

## A Few Words from Bruce...

# BCC Continues to Grow with New Members and New Building



*Bruce Maxwell*

Twenty new members have joined BCC over the last two months alone! This tells us something — we are a place where people want to belong. BCC is a very unique community indeed, and we are a place that people want to visit. And when they visit, many of them stay and join us as members. They join because of Rabbi Lisa Edwards.

They join because of Cantor Juval

Porat. They join because of our beautiful choir and our wonderful musical service, Ruach Chayim. But most of all, they join because you, our members, make our visitors feel welcome so quickly as a part of our family and community. You make them feel welcome from the time they walk in the door for the first time to visit us. Thank you to each of you for your contributions to this effort, for greeting each new face with a smile and for making each person feel special with a warm welcome. Thank you for continuing to serve as "Member Goodwill Ambassadors." With your continued efforts we will be certain to grow and maintain our healthy membership roster. Please contact our new Membership Chairpersons Carol Saragossi and Deborah Chanen with your ideas and enthusiasm and they will be happy to accept your help. [Editor's note: See page 9 for a list of new members in 2009]

We continue to proceed forward with the plans for our new home at 6090 Pico Blvd, just two blocks from our current building. Many of you were able to come to the presentation by the Building Committee, chaired by Ira Dankberg, during High Holidays. Ira discussed the overall plan for our new home and described the process in which we have been working with our architects Toni Lewis and Marc Schoeplein of Lewis-Schoeplein & Associates. For the first time, Ira presented to the Congregation the three-dimensional model, drawings,

and architectural plans for our new home. The plans and drawings continue to be available for viewing in the oneg room on Friday evenings. We are very excited as the close of escrow on our building approaches and your Building Committee is hard at work finishing up their remaining tasks. As we approach the end of the calendar year, we will keep you posted with further details and updates on our progress.

And most importantly, I want to thank each of you who participated in our High Holiday appeals during Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Thank you in particular to our speakers Harriet Perl and Larry Bloustein for sharing their personal stories and preparing and delivering such wonderful words. And thank you to the 14 individuals who stepped up and agreed to be a part of the matching campaign that we put forth on Yom Kippur day. Because of that effort, the Congregation responded wholeheartedly, and the good news to report is that we not only reached our goal for this appeal, but we exceeded it. Your enthusiasm for the ongoing support of BCC is truly wonderful and most appreciated.

*Continued on Page 2*



*BCC clergy at Temple Isaiah for High Holidays: Student Rabbi Lindy Davidson, Cantor Juval Porat, Rabbi Lisa Edwards*



As I have now been your president for only a couple of short months, there are still many of you that I may not yet know by name. Please take the time to introduce yourselves to me. Knowing each of you personally, and hearing your goals and visions for BCC's future, is important to me as I continue to lead our community over the next two years.

Warmest regards,

Bruce Maxwell

## Taschlich at Venice Beach on Second Day Rosh Hashanah 5770



Photos by  
Tracy Moore



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## G'vanim Advertising Rates

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

### STAFF

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### G'VANIM

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

#### BETH CHAYIM CHADASHIM

6000 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 Larry.nathenson@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.**



## Join me for Jewish Poetry Slam!

Rabbi Lisa Edwards

PHOTO: KENNA LOVE



Dear Friends,  
The Hebrew month of Tishrei - the most holiday-laden month on the Hebrew calendar -

has drawn to a close. What a pleasure to have seen so many of you at our Days of Awe, Sukkot and Simchat Torah observances.

And suddenly, we find ourselves in Cheshvan, the month with the fewest Jewish holidays (only its four Shabbats). No wonder Cheshvan has become a time to begin a new cycle of community learning - we have a little more leisure time. This year our Cheshvan offerings are varied and many, and I invite you to join me for them all. Here and elsewhere in this issue of G'vanim you'll find brief descriptions of some of what we have to look forward to, not just in November, but ongoing through much of this new Hebrew year, 5770.

In particular, I hope you'll join me on Tuesday, November 10, along with others from BCC and the larger LA Jewish community, at the kick off for this year's One People, One Book.

For me, Zelda and Yehuda Amichai are indeed among the most powerful and moving of the many Israeli poets whose work continues to inspire readers in Israel and in the Diaspora.

Born in Russia, the daughter and granddaughter of prominent Russian Hasidic rabbis, Zelda's family took her to Palestine in 1914. Witness to the early years of the new State of Israel, she lived in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Haifa, living a mostly religious life, bonded to her mother, her husband, and many young women whom she mentored. She died in 1984, a poet

admired by religious and secular, young and old.

