more than 800 views in less than a month and was embedded in the URJ blog article described above. You can watch it on YouTube. Here's its direct link: <http://bit.ly/LUIUOU>

You can watch live all our wonderful Friday night services and some special events. Please check our online calendar for dates. If you'd like to watch on your computer, iPad or smartphone, go to: <http://www.bcc-la.org/bcc-live/> If you'd like to view a previous recording, visit our Ustream broadcast channel, <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/bcc-live;>

the most recent recordings are on the top left; and for our full archive scroll down and you'll find them on the bottom right.

We also offer a telephone option for Friday night services and classes along with a lay-led weekly Torah study held every Thursday, 4-5pm. All these are available via conference phone, which is free—excluding any long distance charges from your personal carrier. Please dial 702-851-4044, when prompted punch in 2, then our pass code, 22252#.

For High Holidays, our telephone services will be on Monday, September 17 (Rosh Hashanah) at 4:00 pm, and on Wednesday, September 26 (Yom Kippur) at 2:30 pm at the same phone number.

If you have questions about BCC Live programming or instructions please email Bracha Yael at bracha18@ca.rr.com.

"Wherever you go, BCC goes with you!"



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L'Chayim Legacy Circle: A Celebratory Luncheon



A special luncheon at BCC on Sunday, December 9, 2012 is planned to acknowledge and thank members who have demonstrated their commitment to BCC's future by including the temple in their will or trust.

The luncheon will include an entertaining program of music and speakers, with a unique gift for L'Chayim Legacy Circle members. New members will be welcomed by Rabbi Edwards, and folks wanting to know more about the group are warmly invited to attend.

Why join the L'Chayim Legacy Circle? This is a great time to plan a legacy to benefit an organization that has helped shape your life, one that will nourish and guide future gay and straight Jews who join our congregation. We encourage members and friends who want to consider placing a provision benefitting BCC in their will or trust to join us at the lunch.

To ask questions or to become a member of the L'Chayim Legacy Circle, please call Ray Eelsing: 310-895-5116 or Hannah Theile: 818-905-7442 .

To RSVP for the Luncheon, please contact Hannah Theile at 818-905-7442 or email hannahtheile@gmail.com RSVP's need to be received no later than November 6th.

Join our LGBTQ Journey Through Israel Oct 24 – Nov 3

There is still time to sign up for our LGBTQ Trip to Israel, co-sponsored by A Wider Bridge and BCC and co-led by our own Cantor Juval Porat! Join Cantor Porat and several other BCC leaders on a ten- night journey that will take us to the desert, Jerusalem, the Galilee and Tel Aviv. As we travel around this amazing country, we'll be getting to know some of Israel's most



prominent LGBT leaders, artists and activists. All along the way, we will sing and study and pray together, and share our own unique stories. We will explore the Old City

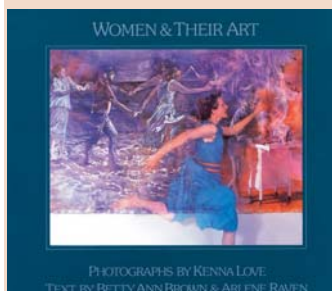
of Jerusalem and learn and reflect during our visit to Yad Vashem. We'll enjoy the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern flavors of Israeli food and wine, including the breakfasts for which Israel is famous. Most of all, we will build a community together, and have a busload of fun along the way. We hope you will join us! There is also some scholarship funding still available. To learn more and register, visit:

<http://awiderbridge.org/2012-trip-to-israel/>

Registration and payment must be completed by September 10. If you have questions, you can e-mail Arthur Slepian of A Wider Bridge at arthur@awiderbridge.org

BCC Professional Series Presents "The Best of Love"

On Saturday evening, October 13, 2012 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm at BCC, photographer and BCC Board member Kenna Love will be highlighting her favorite images from 40 years as a photographer.



Kenna will feature photographs from her book, Exposures: Women and Their Art, with guest artist Ruth Weisberg. She will also discuss the very popular "A World of Difference" project where Kenna photographed over

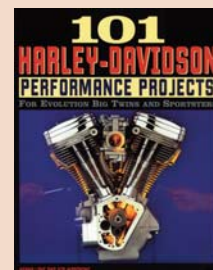
50 individuals to represent their communities, such as Hollywood, Little Tokyo, and Chinatown. These portraits were printed on banners and lined the streets of Los Angeles for over a year.

Kenna will emphasize her love and passion for rhythm and patterns in her images coinciding with the vibrant rhythms in music. You will be swept away by her use of light, emotion and humor.

Also on display will be Cibachrome prints from her books Exposures and 101 Harley Davidson Performance Projects along with prints from her Rancho Mirage Ad Campaign.

There will be a brief discussion providing tips for creating interesting presentations of your work. As examples Kenna will be showing glimpses from "BCC Goes to Israel" and "Oaxaca."

Reserve your seat because we are expecting a full house! For more information and to RSVP, contact Kenna at (818) 995-7521 or kennalove@artnet.net.



Summer Continues with the Men's Havurah

Mark Miller, Men's Havurah Chair

Do you like delicious dinners and brunches, wine tastings, game nights, trips to museums, movies, stimulating lectures, pool parties, and Jewish Holiday celebrations? How about meeting other BCC men and making new friends? Then make sure you're connected to the Men's Havurah. We have a wide selection of social events throughout the year, at members' homes and in different locations. The Havurah is open to members and non-members alike. So if you're thinking of becoming a member of BCC, this is a great way to get to know our men's community. To get on our e-mail list, contact the Men's Havurah directly at bcc.menshavurah@gmail.com or look for us on Facebook.

