

From the Rabbi's Study Queer Teenagers and Us

Rabbi Lisa Edwards



PHOTO: KENNA LOVE

Despite the pleasure of being together in community for the Days of Awe, Sukkot, Simchat Torah, and beyond, I've also found myself so sad lately over the recent rash of gay teen suicides. How can we help? What should we do as a congregation and as individuals to reach out to GLBTQ teens? As important and moving as is the You Tube "It Gets Better" Project, I find I am not alone in

thinking it's not nearly enough. We need to be helping teens not just wait it out, but as the Gay-Straight Alliance Network's new campaign says, "make it better." We have to help our teens (the ones who live with us, the ones we don't yet know) avoid being bullied and avoid being bullies. We have to step up and reach out more.

To that end, Cantor Porat and I invite you to join us at BCC on Tuesday night November 9 from 7-9 pm for a practical conversation on "Weaving a safety net: How can we as a GLBTQ Jewish community reach out to and provide safe space for queer teens in need of religious and spiritual support?"

Two of my gay rabbi colleagues, Rabbi Victor Appell and Rabbi Steven Greenberg, each recently posted powerful blog entries in the aftermath of the suicides. The stories they told could not have been more opposite from one another.

Rabbi Appell tells the story of how in the ninth grade his social studies teacher had each student subscribe to the NY Times in order to keep up on current events. But for young Victor, current events weren't as important as something else: "Every Friday, when we picked up our paper in class, the first thing I did, as discreetly as possible, was turn to the second section" where, a few pages in, "at the bottom of the page there was a small three-line ad that read, 'Gay Synagogue: Friday Night Service,' followed by the time and location."

Every Friday Victor would immediately turn to that page "to make sure the ad was still there. And in doing

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On Walking the Walk

Cantor Juval Porat



PHOTO: KENNA LOVE

On a gray and foggy Sunday in October, an eclectic group of around 30,000 people gathered together on the streets of West Hollywood to show their support for AIDS awareness and activism by walking in the annual AIDS Walk of Los Angeles. They were walking the walk to stop new infections, to fight racism and homophobia, and to end HIV's assault on Los Angeles. The

streets made room for the many enthusiastic spirits who walked for integrity, love and respect. I was there, listening to the sounds of footsteps, of joy and laughter, of unity and friendship. The sounds of passion and faith reminded me of the sounds that we heard at the very beginning of that same weekend, as BCC celebrated Shoshanah Weinreich's bat mitzvah in our sanctuary together with many friends and family members. What a joy it was to yet again share the bimah in honor of Shoshanah's bat mitzvah with Cantorial Soloist Fran Chalin and Rabbi Lisa Edwards!

So despite the gray skies, Friday through Sunday were joyous days. Days of walking, if you like, as that was also the name of that weekend's Torah portion, *Lech-Lecha*, which is Hebrew for *walk for yourself*. In *Lech-Lecha* we read about Abram, the founder of the Jewish people, whose very first instruction given by God is to walk, or more specifically to walk away. Isn't it interesting that out of all the possible instructions to be given to the very first Jew to make a covenant with God, Abram is told to walk first?

Going home after experiencing the AIDS walk, I asked myself if Abram's walking could serve us as a foundation too. What would it mean always to be on the move? Never to be static? Always to progress, to look and move forward? I thought to myself that maybe, by constantly walking openly and curiously, we might actually discover and find out the many different truths and potentials that hide deep within each and

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every one of us. We could benefit from all the walking just like it says in God's commandment to Abram: "Walk for yourself" (Genesis 12:1), which could be read as "Walk in a way that fits your needs, so that you'll get the best out of the walk." We can try and choose our pace and our directions during our walk in order to find what's best for us. It's an endless task and an endless commitment to never really rest on one's achievements, but it can be bearable, even fun, if the walking is truly our own.

Abram's walk goes in the opposite direction of everything that surrounds him, which makes detachment and letting go a crucial part of his journey. It is not an easy thing to do, to walk against the stream, to leave behind what is considered to be the norm in order to look for one's own truth, but once that individual truth is found it has the potential to shine as an inspiration in a world already filled with so many different lights of truth. But can freedom be found only if we constantly walk and search for our own truth? Is that enough, or is there more to our walk?

The second half of God's instruction to Abram concludes in the promise to turn Abram's successors into a big nation (Genesis 12:2). How does that relate to the first half, where it's all about the individual journey? If the point is to find my private truth that fits

me and only me, what interest should I have in a big great nation?

Maybe this is where a balance can be found. Maybe the reminder to ourselves that we're part of something larger – and "something larger" can easily be replaced with "great nation", "my neighborhood", "my community", "my family" or simply "you and me" – serves as a prerequisite for our walk to find our own individual truths.

On such a weekend of important events, I was filled with hope that the idea of walking for yourself without losing touch with the world around you can be helpful for Shoshanah, as she makes her first steps as an adult member of the Jewish community. I also hope each participant in the AIDS walk will get to see his or her vision turned into reality.

And I hope we never unlearn the ability to walk forward, aiming to find the truth that makes us unique, and at the same time to stay connected with each other.