Here is Marcia Falk's translation of Zelda's poem, "**When You Were Here**":

When you were here,  
Your brown glance protecting me  
And our thoughts touching  
Suddenly  
Wing to wing,

When you were with me  
Among the passing things,  
The walls were like elderly relations  
Telling ancient tales in the evenings  
As we drank our tea.

Now the walls are no shelter.  
Withdrawn into their own silence,  
They pay no attention to my fall.  
Now the walls are plaster and concrete,  
A strange element,  
Matter  
Unresponsive as death.

I lie in my house,  
And in the distant distance  
The sea wanders through the dark.  
Leave a bit of light  
In me,  
Do not ravage me,  
O sufferings.

Yehuda Amichai was born in Würzburg, Germany, in 1924, immigrated to Palestine in 1936, and died in Jerusalem in 2001. Israel's most widely read and loved poet, his works have been translated into more than 20 languages.

Personally, I am grateful to Amichai for the countless ways he tugs our heartstrings, more articulate than most of us, of the grief and despair that constantly hovers beside our hopes and dreams for Israel and its people. An example:

### Jerusalem

On a roof in the Old City  
Laundry hanging in the late afternoon  
sunlight:  
The white sheet of a woman who is my  
enemy,

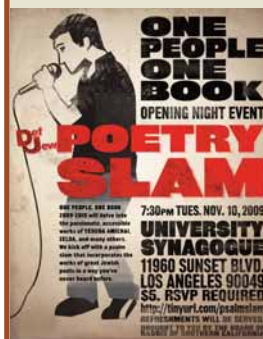
The towel of a man who is my enemy,  
To wipe off the sweat of his brow.

In the sky of the Old City  
A kite.  
At the other end of the string,  
A child  
I can't see  
Because of the wall

We have put up many flags,  
They have put up many flags.  
To make us think that they're happy.  
To make them think that we're happy.  
Translated by Irena Gordon

### Def Jew Poetry Slam!

Tuesday, Nov. 10, 2009, 7:30 pm  
University Synagogue  
11960 Sunset Boulevard, L.A., CA 90049



The story of the Jewish people has always been told through verse, from Deborah and Job, Psalms and Song of

Songs, to Emma Lazarus and Allen Ginsberg. This opening night of our **One People, One Book 5770** program, will feature dramatic, energizing and soulful performances of great poems of Jewish life - and the chance to engage in transdenominational reading and study of works by Yehuda Amichai, Zelda, and others.

Intermittently this year, scattered among a wide variety of other learning opportunities, we'll take some time (dates to be announced) to linger on the poetic words of some of Israel's other best writers. Watch for further details.



# Adult Education for Fall 2009

Kadin Henningsen

## Explore Queer Jewish Identity with Warren Hoffman, author of *The Passing Game* November 5 and 6

In collaboration with the Institute for Judaism and Sexual Orientation and Kol Ami, BCC is pleased to present author Warren Hoffman. His new book *The Passing Game* sheds light on the long history of queer Jewish identity in twentieth-century American literature, drama, and film. Taking up both Yiddish and English narratives, the book explores the tensions among Jewish identity, queer sexuality, performance, and American citizenship.

Please join us on **Thursday, November 5 at 7:00 pm at Kol Ami** for an in depth discussion with Mr. Hoffman. Then, join us at BCC on **Friday, November 6 for Shabbat Services with a drash by Dr. Hoffman**



and more lively discussion following services.

Warren Hoffman is the Director of Arts and Cultural Programming for the Gershan Y in

Philadelphia. Before that, as a theater professional, Warren served as the literary manager and dramaturge for Philadelphia Theatre Company where he worked with such playwrights as William Finn, Terrence McNally, Christopher Durang, and David Henry Hwang. Previously, Warren served as the Associate Artistic Director of Jewish Repertory Theatre in New York where he produced and dramaturged a season of Jewish musicals in concert. Warren was also a writer and reviewer for *TalkinBroadway.com* where he covered the Off-Broadway and cabaret scene in New York. In addition to working in the theater community, Warren holds a Ph.D. in

American Literature from the University of California-Santa Cruz and currently teaches at Temple University. His play *New Words* received a reading at Philadelphia Theatre Workshop and was a finalist for the Christopher Brian Wolk Playwriting Award in New York. His new play *The Last* was a recipient of the 2008 Foundation for Jewish Culture theatre development award. Warren was recently named one of the 10 most influential Jewish leaders in Philadelphia under the age of 50 by *Inside Magazine*.

## Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Swine Flu but were Afraid to Ask November 13 after Shabbat service at BCC

BCC member and public health expert Dr Marsha Epstein, MD, MPH, who works for the LA County Department of Public Health, will offer a powerpoint presentation on influenza and (hopefully) answer all your questions: Should you get the H1N1 influenza vaccine? Should you get the regular seasonal influenza vaccine? What about mercury? What if I get sick—when do I call the doctor or go to an emergency room? What about children? Come with whatever other questions you have.

## J.J. Keki and the Abayudaya Jewish community of Uganda November 17 at 7:30 pm at Temple Beth Am



Beth Chayim Chadashim, in collaboration with Temple Beth Am (on La Cienega, just south of Olympic), is pleased to present J.J. Keki, a leader of the 1,000-member Abayudaya Jewish community of Uganda, and brother of our friend and previous BCC guest speaker, Rabbi Gershom Sizomu.

J.J. Keki has been acclaimed in *Oprah Magazine* for his leadership of the interfaith Delicious Peace Fair Trade coffee cooperative, and has also been nominated for a Grammy in traditional world music. He will share the story of the community's evolution, from its struggle to maintain its Jewish identity in the face of persecution, to the remarkable development of ties with neighbors of different faiths. He will give a multimedia presentation about the education, nutrition, health, and economic development programs that are supported by Kulanu, and perform traditional Abayudaya music (See [www.kulanu.org/abayudaya](http://www.kulanu.org/abayudaya)).

This program is part of a Kulanu speaking tour to raise funds for two Abayudaya schools that educate and feed 700 Jewish, Christian, and Muslim children. Kulanu ("All of Us" in Hebrew), founded in 1994, is a non-profit organization which supports isolated and emerging Jewish communities around the world.

## New Course: Fear & Faith with Rabbinic Intern Lindy Davidson

Have you been drawn into Judaism because of the rich imagery and imaginative tales that are woven throughout? Whether you are artistically inclined or simply open and interested in exploring new ways to understand Jewish texts, this class is for you. Rabbinic Intern Lindy Davidson brings us texts on fear and faith to explore through different artistic mediums. You need not be an artist in order to participate, just open to exploring and learning texts through visual, kinesthetic and dramatic means. Bring your inner child, your inner artist or just yourself and together we will explore what our tradition has to teach us about fear and faith. Dates will be announced soon for Sunday afternoons in December, January, and February.



# Chanukah and Fire

*Rabbinic Intern Lindy Davidson*



The rains came early in Los Angeles this year, in October. As I sit and write this it is a dark and stormy night, much like I imagine when I read Edgar Allen Poe's stories while curled up in my favorite chair by the blazing fireplace. Yes, we live in Southern California, and we may not see

the leaves change colors or the ground covered in snow, but tonight I feel the winter drawing near as the rain pounds down on the roof. We are approaching the longest nights and the darkest time of the year. It is during this time, when the moon has gone into exile, that we celebrate Chanukah. This time of year is also the time of the winter solstice, when the sun hides her shining face as well.

At this time, when one could imagine it is easy to despair, the Jews begin to light candles increasing the light each night. Rabbi Arthur Waskow teaches us that there is a great deal of evidence that in the Middle East, the winter solstice was a time for imploring the sun to return and for celebrating its readiness to do so. You know the story that retells of the singular vial of oil that was found which lit the lamp for eight days instead of just one. The Jewish Renewal movement makes spiritual meaning of this miracle. They believe that the miracle of the eight days is a symbol that a little of God's help could turn into an infinite supply of spiritual riches. Why infinite? Since the world was created in seven days, the number eight becomes the symbol of eternity and infinity. It is very possible that Chanukah was intentionally placed at the darkest time of the year, when the moon and sun are in hiding. Our candlelight then takes on new meaning. Lighting our hanukiot becomes an affirmation of our hope for renewed light in our physical and spiritual worlds.

This time of year, when winter has

come upon us, we are most aware of the importance of the fire, the flame that we celebrate during Chanukah. Fire warms us, cooks our food, fuels our machines, and is used in warfare. This fire lights up the darkness. Watching the flames dance and sway can mesmerize even the most serious of souls into deep contemplation. It is no surprise that this fire helps create sacred space and community. Fire is the ideal element for ritual. As Jews, each Shabbat and Yom Tov we use fire to light our candles, which we let burn until they sputter out. We use fire to welcome Shabbat, to bake bread, to purify at Passover and to dedicate and sanctify from biblical times to Chanukah today. Fire is both a powerful tool and a metaphor that has been used to represent the soul and the divine. In the book of Exodus God appears as a malach (angel) seen by Moses through a burning flame that comes forth from a bush that is not consumed. God appears as fire. In that same book God appears as a pillar of cloud by day and fire by night to protect and guide the Israelites during their wandering in the wilderness.