BCC's Men's Havurah sponsored the following very successful event during August 2012:

• Summer Sunday Brunch on August 12th

About 25 men enjoyed a fantastic brunch at the home of BCC members Brett Trueman and Mark Miller in Santa Monica featuring great homemade waffles prepared by BCC Secretary Richard Lesse together with lots of other delicious food. Acquaintances and new connections were made with lots of schmoozing and socializing.

The Men's Havurah Planning Committee is planning great events for the next several months. Announcements via e-mail, the BCC Weekly, and Friday evening's Seat Bulletin for our September **Pool Party** event have already gone out. The party will be on **September 9th** at the home of BCC member Ray Eelsing in Playa Del Rey beginning at **1 pm**. If interested in attending, RSVP to bcc.menshavurah@gmail.com.

For events in October and later months, announcements will go out as soon as details are finalized. However, until then here's a thumbnail sketch of what we're planning:

- Tour of Jewish and LGBT Los Angeles on October 21st led by BCC and Jewish Historical Society members Steve Sass and Estaire Press including sites in downtown L.A., Boyle Heights, and Silver Lake.
- Game Night in November at the home of BCC members Mark Miller and Brett Trueman. One of our most popular events including the Jewish edition of Taboo and Hebrew Scrabble.
- Chanukah celebration in December.

There are two ways you can stay in touch with us:

Through e-mail:

bcc.menshavurah@gmail.com.

Through our Facebook page ("BCC Men's Havurah") where we post event details and share pictures from events

We can use everyone's help and very much encourage

- Your ideas for additional types of events that would be of interest to the Men's Havurah, and
- Volunteers to plan and host events naturally tailored to the size of your home.

BCC's Active Women's Havurah

Donna Quigley Groman

BCC's Women's Havurah seeks to enhance the temple experience for the women of BCC with social, educational, cultural, and other events throughout the year. Some are open to all, while others are for women only. In recent months we have had a pool party, visits to museums, game nights at BCC, Sparks games at Staples Center, and more.

On Sunday, September 2, we enjoyed a day at the Annenberg Community Beach House in Santa Monica, with a variety of activities including biking, walking, swimming, and mah jongg.

On Saturday, October 27, from 7:00 to 10:30 pm at BCC, we will host a Women's Havurah game night.

We'll have lots of fun as we play board games, card games, word games, and mah jongg, accompanied by much light-hearted laughter. This is **for women only**. Bring a beverage and snacks to share. Please RSVP to dlgroman@hotmail.com and contact me for further information about the Women's Havurah.



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Life Transitions Group is Here to Help

Members of the Life Transitions Group

While facilitating the Life Transitions Group at BCC for over 10 years, many people have asked Shirley Hirschberg, our facilitator, what made her go into this type of work. The following is what she shared with us.

At the age of 15 her 19 year-old sister was killed in a car accident, and her parents were so emotionally upset that she felt she couldn't share her feelings with them or anyone else. Although this experience of loss will always be with her, she always knew she wanted to help people going through similar situations. She said through this process of helping others she continues to heal herself and feels so blessed to be part of other people's process of healing.

After receiving her Social Work/Sociology Degree she started volunteering at AIDS Healthcare Foundation - Hospice - supporting patients, partners, family and friends. At the same time she was certified as a Bereavement Counselor at Cedars-Sinai Medical Hospice. At Cedars, Shirley met a BCC member who encouraged her to facilitate a Life Transitions/ Bereavement Group at BCC. After meeting with Rabbi Lisa and then Cantorial Soloist Fran the rest is history.

At BCC, people in the Life Transitions group deal with relationship, health, job, economic, retirement and bereavement issues in a confidential and supportive atmosphere, thereby building emotional strength. Here are some comments from other BCC - Life Transitions members:

"LTG gave me a sense of belonging, of being accepted, and helped me in the way of feeling support. Also gave me the possibility of meeting people and sharing our feelings. Thank you, Shirley."

"The LTG is an asset to BCC and to me, a forum to share safely life's ups and downs while receiving feedback and encouragement. It's as good as any support group I've every belonged to with the benefit of familiar BCC members who have become friends. I enjoy Shirley's upbeat style, challenging and gently guiding us while getting everyone to participate."

Everyone is welcome - members and non-members. To see if the group is for you - contact Victoria, BCC's Office Manager, at (323) 931-7023, ext. 205.

Shirley also facilitates a LGBTQ Caregivers' Support Group in conjunction with the Gay and Lesbian Center.

Return of the Professional Liaison Committee




Donna Quigley Groman, Chair

The BCC Professional Liaison Committee is back! In past years, this committee was highly successful in keeping open lines of communication between congregants and clergy. The committee has been reformed at the request of BCC's leadership to promote dialogue between members, clergy, and BCC leadership as we build a stronger and more united BCC community.

The members of the committee, appointed by the Board and the clergy, are Ira Dankberg, Donna Quigley Groman, William Korthof, Bill Resnick, Eldon Teper, and Leslie Tuchman. Each committee member is assigned a group of members to contact. You will be receiving an introductory e-mail from your representative in the upcoming weeks. Feel free at any time to contact any member of the committee to discuss concerns, suggestions or ideas that will improve your BCC experience.

The information you provide to the committee is confidential and will be shared only in accordance with your permission. By working with you to keep an open dialogue, committee members look forward to the opportunity to contribute to the continued vitality of our BCC community.