AIDS Walk 2010

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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
 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 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.

so, I reassured myself that the Gay Synagogue was still there. . . Even as I read the ad week after week, some part of me could not believe what I was reading. I studied the small ad looking for some hidden clue. Maybe they were just happy Jews I thought, not gay like me. At 14, I knew I was years away from going to the Gay Synagogue...

"After ninth grade, I continued my subscription to *The New York Times*, if only to make sure that the Gay Synagogue was still in existence. Week after week, and eventually year after year, this little advertisement became my lifeline. And all the time, I waited until I could go to the Gay Synagogue."

Eventually Victor gets there, with wonderfully positive results. Toward the end of his essay he observes: "It is difficult to have a positive self-image when much of society would tell you that what you are is abnormal or that you are a sinner and would seek to deny your civil rights and make your expressions of love against the law. Coming out in a religious context challenges all that. We can learn, in synagogues and churches that welcome us, that what we are is good; that we can love and be loved; that we are created, like everyone else, in God's image; and that God loves us with an unqualified love. Religion has the ability to transform us. With people not only hating us but also trying to make us hate ourselves, we desperately need places where we can learn to love ourselves."

The story Rabbi Steven Greenberg shared in his Huffington Post essay about his recent conversation with an Orthodox rabbi in Cincinnati, took a very different route than Rabbi Appell's secret of comfort and support. Writes Greenberg:

"I shared with him that people who are gay and lesbian who want to remain true to the Torah are in a great deal of pain. Many have just left the community. Some young gay people become so desperate they attempt suicide.

"His reply: 'Maybe it's a mitzvah for them to do so.'

"At first I was speechless. I asked for clarification, and yes, this is exactly what he meant. Since gay people are guilty of capital crimes, perhaps it might be a good idea for them to do the job themselves. For the rest of the conversation I was shaking, using every ounce of my strength to end the conversation without losing my composure."

Rabbi Greenberg continues:

"Nor is it enough simply to decry bullying. Religious communities of all sorts need to make it possible for a 13-year-old to expect that life will be good. We have a duty to make it clear that if a teenager discovers herself to be gay, she can still dream of a happy future. Depriving young people of hope for the future is a deadly game."

I want to thank both rabbis for their bravery in publishing these essays on widely read blogs, and telling these stories – each heartbreaking in its own way. And to each of them also for reminding us that you never know who might witness or enter into — accidentally or on purpose – the community we make at BCC, the actions we take, the lives we lead. We never know who needs the message we deliver when we live our lives together and out loud in a Jewish community that attempts and intends to embrace all who enter our doors (or just read our website).

In the weeks and months to come, I hope you'll join with me and Cantor Porat in exploring ways to reach out to queer teens, to provide a safe space, various resources, listening ears, open hearts, help and wise counsel should they be skilled enough, lucky enough to make their way to our doors, or the doors of other allies and friends. If you already have ideas to offer of what BCC as a community can do, or any of us as individuals, please let me know either in person or by e-mail, and/or join us Nov. 9.

L'shalom,

Rabbi Edwards

You can read the full texts of the blogs, as well as find useful resources on these websites:

Rabbi Greenberg:

http://www.thejewishweek.com/editorial_opinion/opinion/cost_standing_idly

Rabbi Appell

<http://blogs.rj.org/reform/2010/10/if-only-tyler-clementi-had-bee.html>

"It gets better" project:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/itgetsbetterproject>

"Make it better" project:

<http://gsanetwork.org/>

Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network:
www.glsen.org



Rabbi Lisa Edwards leading Tashlich service at Venice beach

Heidi Hale, Cantorial Soloist Emerita
Fran Chalin, Davi Cheng, Helen Brand
with shofars at Tashlich service

Photos from Second Day Rosh Hashanah

by Sylvia Sukop



Student Rabbi Dror Chankin-Gould,
Henry Wuil, Helen Brand, and
Cantor Juval Porat at Second Day
Rosh Hashanah service at BCC



Cantor Juval Porat and Student Rabbi
Dror Chankin-Gould at BCC's Tashlich
service. Venice beach

BCC New Building Construction Update

Ira Dankberg, Building Committee Chair

The dust is flying!

Since our groundbreaking celebration on August 15, construction of our new home at 6090 W. Pico Blvd., two blocks west of our current home at 6000 W. Pico, is proceeding full steam ahead. As you can imagine, remodeling a 1920s commercial building to become a code compliant, environmentally sustainable,

during all BCC events.

Starting next week, large portions of the south wall will be removed and steel reinforcing beams installed to allow for the construction of the glass window/door system that will bring natural light into the lobby. This will totally transform the perception of the space from a dark, enclosed commercial building into our light and airy home.