Fire, flames and light, our symbols for the divine, can remind us this holiday season of the true reason to celebrate. We celebrate not because we want to one up the Christians and Christmas, but because we celebrate the divine and the miracles that we have experienced. This year, as you watch the flames of your hanukiah burn down each night, take some time to reflect. In what ways have these flames brought the light of God into your life?

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# Women's Havurah Wraps Up 2009

Donna Quigley Groman

It's hard to believe that we are wrapping up the year 2009 and moving on to another decade. Do you remember all the panic around the turn of the century? – "Y2K" – and now it's 10 years later. Thus far, 2009 has been a fabulous year, with just two months left to share with your BCC sisters before the new decade kicks in. So, if you haven't joined us in a Women's Havurah event, here is your last chance while there are still

two "00"s to the right of the "2."

There are 2 events on **Sunday, November 15**. In the morning there is a **5K Run-Walk to benefit research for ovarian cancer**. The event starts at a civilized 9:30 a.m. in Pan Pacific Park. Mrs. CQ and I will be walking and want you to join us. Register for Team BCC at <http://www.runforher.com/>. Send me an e-mail [dlgroman@hotmail.com](mailto:dlgroman@hotmail.com) to let me know you will be there and I will send

you info on a meeting place for BCC'ers.

The second event on November 15 is a repeat event of the fabulous **croquet party** we had at Sylvia and Irene's home in Sherman Oaks. Take a shower and show up between 1 and 5 pm. RSVP and directions: [sylviaweisenberg@yahoo.com](mailto:sylviaweisenberg@yahoo.com). This is a **women only** event.

Here's a first and hopefully an annual event – a **Sunday Afternoon Sing-Along** at the home of Helena

Lipstadt in Hollywood. **Sunday, November 29**, 2:00 p.m. to 5 p.m. This is a **women only** event. Bring a song or two to share and a snack or beverage. RSVP and directions: [dlgroman@hotmail.com](mailto:dlgroman@hotmail.com)

On Saturday, **December 12** at 8:00 p.m., **Women's Chorale Vox Femina** presents their "Holiday Voices" Concert in Pasadena at First Congregational Church. Everyone is welcome. Purchase your tickets at [www.voxfeminala.org](http://www.voxfeminala.org). RSVP to [dlgroman@hotmail.com](mailto:dlgroman@hotmail.com) for an optional pre-concert dinner.

Another annual event at a different location: **Friday, December 25 – Annual "Movies and Chinese Food"** on Christmas Day. Movies from 12:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the Grove, followed by dinner at Hunan Taste, 6031 San Vicente Boulevard, Los Angeles at 6:00 p.m. **Everyone is welcome**. You must RSVP for dinner to [dlgroman@hotmail.com](mailto:dlgroman@hotmail.com) by December 15.



Womens Havurah playing mah jongg at Santa Monica Beach. Pictured from the left and continuing clockwise: Gavi Ruit, Susan McKibben, Hannah Theile, Donna Groman

## Men's Havurah Does Comedy, Halloween, and Chanukah

Mark Miller and Richard Lesse, BCC Men's Havurah Co-Chairs

BCC's Men's Havurah has just come off a very successful pre-High Holiday catered dinner and Havdalah service on Saturday, September 12 (before Selichot services at BCC) hosted by our former President and former First Gentleman, Brett Trueman and Mark Miller. We had about 20 people, who feasted on wonderful Mediterranean food and stimulating conversation.

Upcoming events that the Men's Havurah Committee is planning include:

- Gay Comedy night at the Improv Comedy Club in West Hollywood on Wednesday evening, November 4 at 8pm. You should have already received your invitation.
- Got the Halloween blues? Ever wonder what the Torah says about witchcraft? An evening of your favorite Bewitched episodes will satisfy your curiosity and your nostalgia on Saturday, November 14. We'll start off the magical evening with dinner at 7pm.

- Chanukah Celebration on Sunday afternoon, December 13, 4pm – 7pm.