FOUR EASY WAYS TO SUPPORT BCC THAT WON'T COST YOU A DIME!

-  1. Make your Amazon purchases through the BCC website and BCC will receive a percentage of your purchase as a donation from Amazon! <http://www.bcc-la.org/shopping/> It couldn't be more simple!
-  2. Register your Ralphs card and choose BCC to receive your community contribution. Ralphs requires you to re-register every year on or after September 1. www.ralphs.com
-  3. Shop through iGive. It is a portal to thousands of Internet shopping sites and will donate a percentage of your purchases to BCC. www.iGive.com
4. Did you know BCC pays a 3-4% fee for every credit card transaction? This adds up to thousands of dollars a year! Switch your payment method to ACH—it's free and easy. Our bookkeeper will debit your checking account for pledge payments, donations, or events, just as easily as "charge my credit card on file." Ask Felicia for the easy to complete form! felicia@bcc-la.org

Gala Garden Party Highlights BCC's Many Accomplishments

Larry Nathenson

More than 150 BCC members, past and present, filled an elegant garden in Hancock Park on Sunday, July 22, to celebrate BCC's 40th anniversary. It was a "feel good" event all around, as we reconnected with old friends, shared BCC memories, and enjoyed delicious food and drinks.

Our host, Dean Hansell, generously opened his home once again, as he did for BCC's 30th anniversary, for Cantor Porat's installation, and on other occasions, and also generously helped to defray the costs. Cara Hale-Hanes deserves many rounds of applause for organizing the party so flawlessly, and for preparing mouth-watering treats (her spanakopita was to die for).



PHOTO: KEINA LOVE

BCC founder Jerry Small, Rev. Troy Perry, BCC president Bruce Maxwell

Tracy Moore also played a central role in planning this event, and in securing an exhibit of artifacts and photos from the BCC History Collection at ONE Archives (where she serves as a Board member). Many of

us had fun trying to identify faces on photos from decades past. There was also a clothesline display of BCC T-shirt designs through the ages (who knew there were so many?).

After enjoying a giant 40th anniversary cake, we all sat down for "This is Your Life, BCC," a musical skit punctuated with reminiscences from some of our founders and leaders. Rabbi Lisa Edwards introduced the program with the "big book" of BCC history,



PHOTO: ELISSA BARRETT

Cantor Porat with Cara Hale-Hanes, chair of the garden party committee

followed by a recounting of BCC's founding to the tune of the theme song from "Gilligan's Island." The Reverend Troy Perry, founding minister of Metropolitan Community Church, offered words of congratulations and

memories of his role in encouraging a group of Jews who were attending MCC in 1972 to start a gay and lesbian synagogue. One of that group, Jerry Small, came all the way from Albuquerque to share his memories of that first year, including the MCC rap group at which the idea for BCC was hatched, his meeting with UAHC Rabbi Kaiman to seek assistance in starting a gay temple, his suggestion for naming BCC

after the MCC newsletter "New Life" (members wrote their suggestions on pieces of paper, and then voted to select one), and the "great fire" when MCC was torched and BCC members rushed back from Canter's Deli to save their Torah from the flames and the water.



PHOTO: KEINA LOVE

Davi Cheng, Ray Eelsing, and Cantor Porat sing at the garden party

The fire led to several years of holding services at different venues before we settled at 6000 W. Pico Blvd. The BCC singers at the party, led by Cantor Juval Porat, recounted the years of wandering to the tune of "On the Road Again," and also listed numerous BCC events and accomplishments through the years. All of our past presidents and clergy were saluted for their service to make BCC what it is today. Finally, current President Bruce Maxwell concluded the program by offering mezuzot made by BCC's artists from stained glass window fragments to Reverend Perry and to Jerry Small.

Cantor Porat also led us in singing his original composition "House of New Life," with accompaniment and additional lyrics by Tamara Kline. Here is the chorus:

This is our vision,
This is our home.
We can be who we are
And know we're not alone.
With all our hearts,
Our souls and might,
Together we'll build
A house of new life.

Our thanks for making this event possible go to Adam Kulbersh, Bob Goodman, Bonnie Kaplan, Brett Trueman, Bruce Maxwell, Cara and Heidi Hale-Hanes, Lauren Schlauf, Mark Katz, and our BCC staff Felicia Park-Rogers, Tim Goad, and Victoria Delgadillo. And let's not forget the BCC singers: Cantor Juval Porat, Davi Cheng, Ray Eelsing, Estaire Press, Jeanelle LaMance, Tracy Moore, and accompanist Tamara Kline.



PHOTO: ELISSA BARRETT

BCC's 40th anniversary cake



PHOTO: RAY EELSING

Dean Hansell's backyard during the garden party

OUR HISTORY

PART ONE: SOMETHING NEW UNDER THE SUN

Larry Nathenson

The Founding. On April 4, 1972, one woman and three men were the only ones who showed up for a weekly Wednesday night rap group at L.A.'s Metropolitan Community Church. In less than four years MCC, the first church with an outreach to gays and lesbians, had grown to 15,000 members in 40 U.S. cities. In Los Angeles the "mother church," led by Rev. Troy Perry and located near USC, had 725 members. As it turned out, the four who came to MCC that April night were all Jewish. The presence of Jews at the church was understandable. In 1972 the existence of lesbian and gay Jews was virtually unheard of. It was a time when same-sex activity was illegal, homosexuality was still classified as a mental illness, and to be openly gay or lesbian usually meant loss of employment and rejection by family and Jewish community. The Stonewall Riots in New York's Greenwich Village, often considered the watershed event in the modern gay liberation movement, had occurred less than three years earlier.