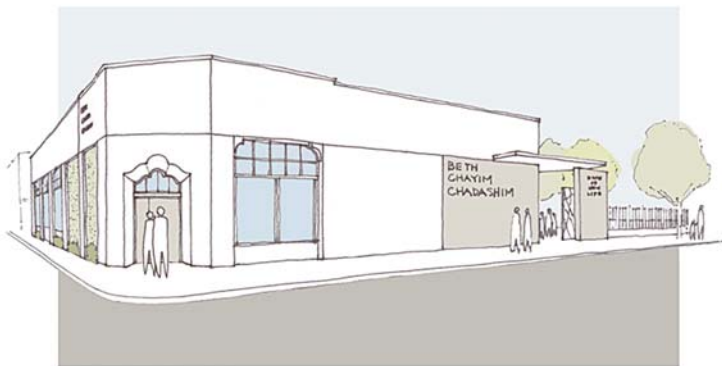
Less glamorous but vitally important, we have installed electrical conduit under the concrete floor slab, and plumbing lines to the new kitchen and restrooms. We recently received a permit to install the fire sprinkler system. New gas service was contracted

with the Southern California Gas Company. We have contracted with Acro Energy to install 44 photovoltaic solar panels on our roof which will provide a large

portion of our electrical needs. This was accomplished with a rebate from the Department of Water and Power and a generous donation from BCC member William Korthof.

Currently several committees are spearheading important building systems and components. Led by Ray Eelsing and Richard Lesse, the Technology Committee has selected a vendor to assist with designing and installing an integrated security/phone/computer system. They are also working on the PA and audio visual system. The Sanctuary Committee is working with the architect on the design of the ark and Yahrzeit memorial panel. Much creative and impassioned artistic effort is going into this process. BCC member Cole Ettman is researching purchasing kitchen equipment at the best possible price, which may be from auctions, slightly used or at wholesale prices.

As of this writing we are still on target to move into our new home at 6090 W. Pico Blvd. in March 2011. We'll continue to keep you posted.



wheelchair accessible, LEED certified synagogue is no small undertaking.

Structural work is a significant part of the overall project. We have already reinforced the existing footings, sprayed concrete on the brick walls to increase their structural capacity, and doubled up wood roof joists. It has been no surprise that we had to mitigate several existing structural conditions that were uncovered during construction.

The most dramatic accomplishment to date was the removal of the existing column that was located right in the middle of our new sanctuary. This required installation of a new beam, weighing well over a ton, that spans between the new bimah and the west building wall. Several intrepid BCC members, including long time BCC member Harriet Perl, rode the construction lift fourteen feet in the air to sign their names and leave messages on this beam that will support the roof over our heads

ART
FOR OUR SAKE
Fine Art, Affordable Gifts, Food, Music & Friends

Sunday, November 14th
1- 5 pm

Hannah & Kenna's home
12945 Addison Street
Sherman Oaks 91423

JOIN US FOR LUNCH
Delectable Food & Beverages for Purchase
Please RSVP by November 9th to
818.995.7521
or kennalove@artnet.net

This event will be a benefit for BCC
and is sponsored by
the Men & Women's Havurah & the 20-30s Groups

ARTISTS

LILI LAKICH Neon Artist
KENNA LOVE Photographer
JERRY HANSON Paper Weaving
GARY FREDRICK BROWN Monotype/Drawings/Sculpture
RAPHAEL Glass Artist
REVA SOLOMON Mixed Media
TONY SMITH Jewelry
CAROL KLASSEN Jewelry

AUTHORS

MAGGIE PARKHURST "Rashi's Daughters" Series
GRACE BAUER "Los Angeles Classic Desserts"

DELECTABLES

PETER BASTIEN Executive Chef
JEANNE GOLDFARB Chocolaterie

MUSICIANS

JUVAL PORAT
MARLA LEIGH

Fall Fun and Learning with the Men's Havurah

Mark Brown, Richard Lesse, and Mark Miller, BCC Men's Havurah Planning Committee

The BCC Men's Havurah sponsored the following very successful events during October 2010:

Visit to the Huntington on October 24th.

We had a wonderful time visiting the Huntington in San Marino with the triple delight of having its library, art collections, and botanical gardens each available to us to enjoy and experience.

Upcoming events for November and December that the Men's Havurah Planning Committee has already scheduled include:

Deadly Medicine: Creating the Master Race,

German Doctors and the Nazi Regime exhibit and lecture at the Hannon Library at Loyola Marymount University in Westchester produced by the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum on Sunday, November 7th, 1:30pm – 4:30pm. See flyer below for more details.

Art for Our Sake, a gathering at the home of BCC members Hannah Theile and Kenna Love with fine art, affordable gifts, food, music, and friends on Sunday, November 14th, 1pm – 5pm. See page 4 for more information.

Hanukkah celebration at the home of BCC's former First Family Brett Trueman and Mark Miller on Sunday, December 5th, 4pm – 7pm.

Event information has already been e-mailed for the two November events. As soon as details are finalized, information for the Hanukkah celebration will be sent out.

End of the year Women's Havurah Events

Donna Quigley Groman

BCC's Women's Havurah will end a very active 2010 with the following events.

Sunday, November 7, 1:30 pm, we join the Men's Havurah at Loyola Marymount University in Westchester to view the exhibit "**Deadly Medicine: Creating the Master Race**," produced by the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. See the Men's Havurah article above for more details.