The Men's Havurah aims to provide a variety of social, educational, and entertainment events at which the men of BCC can get to know each other. Two of our most popular recent events were a Summer Sunday brunch at Brett and Mark's home on August 23, and a wine tasting party on June 7 at the home of David Mozes and Peter Bastien. Photos from these events can be found in the July/August issue of G'vanim. There are two ways to stay in touch with us:

- Our Facebook page ("BCC Men's Havurah") where we post event details and share pictures from events
- Our e-mail address: [bcc.menshavurah@gmail.com](mailto:bcc.menshavurah@gmail.com) – If you'd like to be part of the team, please let us know... we can use everyone's help especially hosting a Men's Havurah event. We will tailor the event to the size of your home.



# BCC Children Participate in Simchat Torah and Chanukah

Leah Zimmerman, Education Director



Our recent Simchat Torah and Shabbat service on October 9 was our first attempt at consciously planning an event for our school, with young children and adult populations joining together.

We began the service at 7:00 pm

so that more families could attend. We also designated that evening an Ohr Chayim date instead of the following Saturday morning. It was wonderful to see our younger and older students joining the congregation in a yearly holiday celebration. I enjoyed leading the children in singing and dancing. Throughout the evening we had some highlights planned that would attract the children's attention. I found a wonderful storytelling partner in our new Rabbinic Intern Lindy Davidson. With her help we were able to engage all ages in a wonderful Jewish story. The students and parents lit the Shabbat candles, sang Sh'ma from the Torah scrolls, and joined the grown up dancing. James (foster son of Jonathan Falk and George Garcia), a new addition to our Ohr Chayim program, stood proudly holding the children's Torah, his arms protecting it in a strong hug and his eyes looking forward and determined.

We also had some activities set up for our students so that they could be busy with their hands while still being a part of the service. One of my favorite moments was when a group of students sat with a student Torah following the Torah reading. As the adults read from the beginning of the Torah scroll, Ashira Weinreich sat on the floor of the bimah with her Torah set on the ledge under the Ark ready to follow. Matt Postrel-Blum and Rae

Chalin sat with me as we followed the Hebrew in the little scroll.

I am looking forward to Chanukah when we will repeat the same structure. Once again we will start services at 7:00 pm on December 18 (the eighth night) so that families can attend, and hold Ohr Chayim on Friday night instead of Saturday morning. Our families and our adult congregation will come together for an evening that celebrates Chanukah on many levels. On the one hand this is not so different from what we have done before, yet in other ways it is distinctly different. In the past the evening has begun with a children's program and then families have left as the timing got late and the adult services began. This year we hope that the families will stay longer and that the adults and children will have more opportunities to interact.

When we have these combined events, each adult in the community has an opportunity to directly fulfill the mitzvah of "v'shinantam l'vanecha." It is a mitzvah to teach the next generation the mitzvot of the Torah. When you say hello to the young students and welcome them into the space you are fulfilling an important Jewish value.

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BCC is continuing in its productive work with One LA. For those not familiar with it, One LA is part of a national organization, Industrial Areas Foundation, which brings together churches, temples, schools, unions, and other non-profits to work on social problems at their root level. Here's what has been happening with BCC and One LA.

**Hearing your Voices.** Roughly 50 BCC members voiced their social concerns at three house meetings and at the Yom Kippur break conversation. Our One LA organizer Robert Hoo and I are both happy with this level of interest. In addition, three members (besides myself and Rabbi Lisa) attended two major assemblies. Among the issues discussed were mortgage reform, health care, California political reform, and building a relationship in our neighborhood.

**Transforming Space, Impacting Lives.** Member Sylvia Sukop shared with me information on two vital organizations in our Pico neighborhood. I hope you will check out their websites and share your thoughts on them with our committee, Dominique Bender, Larry Bloustein, Rabbi Joe Hample, Eric Kamm, and me. The Pico NC (Pico

Neighborhood Council) ranks among the top 5 neighborhood councils in Los Angeles according to Urban Insight, "an independent consultant for the city of Los Angeles."

The council has a wide range of projects and

concerns including billboard inventory, medical marijuana dispensaries, beautification of Little Ethiopia, LAPD Open House, and Big Sunday and the Garden Project both at Saturn Elementary School.

Like BCC, Saturn is engaged in transforming space (their playground, and for us, our new building) and impacting on lives. The school is located roughly midway between Fairfax and La Brea Avenues and south of Pico. It is a Title I LAUSD school with 547 K-5 students. The student body is 70% Latino and 27% African-American. The school has a number of challenges: Over 19% live below poverty level with 92% receiving free lunch. 43 % are English learners, and 11 % are in Special Education. The school is in a high- density area with no parks within walking distance. And, of course, state budget cuts have impacted the school.