During their conversation, the woman, Selma Kay, z'l, asked: "Why don't we form a temple with an outreach to the gay Jews?" The others—Jerry Gordon, z'l, Jerry Small and Bob Zalkin—agreed, and they set out to translate their unprecedented vision into reality. They dared to dream of creating a safe place where they could affirm and integrate their identities as lesbians, gay men and Jews. They turned to Rev. Perry, who agreed they should have their own congregation, encouraging them and offering the

use of the church's facilities free of charge. (The favor would be returned many years later when MCC's home was damaged in the 1994 Northridge Earthquake.) He also gave them the names of 12 other Jews he knew at MCC. As he recalled 25 years later, "Obviously, I'm not Jewish, and I didn't know much about Judaism or starting a synagogue, but I told them, 'No matter what you do, make sure you make it really Jewish.'"

About a dozen women and men responded to the call to an ad hoc committee meeting to discuss what was to become the world's first synagogue founded by and for lesbians and gay men. Among the decisions made at that May meeting: that "Metropolitan Community Temple" would be the name of the group; that "there be a Reform Service for Friday Night Services"; and that announcements of the service would be made by Rev. Perry at MCC services and placed in *The Advocate*, then a local monthly newspaper in the Los Angeles area. The ad hoc committee also heard a report of Jerry Small's meeting with Rabbi Arnold Kaiman of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (now Union for Reform Judaism). Though the Reform movement was the only branch of Judaism expected to be willing to assist such a group, Small went to the meeting with Rabbi Kaiman expecting to have to put up a fight. Instead, Rabbi Kaiman's only question was, "How can we help you?"

The First Services. Fifteen people came to the first service, held June 9, 1972 in Jerry Gordon's home. The following month, a special interfaith service was held at MCC's sanctuary, to introduce the new temple to the gay and lesbian community. Thereafter, weekly Friday night services were held at MCC, created and led by temple members, with guest rabbis officiating on occasion. From the beginning, MCC's liturgy reflected the "creative services" then being introduced in Reform and some Conservative congregations, and included the original contributions of members, in addition to selections from the Union Prayer Book and other siddurim. A Basic Judaism class was also necessary, observed Lorena Wellington, z'l, since: "[M] any of us had not reviewed our history and what it meant to be a Jew for a long time. Many of us had no formal Jewish education at all. We just knew that we were Jews and wanted to study and learn more about our religion and our heritage."

Rabbi Erwin L. Herman, z'l, then director of the UAHC's Pacific Southwest Council and national director of regional activities, began enthusiastically assisting the fledgling congregation, helping develop lay-led services

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Synagogue formed for homosexuals in L. A.

By TOM TUGEND
Jerusalem Post Correspondent

LOS ANGELES. —
FORMATION of a synagogue serving the spiritual needs of homosexual men and women was disclosed here last week.

The congregation, the Metropolitan Community Temple, generally follows the Reform ritual and was founded about a year ago. It has about 60 full-time members, conducts regular study sessions and Shabbat services, and welcomed more than 175 homosexual men and women during High Holy Day services last autumn.

Rabbi Erwin Herman, regional director of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (Reform), who encouraged establishment of the Temple, said that "the congregation came about because of a yearning by these people to form an organized Jewish worship group."

Questioned concerning Biblical injunctions against homosexuality and the wearing of female garb by men Rabbi Herman replied: "From the point of view of Reform Judaism, we cannot say that we are bound by *Halacha* in such a matter. We believe that these are people facing their own condition. They have become a social grouping."

"I have found a sense of understanding among my lay leaders and rabbinical colleagues. We are all discovering the true meaning of *rahmanut* (compassion)."

*Jerusalem Post article about
BCC, February 1973*

Continued on Page 13

and adult education classes, obtaining speakers, and lending a Torah and other ritual objects. "Rabbi Herman became our champion...he was our advisor, our friend and mentor. I can't begin to thank him for all of his work on our behalf," Wellington wrote in a contemporary account. Norman Eichberg, then president of the Pacific Southwest Council, was also a leading supporter. (Sadly, years later, the Herman and Eichberg families would lose sons Jeff, z'l, and Rob, z'l, to AIDS.)

By the 1972 (5733) High Holy Days, MCT had 30 members, with twice and sometimes three times that



Ticket for first High Holiday services, 1972.