Sunday, November 14, 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm — **Art for our Sake**, at the home of Hannah Theile and Kenna Love, 12945 Addison Street, Sherman Oaks. Sponsored by the Women's, Men's, and 20s/30s Havurot, this event will be filled with beautiful art and music, delicious food, and great company, all to benefit BCC. Please see page 4 for more details and RSVP information.

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.

Exhibit and Lecture: "Deadly Medicine: German Doctors and the Nazi Regime"

Date: Sunday, Nov. 7, 2010
Time: 1:30pm – 4:30pm
Location: William H. Hannon Library at Loyola Marymount University in Westchester
Cost: Free admission
Event open to everyone

Update

DEADLY MEDICINE CREATING THE MASTER RACE

Source: The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum website (<http://www.ushmm.org/>)

Our first Men's Havurah event in November is a visit to the William H. Hannon Library on the campus of Loyola Marymount University (LMU) to see the exhibit "Deadly Medicine: Creating the Master Race," produced by the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM). The exhibit explores the perversion of medical ethics in Nazi Germany, specifically the movement to "cleanse" German society of all those who were deemed genetically "undesirable." The exhibit takes about an hour to view and at 3pm we have been invited to a special lecture by Museum historian William Meinecke, who will speak on "German Doctors and the Nazi Regime". A discussion and reception with light refreshments will follow the lecture. The exhibit and lecture are free of charge; however, **reservations are required for the lecture only**. RSVP to 310-556-3222 or western@ushmm.org (Western Regional Office of the USHMM), **not** to the Men's Havurah. For directions and parking information, please visit LMU's web site (<http://www.lmu.edu>). For all other questions, please contact BCC member, Michael Sarid, Western Regional Director, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, at 310-556-3222.

Men's Havurah Planning Committee (Mark Brown, Richard Lesse, Mark Miller)
e-mail: bcc.menshavurah@gmail.com or find us on Facebook

Saturday, December 11, 7:00 to 10:30 pm, **Women's Havurah Game Night**, at BCC, for women only.

Saturday, December 25, our **First Annual Elena Kagan 12/25 Celebration**. From 12:00 to 8:00 pm, join us for movies at the Landmark Theatres at Westside Pavilion, and Chinese food at a Chinese restaurant nearby. Everyone welcome! For more information or to RSVP e-mail dlgroman@hotmail.com or call the temple office.

A New Spin on Hanukkah

Davi Cheng, Ritual Chair and Past President



Oy! Chanukkah, Hanukah, how many ways can you spell Hanukkah? And that annoying song, Dreidel Dreidel Dreidel Dreidel...

The spinning top is one of the world's oldest toys. What is more incredible is that this toy can be found in every culture, made from various natural materials, and no one knows where this idea of spinning comes from, and where it originated. Maybe it's because we live on Earth, a large spinning ball on an axis, that we are fascinated by the spinning motion.

In the city of Ur, southeast of Baghdad, clay tops have been

discovered in archaeological digs dated as far back as 3500 BCE. Others have been found in Egypt, Rome, and Greece. But of course, they are also found in China, in Japan...etc. Children around the world for centuries have used spinning tops as toys and pastimes. Tops have also been used in prophecy, fortune telling, gambling or as items to take into the afterlife.

Here are some interesting bits of trivia for you to share during Hanukkah with your family and friends while your dreidel is spinning. Did you know that the world's longest spinning record for a top is 2 hours, 52 minutes and 11 seconds? Can you imagine, playing a dreidel game with your family and waiting that long to see which side it lands on?

Also, spinning tops have different names in different countries:

- Trompo - Argentina
- Kolap - Australia (Aboriginal games using beans of kolap trees)
- Draaitol - Dutch
- Toupie - French
- Skopparahringla - Iceland
- Baldufa - Spain
- Tuo Luo - Chinese (shell)
- Baczek - Poland
- Sevivon - Hebrew (spin)

That is my diversity spin on Hanukkah. I hope to see all of you on December 3rd as we celebrate Shabbat and Hanukkah at BCC. Bring your Hanukiah and candles to light. It will be a special festive night because Harriet Perl will be celebrating her 90th birthday with us. Chag Sameach!

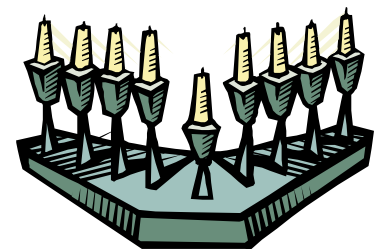


Harriet Perl plans to celebrate her 90th birthday at BCC on Friday, December 3, 2010. She hopes all her friends – and especially the “old timers” who “remember when” – will be there to share her rejoicing. And also to indulge her as she reveals her very own guide to a good life.

For those who came to BCC recently and may not know Harriet, she served BCC for many years as an officer and board member, editor of *G'vanim*, and member of rabbinic search committees, and received the Presidents' Award at our 2006 awards brunch. Harriet joined BCC in its first few years and spearheaded the creation of our first (and perhaps the world's first) degenderized siddur. A long-time English teacher in Los Angeles schools, her former students include several current and past BCC members and other notables including Lillian Faderman (scholar of LGBT history and co-author of the book *Gay LA*) and LA councilman Paul Koretz.