Against these challenges, Saturn

has made significant academic gains and there have been some outstanding collaborative projects to assist the school. In 2009 the



students jumped in their API (Academic Performance Index) from 723 to 780, a gain of 57 points, judged among the top student gains in LA County. The school credits this in good measure to 1 on 1 volunteer mentoring and tutoring. The vision and collaboration of the Pico NC, the Tree People, a school support group aptly named "Rings of Saturn", and others are transforming their barren, bleak asphalt playground into an imaginative, multi-use park that will be used by the community in non-school hours.

For more information, please Google: "Pico Neighborhood Council, Los Angeles", "Saturn Elementary School, Los Angeles"; and use "<http://rings.saturnelementary.com>" ... and while you are at it, please email Jerry at [jerdn2@gmail.com](mailto:jerdn2@gmail.com) with questions, interests, and comments. The committee and I will be happy to hear from you!

## Life Transitions Group

The BCC Life Transitions Group has been in existence for the last seven years. This unique and successful group is committed to helping people dealing with changes and/or challenges in relationships, family, bereavement, health, career and economic issues in a safe and confidential environment. We meet the first and third Wednesday of each month 7:00 to 9:00 pm at BCC. It is led by Shirley Hirschberg, social worker and life style and bereavement counselor. We welcome BCC members and non-members. There is a fee associated with participating in this group. To get more information and see if this group is for you, please call the BCC office.

## Volunteer for GLBT Seniors on Thanksgiving

For the second year in a row BCC will join with other congregations under the leadership of the Interfaith Queer Clergy Coalition to bring food and additional community and camaraderie to the residents of the Gay and Lesbian Elder Housing in Hollywood. Save the date now (Thursday, November 26), and watch the e-bulletin for more details on this wonderful and much appreciated volunteer opportunity.

Gay and Lesbian Elder Housing is a nonprofit organization dedicated to building and operating high-quality affordable, multicultural housing developments that include a community space used to provide social and recreational services for GLBT older adults. Our goal is to provide a safe, nurturing environment that supports the well-being of GLBT elders. More info and photos of this gorgeous and unique facility can be found at [www.gleh.org](http://www.gleh.org)



# Mazel Tov

Please join the whole BCC community in wishing the following members a big "mazel tov" on their recent good news or upcoming naches.

**Jeff Bernhardt**, on the publication of his essay on preparation for the High Holy Days in the L.A. Jewish Journal on September 10, 2009.

**Steve Koltai**, on receiving a Franklin Fellowship at the State Department. 3 to 5 of these fellowships are given each year to people from outside the government to bring "fresh ideas" into the State Department. Steve is now working at the State Department as a "Senior Adviser" on an exciting project that was started by a terrific Foreign Service Officer last year. The working title is the Global Entrepreneurship Program <http://www.gepcon.org/>. Its purpose is to try to help a few, targeted countries "jump start" their entrepreneurial sectors by creating connections between US entrepreneur education programs, foundations, and especially, local entrepreneurs themselves.

**Kenna Love**, who just completed photographing a year of ads for LA Magazine & Coast Magazine, depicting families gay and straight having fun in the Rancho Mirage area. A great portrayal of warm and loving gay life styles.

**Michele Huneven**, whose new novel, Blame, got a "briefly noted" in the New Yorker. It is online at [http://www.newyorker.com/arts/reviews/brieflynoted/2009/10/19/091019crbn\\_brieflynoted4](http://www.newyorker.com/arts/reviews/brieflynoted/2009/10/19/091019crbn_brieflynoted4)

Please send your good news to the BCC office. We want to celebrate with you!

## BCC Welcomes 31 New Members This Year

Beth Chayim Chadashim is thrilled to welcome the following 31 new members and affiliate members. They have all joined since January 2009. Please extend your warmest BCC welcome to them. The date of our next new member Shabbat celebrating and blessing them will be scheduled shortly.