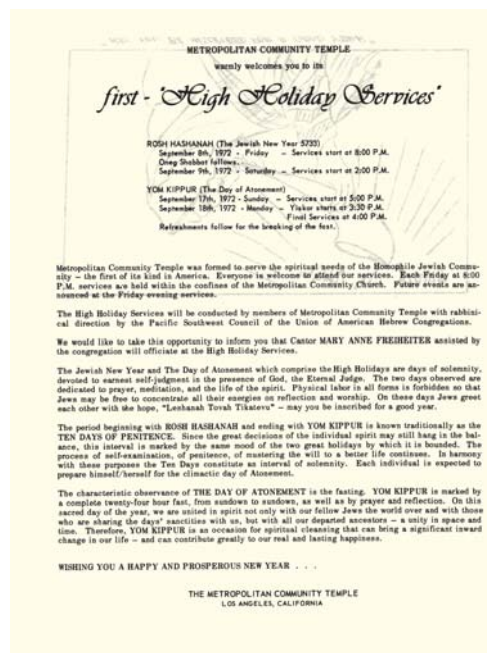
many attending Friday night services. The flyer announcing High Holy Day services noted that "Metropolitan Community Temple was formed to serve the spiritual needs of the Homophile Jewish Community—the first of its kind in America." [Actually, in the world.] Though most weekly services were lay-led, the members wanted a rabbi for High Holy Days. Rabbi Herman later wrote: "Our attempts to fill the pulpit met only with disappointment. Some colleagues to whom we turned were otherwise occupied or traveling elsewhere. Some others, however, available for High Holyday placement, noted candidly that the distance between 'Rabbi of the Homosexual Temple' and 'Homosexual Rabbi of the Temple' was too slim to permit their participation." As a result, the members conducted High Holy Day services themselves, assisted by a straight woman educator who acted as cantor, Mary Anne Freiheiter, better known later as Aviva Kadosh. (The following year, Rabbi Richard Sternberger, z'l, then UAHC director in Washington, D.C., traveled to L.A. to lead BCC services for free.)

Choosing a Name, and the Great Fire. After services at MCC on Friday evening, January 26, 1973, the synagogue passed its first bylaws and held its first election of officers, selecting Stuart A. Zinn, z'l, as the first president, following Sherry Sokoloff, z'l who had served as the interim president. To distinguish the synagogue from MCC, the members also chose a new Hebrew name that night from suggestions written on pieces of paper. The proposed names

included "Children of Pride-Yeladim Shel Gaavah"; "The House of the Children of Peace – Beth Yeladim Sholom"; "The House of the Children of Unity—Beth Ylodim Shel Achdus"; "The House of Eternal Truth—Beth Tamid Emet"; "The House of Eternal Life—Beth Ha Chayim"; Temple Emanuel, and "Congregation Beth Ahavah—The House of Love." Small, one of the first four founders and the congregation's newly elected vice president, submitted the winning entry. Inspired by New Life, the name of Metropolitan Community Church's newsletter, Small asked a friend to translate "House of New Life" into Hebrew, which was rendered as "Beth Chayim Chadash" and which won by a vote of 26-0. Subsequently, Rabbi Herman and Ragins pointed out that "Chadash" was grammatically incorrect and so the name was changed to Beth Chayim Chadashim.

After the meeting that Friday evening, some members adjourned to Canter's Delicatessen on Fairfax Avenue. Shortly after midnight, Milt Jinowsky, z'l a board member and ritual committee chair, was on his way home and heard on the radio that the MCC building was

on fire. He rushed to a phone, called Canter's and told Stu Zinn the terrible news. Lorena Wellington recorded the dramatic scene: "With one accord, the entire group of us, about 20 or so persons, left in our cars. We raced to the scene of the fire. There we surrounded the Fire Chief. 'Our Torah is in that building—we have to get it out.' We all shouted at him. The Fire Chief, overwhelmed by the sheer number of us, and our almost hysterical insistence, finally asked us to select one member to go into the burning building with him. "Unanimously we turned to our new president- elect, Stu. His first act as President was to enter the burning building with the Fire Chief, and rescue our Torah [on loan from the UAHC]. He was gone such a long time, more fire trucks arrived, the flames shot skyward as the spire burned more fiercely, the firemen were pushing us



Flyer for first High Holiday services, 1972

Continued on Page 14

back to the sidewalk— 'Where is he?' we asked each other. 'Has Stu come out yet?' Then, out of the smoke, with his pants legs rolled up— came Stu— tenderly carrying our Torah in his arms! We all broke into tears!



L.A. Times photo of MCC fire, Jan. 28, 1973

"Our Torah was water damaged, but safe. That night, we spent the entire night tenderly unrolling our Torah, both men and women, reverently weighing down the wet corners so that it might dry. Both men and women spent the night on their knees—thanking God silently for our Torah and carefully putting books, papers and weights wrapped in wax paper on the curling sheepskin. Our togetherness was never closer than at that moment..." While the Torah was rescued (although another account said that in spite of these efforts, it was later decided that the scroll was damaged beyond repair and had to be buried), the MCC building sustained \$160,000 in damage, was deemed a total loss and ultimately torn down. Although the fire was initially determined to be of suspicious origin, arson was later ruled out by the Fire Department, but doubts as to the cause persist to this day.

Help from Leo Baeck Temple, and our Survivor Torah.

Until MCC could be rebuilt or relocated, BCC needed to find a new place to meet. It didn't have to search long. Rabbis Leonard Beerman and Sanford Ragins of Leo Baeck Temple came forward, contacting the congregation and volunteering the use of the Temple's classroom building for Friday evening services. The rabbis also said they would address any issues that might arise with their temple's board (none did) and thanked BCC for the opportunity to perform a mitzvah.

About a month after the MCC fire, some 400 people, including city officials and leaders of the Jewish and gay communities, gathered at Leo Baeck to dedicate BCC's own Torah scroll. Participants included the officers of the congregation, Rev. Perry, Rabbi Herman, Rabbi Ragins, Dr. Lewis M. Barth, dean of Hebrew Union College's California School and Cantor Dora Krakower, one of Reform Judaism's pioneer woman cantors. (The first woman rabbi, Sally Preisand, was ordained by HUC in 1972.) Unfortunately, the

Torah's donor was anonymous and not among the celebrants, for as Rabbi Herman indicated: "As a practicing professional in a neighborhood contiguous to Leo Baeck, he lived his life publicly as a 'straight.' Had he made public acknowledgement of his homosexuality, he feared the social stigma and economic repercussions that often accompany such knowledge."

