

Let Torah be a way of life, and welcome every person as a friend - Pirke Avot



OUR FINANCIAL FOCUS

Michael Heil, Treasurer

As we conclude this 2016-17 fiscal year, we are pleased with several important financial accomplishments. At the same time, as we begin the 2017-18 year, we face two new challenges.

Our capital campaign was highly successful. More than 80% of our members—and a few non-members—participated, contributing a total of \$168,568. The most visible of the capital campaign projects are the **bimah**, the **Sukkah**, and the **playground**. The campaign also funded **several energy conservation projects**, such as attic insulation and better temperature controls, **yard improvements** surrounding the playground area, and a significant payment to **reduce our mortgage principal**.



Controller Berry Freund and Treasurer Michael Heil pay down our mortgage (from \$139,692 to \$91,692) with this presentation of a check for \$48,000 to Doug Moffat, Senior Relationship Manager, Pinnacle Bank

A financial challenge for the upcoming 2017-18 fiscal year is to reduce a trend toward reduced income from “spontaneous donations” (such as unsolicited gifts at holidays and throughout the year). To some degree, this trend was a natural consequence of the capital campaign; for households with very limited discretionary income, a dollar given to the capital campaign is not available for a donation for another purpose. However, we hope that,

with the capital campaign completed, most members will be able to resume their previous, generous levels of giving.

People traditionally consider **spontaneous donations** at joyful occasions (anniversaries, graduations, childbirth, b’nai mitzvah, holidays, etc.), for healing, to express gratitude for a special event or recovery from illness, or to express condolences. The traditional donation is a multiple of \$18, the symbolic number representing life (*chai*). Choose between ***a donation form and quick, easy electronic payment, both available through our website.*** Donations can be directed to either the general fund or a temple fund of your choice. We will notify the recipient of the gift with an acknowledgement letter.

The Yahrzeit memorial board remains a traditional way to remember loved ones who have died. In this way, we demonstrate that they are remembered eternally because the good work continues even in death.

With the capital campaign over, planning is underway for **other fundraising**, such as a **summer wine tasting event** and a **fall theater event**. We also continue to build our **building and kitchen rental** program.

The second financial challenge will be to “roll over” our Emeth bonds and bank mortgage in April 2018. The Emeth bonds total \$699,000. With the recent pay-down of the mortgage (and an accelerated monthly principal payment schedule), we expect the mortgage balance will be under \$85,000 in April. If we are able to increase bond investment to \$784,000, we can pay off our mortgage, financing our building entirely by ourselves. (And Emeth bonds will be even more attractive, as they will now be secured in first position against the assets of our building, approximately \$1.5 million.) With many new members since the last bond issue in April 2012—and a continuing attractive interest rate—we believe this goal is achievable. Bond amounts will be between \$5,000 and \$90,000. So, in the fall, **expect us to contact you to see if you will either renew your current bond or become a new bondholder.**

Congregation Emeth

Staff

Rabbi	Debbie Israel
Administrator	Charlene Rose
Controller	Barry Freund

2016-2017 Board

President	Becky Neto
Vice President	Susan Braun
Past President	Susan Meyers
Treasurer	Michael Heil
Secretary	Denise Weyl
Ways & Means	Grant Gordon
Membership	Marilyn Freund
Education Liaison	TBD
Communication	Elizabeth Mandel
Tikkun Olam	Susan Meyers

Non-Board Leadership

Adult Education	Wendy Thowdis
Building & Grounds	Dale Foster
Web Calendar	Rena Dubin
Education	Daria Ogden
Library	Linda Riesenber
Ritual	Michael Oshan
Sisterhood	Patty Baggesse, Marilyn Freund
Kitchen	Susan Latin
Technology	Arthur Rudin

Kol Emeth is published three times per year. Congregation membership includes a subscription to this publication.

For the best (color) reading experience, this newsletter should be viewed online at www.emeth.net.

Follow Congregation Emeth on Facebook for the latest news and photos.



To submit articles and/or event photos, please email them to Communication Director / Kol Emeth Editor, Elizabeth Mandel, at communication@emeth.net.

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(408) 778-8200

A LOVELY COMMUNITY SEDER!

Rena Dubin, Community Seder Chair

Photos by Aliya Glatt

Once again, over 50 people gathered together for a delicious, catered meal to celebrate the ritual of Passover. **Rabbi Israel** led a beautiful ritual filled with readings, humor, and discussion, providing many insights into our ancient seder traditions. (How ancient? Ask Rabbi Israel!) **Levi and Aliya Glatt** sang a wonderful rap of "Moses of the Israelites" to the tune of "Alexander Hamilton," with their own original lyrics. The seder was inspiring, and wonderful to share with our Emeth community!