### Members

Meiram Bendat

Eric Carter and Russell Freesland

Stephen J. Cherin

Yanir Dekel

Roe Dror

Rebecca Fisher and Gretchen

Peterson

Naomi Goldberg

Elaine Goodman

Marc Gottehrer

Bruce and Patty Hackman

Yetta Howard

Adam Kulbersh

Richard Levik

Or Lindenfeld

Alex Maghen

Liora Gubkin Malicdem

Joel Rosner

Devorah Servi

Michael Cimet Shojjet

Gavin Steckler

Ash Steffy and Robert Weiss

Meline von Brentano

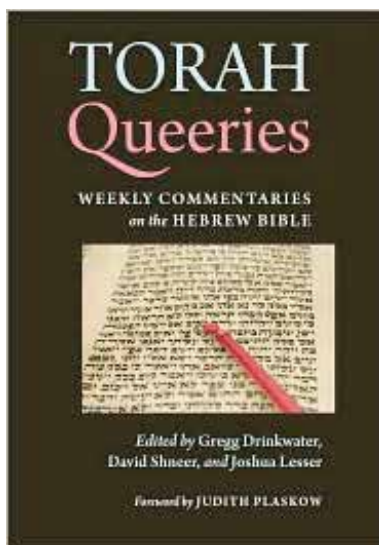
Elijah Yecke

### Affiliate Members

Heidi Davidson and Bonnie

Leopold

Sy and Charlotte Maxwell



## Rabbi Edwards Contributes to New Queer Torah Commentary

Rabbi Lisa Edwards is one of the contributors to **Torah Queeries**, a new collection of Torah commentaries from a queer perspective. She has an article of her own, and another co-authored with her brother Larry Edwards, rabbi of our sibling congregation Ohr Chadash in Chicago. Several other friends of BCC also contributed.

Torah Queeries: Weekly Commentaries on the Hebrew Bible features 60 new essays on the weekly Torah portions and major holidays, edited by Gregg Drinkwater, Dr. David Shneer, and Rabbi Joshua Lesser, with a preface by Dr. Judith Plaskow. It is published by NYU Press. We will have copies available for sale at BCC in the future, but to check it out now, go to [http://www.nyupress.org/books/Torah\\_Queeries-products\\_id-11118.html](http://www.nyupress.org/books/Torah_Queeries-products_id-11118.html)

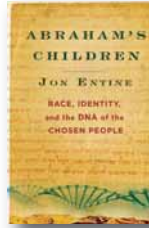


For nearly fifteen years, BCC members and friends have gathered in private homes for monthly potluck brunches and discussion of books selected by the group. Fiction and non-fiction, historical and contemporary, American and Israeli, the books read by the group include something for everyone's tastes 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 book discussions are:



**Sunday, November 22, at 10:00 a.m.,  
The Grand Inquisitor's Manual, by Jonathan Kirsch**

Written by former LA Times religion editor and prolific author Jonathan Kirsch (The Harlot by the Side of the Road, King David), this book traces the history of the Inquisition and its methods and mindset from medieval times to the 20th century, including its influences on Nazism, McCarthyism, and Islamic terrorism and the U.S. response to it.



**Sunday, December 20, at 10:00 a.m.,  
Abraham's Children, by Jon Entine**

This book traces the genetic ancestry of various Jewish communities around the world through recent DNA studies as well as the cultural and other influences that shaped them. It is written in a non-scholarly way, so no familiarity with genetic science is needed.

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](mailto:Larrynath@aol.com).

## BCC's shofar blowers at Rosh Hashanah 5770



Photos by  
Tracy Moore

BCC children



Steve Bryan



Helen Brand



Lauren Schlau

### Ruach Chayim (Living Spirit)

"Shabbat is a palace in time."

— ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL

Enter the palace with us.

Heartbeat . . . drum beat

Kol haneshamah te halel Yah . . .

Let every soul sing praise . . . [Psalm 150]

On November 20, join us at BCC to welcome Shabbat with drum,  
with song, with open heart.

7:00 wine, cheese, schmooze

8:00 Kabbalat Shabbat service,

with Rabbinic Intern Lindy Davidson, Cantor Juval Porat, and guest musicians.