The Torah itself had an unusual story. It was Czech Scroll #115, from the town of Chotebor, written in 1880 and one of 1,564 Torah scrolls found in Czechoslovakia after World War II,

representing hundreds of Jewish communities in Bohemia and Moravia that had been destroyed in the Holocaust. The scroll was part of a huge collection of Jewish ceremonial objects that the Nazis had confiscated and desecrated but saved for a permanent exhibit of "relics of the extinct Jewish race," which they planned to set up following the victory of the so-called Thousand-Year Reich. The Torah scrolls were later rescued by the Westminster Synagogue in London, restored and made available on permanent loan to Jewish communities around the world. This Torah remains one of BCC's most cherished possessions to this day.

Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of six articles recounting the history of BCC on the occasion of its 40th anniversary. This part, and the next, are based substantially on the history expertly compiled and eloquently written by BCC history maven Stephen Sass for the 30th anniversary in 2002. My thanks also to Stan Notkin for his wealth of archival material from BCC's early years and his helpful editorial comments, and to Rabbi Lisa Edwards and Tracy Moore for their many helpful comments, suggestions, and corrections.

z'l = Zichronam livrachah, may their memories be for a blessing.



Advocate article about MCC fire

CANTOR JUVAL PORAT

INTERVIEWED BY A.J. LLEWELLYN

Juval Porat is famous for being the first cantor to be invested in Germany since the Holocaust. Temple Beth Chayim Chadashim of Los Angeles, the world's first GLBT synagogue, was lucky enough to snap up this talented, charismatic singer, who is now recording a special album of music.

Apart from his work as a cantor, Juval Porat has some hidden depths. He is a gifted architect, speaks several languages, is a fearless pop music performer and...drag queen. Putting him in the hot seat for just a moment, I have some questions for Juval.



PHOTO:KENNA LOVE

Juval, thank you for your time. Having experienced your wonderful voice firsthand, not to mention your astonishing harmonies and varied musical collaborations on stage, my first question is when did you first discover your love of music and what were your earliest influences?

Hi AJ – thanks for having me. That's quite humbling of you to ask me to be put on the hot seat. My earliest memory is probably from when I was around 6 or 7. I would spend hours on my parents' rocking chair with the headphones on, listening to my parents' collection of classical music. I remember listening to Carnival of the Animals, dancing with my nanny to Swan Lake. To take time just listening to a piece is something I remember dearly and something I'm grateful to do nowadays, when I have the chance.

Did your parents encourage your love of music? Were you destined, do you think from a young age to be a cantor? And how did this come about?

Being a cantor was never really on my to-do list. It came about when a position for a service leader at a small synagogue in the city of Moenchengladbach, Germany opened up and I was asked if I'd be interested in that position. I was working as a counselor at a Jewish youth center at that time in Aachen, the city where I was studying architecture. I don't know if I was destined. It is pretty miraculous though the way things came to be. After graduating in architecture something just gravitated me towards Berlin – that's the only place to which I sent applications for an architecture job. Once I got the job and moved to

Berlin I realized that I loved the city, but couldn't quite find gratification in architecture. I had been a service leader for almost seven years at that point, travelling to small towns all over Germany, and I remember being very happy for the feedback I would receive from the congregants. They liked what they heard and shared personal stories of how the music and the liturgy would open something up in them. That's when I decided to pursue the cantorial stuff professionally.

And in my second to last year of cantorial studies I met the current president of BCC by chance in Berlin, and he encouraged me to send my resume to Los Angeles. Skype interviews and an invitation to LA followed and by 2010 I found myself living in West Hollywood.

As for my parents – I know they're happy that I'm happy. It wasn't an easy journey for me figuring out my strengths and passions, but I'm very glad I've come this far.

You are openly gay and you are a major musical force for the world's first GLBT synagogue. Was your sexuality accepted in Germany? How are GLBTs treated there?

It's sweet that you see me as a musical force, but I see myself as a constant student – there's still a lot for me to learn. I was mostly out in Germany, and living in Berlin makes it a bit easier. As far as my experience goes, it's easy for GLBTs to live out and proud in Berlin.

You arrived here in 2009 and I know your English was limited according to what I've read but one would never know it. You speak several languages but...in my own experience LA is a tough place to move to. Everyone warned me the first year is the hardest. Did you find this to be true?

Oh yes. I spent the first three months in LA crying every day and writing sad songs. My arrival in town was paired with a rather traumatic breakup, which didn't make things any better. I literally felt lost both in space, as well as in time – whenever I wanted to reach out to my friends and family on the other side of the ocean they would be asleep according to their time zone. It was tough to settle in. When I most recently came back from Berlin, after touring some of the country with a bunch of American cantors, I had a sense of acceptance and of coming home for the very first time. Acceptance for all the good and bad things that make LA different from any city that I've lived in before. I've been writing some happy songs since then!

Getting back to music...will some of your collaborators who've performed with you at BCC be part of the new album and what can we expect from it?

Yes, there will be some collaborators who've recently

Continued on Page 16

shared the bimah with me on the album as well. With the help of the sample technology (and hopefully the right license) I hope to duet with a singer, who recently passed away and whose influence on BCC and beyond is very strong.