BCC Does Hanukkah in Santa Monica

Help light the giant menorah near the Third Street Promenade in Santa Monica on the evening of Saturday, December 4, 2010! Exact time and location to be announced shortly! Join Cantor Porat, Rabbi Edwards, the BCC Choir and Ohr Chayim as we sing songs and recite the blessings as we light the menorah and represent BCC in the wider L.A. community.



My Glorious Temple



Eliana (age 8) was asked at school to write about a place that made her feel safe. We are honored that she chose to describe with such eloquence the way she feels at BCC. We share her words with you because we know they reflect what this community strives for, and provide a unique inside view of our

weekly program. But I also feel it is significant to share with you because this is the voice of someone who contributes regularly to the Ohr Chayim Shabbat experience. I believe that hearing Eliana's voice gives you more insight into our program than anything else I could write here.

When I walk in I feel holiness. The smell of spices and friendship fill the air. When I touch my friend's hand I feel wonderful. When I drink even the water tastes holy! I stick to it like a fly in a spider's web. Even if it is freezing I feel warm. When I look out the window I can see the presence of God.

The kids are gentle. It is lovely. There is peace everywhere. I know you might say it is nice and it is.

Fall Classes for Adults

BCC's clergy, Rabbi Lisa Edwards and Cantor Juval Porat, will join together for two special and very timely classes this fall at BCC:

**Tuesday, November 9
7:00 pm**

Weaving a safety net.

Join us for a brainstorming and study session to discuss how we as a GLBTQ Jewish community can reach out to and provide a safe space for queer teens in need of religious and spiritual support.

**Tuesday, December 7
7:00 pm**

Everything you wanted to know about Hanukkah but were afraid to ask.

On the seventh night of Hanukkah, join us for an exciting session on the holiday and its customs, history, melodies and foods. We will sample a few Hanukkah treats, light the lights on the Hanukiah, and celebrate, learn, and sing together about this winter festival of lights.

Eliana Berkovitz Newman and Leah Zimmerman

Well there's happiness and it is beautiful. The Torah that holds the ancient past seems to glow.

Before services there's playfulness. What can I say, it is fun. When the service is over and I walk out I feel good. That is my amazing temple of BCC. Hazak hazak venithazek. Be strong, be strong and, may we be strengthened.

The Shabbat and Hanukkah celebration on December 3 will begin at 6:00 pm with a bring your own dinner and Hanukkah activities for children. Families are invited to stay and join in the communal candle lighting at 8:00 pm.

We also have a new Parent and Me Class for children age 5 and under, at 9:15 on the second Shabbat of the month led by Ilene Cohen and Shari Charalambous (aka Ms. Purple).



Parent and Me Shabbat at BCC

**November 13
9:15am**



Children 5 and under are invited to come and bring a parent or two to join our warm and friendly group for singing, storytelling and Shabbat fun.

Led by BCC member Ilene Cohen and BCC teacher Shari Charalambous.

**Second Shabbat of the Month
December 11
January 8, February 12, March 12, April 9, May 14**



Beth Chayim Chadashim ~ 6000 Pico Blvd. ~ Los Angeles, CA ~ 90035 ~ 323-931-7023

From the Desk of the Vice President (the taller one)

What can BCC do for You?

David Mozes, Vice President

Under the leadership of our exceptional and hard-working officers, Board of Directors, clergy, and staff, BCC has experienced tremendous growth over the last few years. This growth has enabled us to afford an energetic executive director, a talented new cantor, a religious school with an education director, and a new building in which we can expand our services and activities!

This year, BCC's Executive and Membership Committees will be taking extra time to focus on member retention in addition to our usual new member recruitment activity. We're obviously doing something right to get new people interested and excited and engaged in BCC programming. Now is as good a time as any to take stock of ourselves and make sure that our existing members are still getting their spiritual and social money's worth (so to speak).

What does this mean to you as a BCC member? Simply put, it means we want to hear from you! We want to know what BCC means to you. How does BCC fit into your life? What elements of BCC do

you hold near and dear to your heart? How can BCC better serve you? What would you like to see develop at BCC in both the shorter and longer terms? Would you like to speak with someone privately about how you can get more involved? Do you have a skill or talent or idea that you could volunteer to help us achieve some of the new goals you'd like to set for our congregation? Surely there is something about synagogue life that you'd like to see happen at BCC that you've been keeping quiet about!

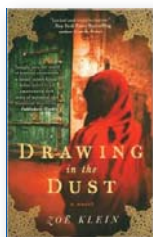
We can continue to improve your synagogue experience if you continue to offer your feedback, comments, suggestions, concerns, and ideas. As BCC's newest officer, I want to hear from you. Email me at dave.mozes@gmail.com and let's start a conversation about how we can take BCC to the next level, how BCC can better serve you, how you can become more involved at BCC, or how you can get more out of being a member of our very special congregation. I look forward to hearing from you.

BCC Book Group

Larry Nathenson

For over 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.

We will meet only once during the months of November and December:



Sunday, December 5, 10:00 a.m.