# November 2009

# Cheshvan/Kislev 5770

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> 2:00 pm (private home) <b>Parenting Workshop</b> Led by BCC member Ziva Renan	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 8:00 pm <b>Men's Havurah</b> at Improv Comedy Club	<b>5</b> 4:00 pm <b>Telephone Torah Study</b> 7:00 pm <b>Reading and Book Signing by Warren Hoffman</b> at Kol Ami (BCC sponsor)	<b>6</b> 6:30 pm <b>Thai House Dinner</b> 8:00 pm <b>Shabbat Service</b> Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat Drash by Warren Hoffman	<b>7</b> 10:00 am <b>Ohr Chayim</b> 12:00 pm <b>Family Service</b> 3:30 pm <b>Parent and Me Shabbat</b>
<b>8</b> 8:00 am (cook) 11:30 am (deliver) <b>Project Chicken Soup</b> 330 N. Fairfax	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 7:30 pm BCC co-sponsors <b>One People, One Book Poetry Slam</b> (University Synagogue)	<b>11</b> 7:00 pm <b>Executive Committee meeting</b>	<b>12</b> 4:00 pm <b>Telephone Torah Study</b> 7:00 pm <b>Torah Study</b> Rabbi Edwards	<b>13</b> 8:00 pm <b>Shabbat Service</b> Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat H1N1 flu update follows	<b>14</b> 10:00 am <b>Ohr Chayim</b> 11:00 am <b>Project Caring</b> 855 N. Fairfax 12:00 pm <b>Family Service</b> 7:00 pm <b>Men's Havurah</b> Dinner and "Bewitched"
<b>15</b> <b>Women's Havurah</b> 9:30 am 5k run (Pan Pacific Park) 1:00 pm Croquet party (private home)	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 7:30 pm <b>Uganda Jews</b> Presentation with J.J. Keki at Beth Am (BCC co-sponsor)	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 4:00 pm <b>Telephone Torah Study</b> 7:00 pm <b>Torah Study</b> Rabbi Edwards	<b>20</b> 7:00 pm Refreshments 8:00 pm <b>Shabbat Service</b> Student Rabbi Davidson Cantor Juval Porat Drash by Kadin Henningsen	<b>21</b> 10:00 am <b>Shabbat Morning Service</b> and Dairy Potluck
<b>22</b> 8:00 am (cook), 11:30 am (deliver) <b>Project Chicken Soup</b> 330 N. Fairfax 10:00 am (private home) <b>BCC Book Group</b> <i>The Grand Inquisitor's Manual</i>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 7:00 pm <b>Board of Directors meeting</b>	<b>26</b> <b>THANKSGIVING DAY (BCC CLOSED)</b> No Torah study	<b>27</b> 8:00 pm <b>Shabbat Service</b> Elissa Barrett Gerschick Zsa Zsa Gerschick	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> 2:00 pm <b>Women's Havurah</b> Sing-along (private home)	<b>30</b>			<div>All events at BCC unless otherwise noted*</div>		

# December 2009

# Kislev/Tevet 5770

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>1</b> <b>WORLD AIDS DAY</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 4:00 pm <b>Telephone Torah Study</b> 7:00 pm <b>Torah Study</b> Rabbi Edwards	<b>4</b> 6:30 pm <b>Thai House Dinner</b> 8:00 pm <b>Shabbat Service</b> Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat	<b>5</b> 10:00 am <b>Ohr Chayim</b> 12:00 pm <b>Family Service</b>
<b>6</b> 8:00 am (cook), 11:30 am (deliver) <b>Project Chicken Soup</b> 330 N. Fairfax	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 4:00 pm <b>Telephone Torah Study</b> 7:00 pm <b>Torah Study</b> Rabbi Edwards	<b>11</b> 8:00 pm <b>Shabbat and Chanukah Service</b> Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat <b>FIRST NIGHT OF CHANUKAH</b>	<b>12</b> 10:00 am <b>Ohr Chayim</b> 11:00 am <b>Project Caring</b> 855 N. Fairfax 12:00 pm <b>Family Service</b> 8:00 pm <b>Women's Havurah</b> Vox Femina (Pasadena)
<b>13</b> 4:00 pm <b>Men's Havurah</b> <b>Chanukah Celebration</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> 7:00 pm <b>Executive Committee Meeting</b>	<b>17</b> 4:00 pm <b>Telephone Torah Study</b> 7:00 pm <b>Torah Study</b> Rabbi Edwards	<b>18</b> 6:00 pm <b>Family Chanukah Celebration</b> and Latke Party 7:00 pm <b>Musical Shabbat Service</b> Student Rabbi Davidson Cantor Porat	<b>19</b> 10:00 am <b>Shabbat Morning Service</b> and Dairy Potluck
<b>20</b> 8:00 am (cook), 11:30 am (deliver) <b>Project Chicken Soup</b> 330 N. Fairfax 10:00 am (private home) <b>BCC Book Group</b> <i>Abraham's Children</i>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 4:00 pm <b>Telephone Torah Study</b> 7:00 pm <b>Torah Study</b> Rabbi Edwards	<b>25</b> <b>BCC OFFICE CLOSED</b> 12:00 pm <b>Women's Havurah</b> Movies and Dinner 8:00 pm <b>Shabbat Service</b> Rabbi Edwards Cantor TBA	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 7:00 pm <b>Board of Directors Meeting</b>	<b>31</b> <b>SECULAR NEW YEAR'S EVE (No Torah study)</b>		