What I hope to achieve is to present classic cantorial pieces in a slightly different sound. I have all kinds of ideas in my head, vocoders and auto-tuners included. Right now Josh Friedman and I are experimenting with various things until we get it right. Since at BCC I sing so many different styles, I'm going to try and give an example of each of them on the album. The common thing to those sounds is that they've all been performed at BCC over the years. ... I'm grateful for being surrounded by such knowledgeable colleagues in LA from whom I keep learning and being inspired.

What music do you enjoy listening to these days?

I most recently fell in love with Frank Ocean's debut album. Getting ready for my own album, I listened to a lot of

cantorial music from the early 20th century and late 19th century. Various styles and voices, but all pretty high on the goosebumps factor. Some of these pieces are just so intense that I needed to take occasional breaks in between the listening periods – I listened to Cantor Mordechai Hershman, Cantor Alberto Mizrahi, Cantor Zavel Kwartin and many many more...

And then there's my playlist, that I like to call "jogging playlist" filled with all kinds of electronic music and remixes – Saint Etienne's most recent album shows up there a lot!

I must ask you about your Purim concert and how comfortable, not to mention gorgeous, you looked dressed as a woman. Is this a facet of performance we can look forward to seeing again?

Well, thank you! Yes, Alatta Arbeit is planning her comeback. Thanks AJ for having me!!

The full interview can be read at <http://tinyurl.com/juval-interview>.

BCC Book Group

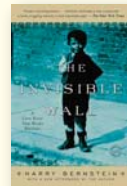
Larry Nathenson

For more than fifteen years, BCC members and friends have gathered in private homes for monthly potluck brunches and discussion of books selected by the group. Our only criterion is that the book has some Jewish content (it may also have GLBT content). We have read fiction and non-fiction, classics and contemporary works, American and Israeli books, something for everyone's tastes and interests. We welcome new members to the group, as well as occasional visitors who may be interested in discussing a particular book. Our next two meetings are:



Sunday, September 30, 10:00 a.m.
The Cookbook Collector, by Allegra Goodman

This novel centers on two Silicon Valley sisters who are opposites in temperament and occupation, and explores what is important in life through their conflicts and relationship.



Sunday, October 28, 10:00 a.m.
The Invisible Wall, by Harry Bernstein

Written at age 93, this is a memoir of the author's youth in a small town in England, when an "invisible wall" separated Jews and Christians, reinforced by anti-Semitism, and a love story in his family threatened to tear his close-knit community apart.

BCC members and non-members alike are invited to attend. Because the discussions are held in members' homes, space is limited. Please RSVP to the BCC office early to guarantee your seat at the table, or contact Larry Nathenson at Larrynath@aol.com.



Davi Cheng with Jewish visitor from Kaifeng, China, August 18, 2012.

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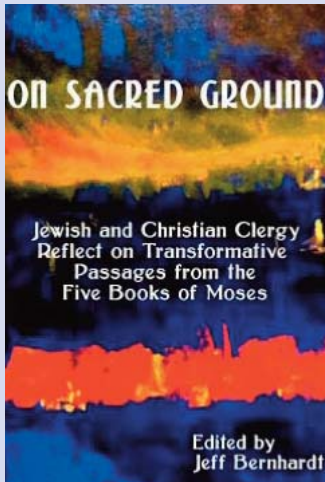


Rent BCC for your special events or business meetings.

Contact Felicia Park-Rodgers Executive Director (323) 931 7023 ext. 203

Mazel Tov

Please join the BCC community in wishing the following individuals a hearty "mazel tov" on their recent accomplishments or good news.

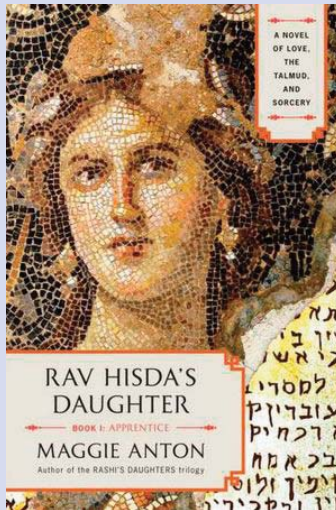


Jeff Bernhardt, on his newly published book, *On Sacred Ground: Jewish and Christian Clergy Reflect on Transformative Passages from the Five Books of Moses*. In this poignant collection of brief essays, over one hundred clergy from diverse religious traditions share the passages that have brought meaning to their lives. *On Sacred Ground* compels the reader to ask: What is my relationship to these sacred words? This is the link:

http://www.amazon.com/On-Sacred-Ground-Christian-Transformative/dp/1610530187/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1344000428&sr=8-1&keywords=on+sacred+ground+bernhardt

Maggie Parkhurst, aka **Maggie Anton**, on the publication of her fourth historical novel, *Rav Hisda's Daughter, Book One: Apprentice, a Novel of Love, the Talmud and Sorcery in third century CE Babylonia*.

<http://www.maggieanton.com> or
<http://www.ravhisdasdaughter.com>



Chris Marshall, a judge of the juvenile dependency court in San Bernardino, was profiled in the August 20 issue of the legal newspaper, the Daily Journal.

Jessica Donath and **Vince Cerundolo** on their new home in Pasadena.



Rabbi Edwards and Tracy Moore receive an aliyah for their 18th anniversary with BCC at Shabbat morning service, August 18. Also pictured are Steve Hochstadt, David Krieger, Henry Wudl.

Rabbi Lisa Edwards and **Tracy Moore** on their 18th anniversary as rabbi and rebbetzin (lesbetzin) of BCC.