Drawing in the Dust, by Rabbi Zoe Klein

This is a novel by one of the rabbis of Temple Isaiah (where we have our High Holiday services) that combines archeology in Israel with a love story, ancient mysteries, and personal growth – it has been called a “Jewish Da Vinci Code.”

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.

Learn to read Hebrew in five easy Sessions!

Tired of feeling lost during services? You can learn to read Hebrew in five 90-minute sessions. You'll be amazed at how quickly you will be up and reading! The sessions will be led by Todd Shotz, who has been teaching Hebrew for over 15 years. This class is appropriate both for beginners and for those who need a refresher. It is open to everyone. Todd uses lots of activities including readings, prayers, songs, and stories; it is definitely a lot of fun. While not 100% guaranteed, most students leave this class being able to read along in the Hebrew during services. Classes will be held on Sundays from 6:30 to 8:00 pm, November 7, 14, and 21 and December 5 and 12 at Beth Chayim Chadashim, 6000 W. Pico Blvd. The fee is \$60 for members of BCC, IKAR or Kol Ami and \$75 for non-members. A minimum of eight participants is needed to proceed. RSVP by Nov. 4 to todd.shotz@gmail.com.

Israeli Orthodox Gay Leaders Come to Los Angeles

Leaders of Israel's historic and fast growing LGBT Orthodox movement will be visiting Los Angeles early in November to speak about the new ground they are forging in Israeli society. They will be speaking at Temple Beth Am, 1039 S. La Cienega Blvd., Los Angeles, on Wednesday, November 3, at 7:00 PM. The panel discussion is co-sponsored by Temple Beth Am, Beth Chayim Chadashim, Congregation

of homosexuality and religion – is being slowly but inexorably transformed by the courage and visibility of a growing community of LGBT Orthodox Jews." Slepian added, "The visit of these LGBT Orthodox leaders from Israel is especially timely, given the growing attention that the issue of homosexuality has received in both the U.S. and Israeli Orthodox Jewish communities in the past year."

membership grow to include hundreds of men and women," said Asaf Lebovitz, one of the founders of Havruta, an Orthodox gay men's organization. Zehorit Sorek, one of the founders of The Pride Minyan, a project of Havruta and Bat Kol, said "The High Holiday services that our organizations sponsor now draw hundreds of Israelis to participate". Ms. Sorek added, "And for the first time in June of 2010, an organized contingent of Orthodox Jews marched in the Tel Aviv Gay Pride Parade. We carried a banner that read 'Kehilah Datit Ga'ah,' Proud Religious Community."

A Wider Bridge is a national organization that promotes engagement of U.S. LGBTQ Jews with Israel and Israeli LGBTQ communities. Working in partnership with Israeli organizations and leaders, A Wider Bridge builds connections with and support for Israeli LGBTQ communities, and provides opportunities for LGBTQ people around the world to join in the work of making Israel a better place. A Wider Bridge is online at www.awiderbridge.org. For more information, please contact Arthur Slepian, A Wider Bridge Executive Director, 415-987-5119, aslepian@pacbell.net, or Josh Weisman, A Wider Bridge Program Director, 415-823-8530, joshweisman@gmail.com



A WIDER BRIDGE PRESENTS

Israeli, Orthodox and Gay

A panel discussion with four of the men and women leading a growing and historic movement

Come hear leaders of Havruta and Bat Kol, Israel's largest LGBT Orthodox organizations, share their stories, successes and challenges as they forge new ground in Israeli society.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 7:00 PM
Temple Beth Am
1039 S. La Cienega Blvd., Los Angeles

For more information, visit
www.awiderbridge.org

Co-sponsored by: Temple Beth Am; Beth Chayim Chadashim; Congregation Kol Ami; JQ International; and the Institute for Judaism and Sexual Orientation, HUC-JIR



Kol Ami, JQ International, and the Institute for Judaism and Sexual Orientation, HUC-JIR. The Israeli visitors are here on a speaking tour of the United States, sponsored by "A Wider Bridge," an organization that promotes greater engagement of LGBTQ Jews with Israel and greater connection between the U.S. and Israeli LGBT communities.

"The Israeli visitors represent a set of vibrant organizations that have developed in Israel in just the past few years, as a growing number of Orthodox Israelis have become more open about their sexual orientation," said Arthur Slepian, founder and Executive Director of A Wider Bridge. "Israeli society – and its attitudes about the relationship

The speakers are among the founders and leaders of Bat Kol and Havruta, Israel's largest LGBT Orthodox organizations. "Our organizations began with only a handful of members just a few years ago, and we have now seen

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Mazel Tov

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

Cantor Juval Porat was profiled in the Jewish Journal of September 23, 2010, following his June 18 installation as BCC's cantor. The article emphasized Juval's training as the first cantor trained in Germany since World War II and his adjustments to life in Los Angeles during the previous year.

Stephen Schneider has opened his own psychology practice in New York, and is also a supervising psychologist and assistant professor at the Albert Einstein Medical College, Beth Israel Medical Center. He specializes in issues of gender and sexuality and treatment of individuals with acute or chronic illnesses.

Peter Bastien has a new job as a chef at the Venetian Hotel in Las Vegas. He will join his partner, BCC vice president David Mozes, in that city. We'll miss seeing them at BCC on Friday nights, but hopefully they'll visit often.