Evelyn Poplawski is leading a support, educational, and self-help group at UCLA Medical Center for people with chronic pain or illness, starting October 1. For more information, she can be reached at crps_rsd_paingroup.ucla@gmail.com and at (818) 554-3635.

If you have an achievement or good fortune to share, please send it to the BCC office. We want to celebrate with you!

BCC Wants To Know

The BCC Board of Directors is vitally interested in ensuring that we are serving our members' needs and that we are doing effective long-term strategic planning. To that end, the Board established a subcommittee, chaired by Jerry Nodiff, that has been working diligently over the past several months to design a survey of BCC members. The survey is designed to be taken via Internet, while a paper version also will be available for those who are not computer connected.

The questions are wide ranging over various aspects of BCC life. Topics covered include Friday night and Saturday morning Shabbat services, High Holy Day services, Ohr Chayim, adult education, social action, and social groups (havurot), among others. The survey will offer members the opportunity to provide ratings as well as to enter specific feedback and opinions on the topics covered.

The survey launch date is expected shortly after High Holy Days and will allow for a four-week response period. Announcements as to when the survey is open for response will be made at services, in seat bulletins, in the weekly BCC e-news and by notices posted at the temple. All the notices will include the Internet link.

We encourage all members to respond to the survey. Your participation, ratings and opinions are important to helping guide our programs and future decision-making.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2	3 LABOR DAY BCC closed 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal Cantor Porat	4 7:30 pm High Holy Days Prep. Class The Sound of Forgiveness Cantor Porat	5 7:00 pm Life Transitions Group Shirley Hirschberg	6 4:00 pm Virtual Minyan Torah Study	7 6:30 pm Pre-Shabbat Dinner 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Cantor Porat Kadin Henningsen	8 9:15 am Parent and Me 10:00 am Ohr Chayim 8:00 pm Selichot Service Temple Beth Am 1039 S. La Cienega
8:00 am cook, 11:30 deliver Project Chicken Soup 3975 Landmark 1:00 pm Men's Havurah Pool party (private home) 6:30 pm Hebrew Class	10 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal Cantor Porat	11	12 7:00 pm Executive Committee Meeting	13 4:00 pm Virtual Minyan Torah Study	14 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat	15
16 8:00 pm Erev Rosh Hashanah Temple Isaiah	17 ROSH HASHANAH Temple Isaiah 9:30 am Morning service 10:30 am Family service Catered lunch 4:00 pm Telephone Minyan	18 ROSH HASHANAH 10:00 am Second Day Service at BCC 4:30 pm Tashlich Venice Beach 6:30 pm Dinner (private home)	19 BCC Office Closed 7:00 pm Life Transitions Group Shirley Hirschberg	20 4:00 pm Virtual Minyan Torah Study	21 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat	22
8:00 am cook, 11:30 deliver Project Chicken Soup 11:00 am Donor Plaque Dedication 1:30 pm Sukkah Building and Arts	24 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal Cantor Porat	25 7:15 pm Kol Nidre Temple Isaiah	26 YOM KIPPUR Temple Isaiah (more info. on page 1) 10:00 am Morning service 11:00 am Family service 2:30 pm Telephone Minyan 4:00 pm Yizkor service	27 BCC Office Closed 4:00 pm Virtual Minyan Torah Study	28 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Elissa Barrett Herb Toplan	29 10:00 am Ohr Chayim
10:00 am (private home) BCC Book Group <i>The Cookbook Collector</i> 10:00 am Sukkah building 4:30 pm Sukkah decorating 6:00 pm Sukkot service Potluck dinner in sukkah	<i>All events at BCC unless otherwise noted</i>					

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 SUKKOT (first day) BCC Office Closed	2	3 7:00 pm Life Transitions Group Shirley Hirschberg	4 4:00 pm Virtual Minyan Torah Study 7:30 pm Torah Study Rabbi Edwards	5 7:00 pm Dinner 8:00 pm Shabbat Service In the sukkah Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat	6 10:00 am Ohr Chayim
8:00 am cook, 11:30 deliver Project Chicken Soup 3975 Landmark 5:00 pm Yizkor service 6:00 pm Simchat Torah service	8 SIMCHAT TORAH BCC Office Closed	9	10 7:00 pm Executive Committee Meeting	11 4:00 pm Virtual Minyan Torah Study 7:30 pm Torah Study Rabbi Edwards	12 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Cantor Porat Lay leader	13 9:15 am Parent and Me 10:00 Ohr Chayim 7:00 BCC Professionals Series Kenna Love Ruth Weisberg
14	15	16	17 7:00 pm Life Transitions Group Shirley Hirschberg	18 4:00 pm Virtual Minyan Torah Study 7:30 pm Torah Study Rabbi Edwards Trans and Gender Queer Text Study	19 Ruach Chayim 7:00 pm Refreshments 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat Guest Musicians	20 10:00 am Shabbat Morning Service and Dairy potluck
9:30 am Jewish and LGBT LA Bus Tour (see page 5) 8:00 am cook, 11:30 deliver Project Chicken Soup 3975 Landmark	22	23	24 7:00 pm Board of Directors Meeting	25 4:00 pm Virtual Minyan Torah Study 7:30 pm Torah Study Rabbi Edwards	26 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Rabbi Edwards Cantor TBA	27 10:00 am Ohr Chayim 7:00 pm Women's Havurah Game Night
10:00 am (private home) BCC Book Group <i>The Invisible Wall</i>	29	30	31	<i>All events at BCC unless otherwise noted</i>		