Ari Katz, son of **Naomi Katz**, has the lead role in the acclaimed play "Take Me Out" at the Celebration Theater. The play is the story of a gay baseball player.

Matt Kahn, BCC religious school teacher, on his recent wedding with Samantha Orshant, HUC Rabbinical student.

Jay Jacobs on his new employment!

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

BCC Clergy in the Community

Rabbi Lisa Edwards:

Second year of mentoring HUC rabbinic students and recent ordainees.

Attended Sha'ar Zahav's presentation at HUC about queer liturgy and their new prayerbook.

Elected treasurer of the Los Angeles Queer Interfaith Clergy Council.

Cantor Juval Porat:

Presentation on Judaism to the 12th graders at the Unitarian Universalist Neighborhood Church in Pasadena.

Performed a concert of Israeli, German and American Jewish music for the Women of Temple Judea's annual brunch.

Visiting other synagogues and getting acquainted with other choirs: Beit Tshuvah, Beth Shir Shalom, Nashuva, Angel City Chorale rehearsal.

Both clergy:

Met with Israel Gay Youth (IGY) Director, Avner Daphni, on his recent visit to LA.

Attended clergy dinner for visiting LGBT Orthodox Jews from Israel, sponsored by A Wider Bridge.

Facilitated the mikvah/conversions for newborn Israeli twins.

Weekly Sova Food Drive

Roughly 900,000 people, or 1 in every 10 in Los Angeles County, is in need of food, and count on food pantries like Sova. Please bring a can of tuna, canned veggies, pasta or rice when you come to BCC.

The need is great!

BCC has begun participating in the "Jeans for Life" program, and we'll have a bin for donations in our building.

JEANS FOR LIFE JEANS FOR LIFE

Donating With Denim

AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) and Out of the Closet proudly announce the 2010 JEANS FOR LIFE campaign. Everyone has jeans and most of us have a few pair that need a new home. Whether they're blue, red, faded or acid-washed, we need them! The Jeans for Life program is a fun, easy way for everyone to donate toward the care of people living with HIV/AIDS. By simply donating a pair of jeans you can reach people around the world.

How JEANS FOR LIFE Works

We are collecting our denim donations in our "jeans-inspired" bins and will completely administer the care of them. We collect the jeans. We upkeep the bins, and we will happily remove them at your request. It's that simple! Let us do all the work!

Why participate in JEANS FOR LIFE

By simply allowing us to place a Jeans for Life bin at your place of business, you become an important part of our donation drive. We will advertise your business address on our website and customers will be excited to know that you care about people living with HIV/AIDS. The Jeans for Life campaign is a great opportunity for your business to participate in AHF's local to global healthcare programs. Proceeds from donated jeans sold at our Out of the Closet Thrift Stores will go to support prevention, treatment and care for people with HIV/AIDS.



Out of the Closet, the world's most fabulous thrift store, is a chain of thrift stores owned and operated by AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF), the largest specialized provider of cutting-edge medicine and advocacy regardless of ability to pay.

Out of the Closet Thrift Stores generate income that helps fund the medical services AHF provides. In addition to regular retail operations, many locations also offer free HIV testing and counseling in a private area of the store.



Since its beginning in 1987, AHF has grown from a small grassroots coalition that provided hospice care for people dying from AIDS in Los Angeles to a global organization that cares for people living with HIV/AIDS worldwide. Through its domestic healthcare centers, HIV/AIDS special needs health plans and disease management programs, pharmacies, and international clinics in resource-constrained countries, AHF delivers on its mission to help people with HIV live longer, healthier lives. AIDS Healthcare Foundation cares for over 135,000 people living with HIV/AIDS in 23 countries around the world. AHF was born and raised right here in Southern California. This Jeans For Life campaign and your participation will assist us in making a very real difference.

TO BE SOLD AT

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT JEANSFORLIFE.ORG



FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT JEANSFORLIFE.ORG

2nd ANNUAL "WE CARE JOB FAIR"

Wednesday, November 10, 2010 | 9:00 am -2:00 pm

The Olympic Collection | 11301 Olympic Blvd. | L.A. CA 90064



Kehillat Israel Reconstructionist Congregation of Pacific Palisades, Sinai Temple, Temple Beth Am, Temple Emanuel of Beverly Hills and Congregation Kol Ami present the **2nd Annual "We Care Job Fair"**, a community-wide event organized to help people who continue to find themselves out of work or whose businesses have failed.

IF YOU ARE A BUSINESS:

- Sign up as an employer. We need you to be part of this and expect 850-1000 job seekers.
- The "We Care Job Fair" will connect you with high caliber candidates in a well-organized environment **at no cost to you**. Last year's exhibitors indicate that the applicants were the highest caliber they had seen.
- As an employer you will get PR, advertising, and community goodwill from choosing to participate in this event.

TO RESERVE YOUR COMPANY'S BOOTH AT THE FAIR OR FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE:

- Contact Matt Davidson at 424.214.7454, email at matt.davidson@kehillatrael.org
- Contact Barbara Berci at 310.437.0555 x 101, email at barbara@bscmanage.com
- Register as an employer at www.wecarejobfair.org

IF YOU ARE UNEMPLOYED OR UNDEREMPLOYED

- Save the date – November 10 and join us!
- Jobs in a wide variety of administrative, managerial and professional fields
- A chance to talk one-on-one with employers who have jobs open right now
- Register as a job seeker at www.wecarejobfair.org

"WE CARE JOB FAIR" is a unique Community Collaboration that is supported by:



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Beth Shir Sholom

Temple Akiba

Temple Aliyah

Temple Isaiah

University Synagogue

Wilshire Boulevard Temple

Follow us online at:

<http://twitter.com/wecarejobfair> • www.facebook.com/pages/We-Care-Job-Fair/144634328897354 • www.linkedin.com/groups?home=&gid=3433407

New Location for Pre-Shabbat Dinner

Due to the closure of the Thai House, our monthly self-pay dinner at 6:30 pm on the first Friday of the month has moved to Taj Mahal of India, 8566 W. Pico Blvd. (1 block west of La Cienega on the same side of Pico as BCC).

November 2010

Cheshvan/Kislev 5771

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 7:00 pm Israeli, Orthodox and Gay Panel Discussion Temple Beth Am	4 4:00 pm Telephone Torah Study 7:00 pm Torah Study Rabbi Edwards	5 6:30 pm Pre-Shabbat Dinner at Taj Mahal 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Rabbi Edwards Seth Harrington	6 10:00 am Ohr Chayim 12:00 pm Family Shabbat
1:30 pm M/W Havurot Deadly Medicine (Nazi Doctors) Exhibit Loyola Univ. 6:30 pm Hebrew Reading Class Todd Shotz	8	9 7:00 pm Class: Weaving a Safety Net (see page 7) Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat	10 9:00 am – 2:00 pm We Care Job Fair Olympic Collection 7:00 pm Executive Committee Meeting	11 4:00 pm Telephone Torah Study 7:00 pm Torah Study Rabbi Edwards	12 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat	13 9:15 am Parent and Me 10:00 am Ohr Chayim 12:00 pm Family Shabbat
1:00 pm (private home) Art for Our Sake (see page 4) 6:30 pm Hebrew Reading Class Todd Shotz	15	16	17 7:00 pm Board of Directors Meeting	18 4:00 pm Telephone Torah Study 7:00 pm Torah Study Rabbi Edwards	19 Ruach Chayim 7:00 pm Refreshments 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Cantor Porat Kadin Henningsen Trans Remembrance Day	20 10:00 am Shabbat Morning Service and dairy potluck
8:00 am cook, 11:30 deliver Project Chicken Soup 3975 Landmark 6:30 pm Hebrew Reading Class Todd Shotz	22	23	24	25 THANKSGIVING DAY BCC OFFICE CLOSED No Torah Study	26 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Cantor Porat Eric Kamm	27
28	29	30	<i>All events at BCC unless otherwise noted</i>			

December 2010

Kislev/Tevet 5771

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>All events at BCC unless otherwise noted</i>			1 EREV HANUKKAH (first candle)	2 FIRST DAY OF HANUKKAH 4:00 pm Telephone Torah Study 7:00 pm Torah Study Rabbi Edwards	3 6:00 pm Family Dinner 8:00 pm Shabbat and Hanukkah Service Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat Harriet Perl's 90 th birthday	4 11:00 am Ohr Chayim 12:00 pm Family Shabbat Evening Menorah Lighting in Santa Monica
10:00 am (private home) BCC Book Group 4:00 Men's Havurah Hanukkah party 6:30 pm Hebrew Reading Class Todd Shotz	6	7 7:00 pm Class: Everything you want to Know About Hanukkah Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat	8 LAST NIGHT OF HANUKKAH 7:00 pm Executive Committee Meeting	9 4:00 pm Telephone Torah Study 7:00 pm Torah Study Rabbi Edwards	10 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat	11 9:15 am Parent and Me 10:00 am Ohr Chayim 12:00 pm Family Shabbat 7:00 pm Women's Havurah game night (women only)
6:30 pm Hebrew Reading Class Todd Shotz	13	14	15	16 4:00 pm Telephone Torah Study 7:00 pm Torah Study Rabbi Edwards	17 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Jay Jacobs Herb Toplan	18 10:00 am Shabbat Morning Service and dairy potluck
8:00 am cook, 11:30 deliver Project Chicken Soup 3975 Landmark	20	21	22 7:00 pm Board of Directors Meeting	23 4:00 pm Telephone Torah Study 7:00 pm Torah Study Rabbi Edwards	24 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat	25 12:00 pm Women's Havurah 1 st Annual Elena Kagan Day Westside Pavilion (movies and Chinese)
26	27 BCC OFFICE CLOSED	28	29	30 4:00 pm Telephone Torah Study 7:00 pm Torah Study Rabbi Edwards	31 8:00 pm Shabbat Service Rabbi Edwards Davi Cheng HAPPY (SECULAR) NEW YEAR!	

SEE BCC-LA.ORG FOR UPDATES AND CHANGES.