Special thanks goes to **Dale Foster and Aileen Teren-Foster** for their hours of work with set up and clean up. **Marilyn and Barry Freund** helped with planning and organizing; **Jerry Dubin and Harlan, Levi, and Aliya Glatt** helped with setting up the sanctuary and the individualized seder plates; and **Bryson Lee** was instrumental with getting the sanctuary back to order. Thank you to all of them and to everyone who contributed in large and small ways to make this evening such a success!

COLLEGE KUDOS

Kelsey Valentine is graduating from Ann Sobrato High School and will be studying Bio-medical Engineering at college. (She is still finalizing her college destination.)

Natalie Valentine is transferring to UC Davis where she will be studying Nutrition.



Kelsey and Natalie Valentine

Congratulations to Kelsey and Natalie and their parents, **Tracy and Scott Valentine**.

Mazal tov to **Sandy and Art Reidel** on the graduation of their son, **Scott Proctor**, from Harvard Law School.

PRAYING WITH OUR FEET: WOMEN'S MARCH FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

Susan Meyers, Tikkun Olam Chair



Fifty members and friends of Emeth joined with 25,000 people in San Jose to demonstrate support for democracy in our United States of America. We marched with our banner, announcing that we are Praying With Our Feet: Congregation Emeth. Hillel's famous quote

If I am not for myself who will be for me? If I am only for myself alone what am I? and If not now when?

reminds us that Jewish teachings implore us to respond when we are aware of injustice. Peaceful demonstrations reflecting our concerns are part of the democratic process. The unity and positive spirit of the Women's March by people across the globe, was a cry for justice. We can be proud that Congregation Emeth was well represented.

June 2017

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MODERN JEWISH THINKERS

STUDENT BACKPACK DRIVE



We are participating in a backpack drive. Please donate NEW backpacks for school students. They can be dropped off at the temple during regular temple hours. Thank you!

SAVE THE DATE: GILROY GARLIC FESTIVAL CONGREGATION EMETH PHOTO BOOTH FUNDRAISER

Arthur Rudin, Chair

We will be again staffing the photography booth at the Gilroy Garlic Festival. This annual fundraiser is a reliable source of income for Emeth, provides an opportunity to meet and work with other congregants, and is a fun, fast paced volunteer opportunity. Attendees look forward to our booth and many come back each year.

We are continually refining our processes to make them more efficient and streamlined, and we welcome your advice and participation. ***Volunteers are needed to set up Thursday, July 27, tear down Sunday July 30, or fill a variety of jobs during the festival (sales, cashier, photographer, printing, etc.), Friday-Sunday, July 28-30.***

Please sign up now at <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0449a8af28a02-gilroy>
Contact Arthur at garlicfestival@emeth.net with questions or suggestions.



FAITH OF OUR NEIGHBORS: JUDAISM

Rick Coencas, ICSC Steering Committee member

Photos by Rick Coencas and Elizabeth Mandel

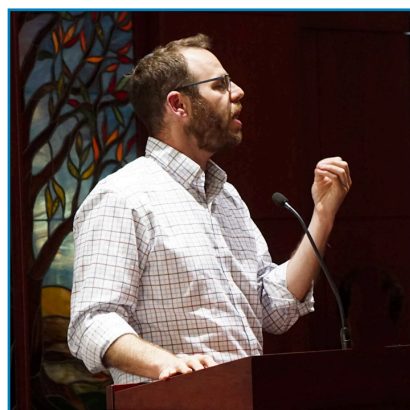


Congregation Emeth welcomed 140 members of the community from many faith traditions for a discussion of Judaism. This was the third in an educational series sponsored by the Interfaith CommUNITY of South County, of which Congregation Emeth is an active participant.

Rick Coencas, Congregation Emeth member and Interfaith CommUNITY of South County steering committee member introduced the panel.



Rabbi Debbie Israel spoke on the topics "What is a Jew?" and "What is Judaism?"



Guest speaker, **Rabbi Joshua Ladon** spoke on Israel and the Jewish relationship with the land of Israel

Emeth member and Past President, **Susan Meyers**, spoke on Tikkun Olam, repairing the world.

Emeth Ritual Committee member **Julie O'Neil** read the Ten Commandments from the Torah.



During the refreshment break, many visitors took the opportunity to view the Torah and ask questions.



The final segment of the program was a lively question and answer session. **Iman Ilyas Anwar** and **Pastor Anita Warner** moderated the session where visitors got the chance to ask the Rabbis about many subjects from women's role in Judaism to what is a secular Jew to Jewish practices.



Editor's Notes:

- For a larger set of event photos on a timeline, go to <https://lightroom.adobe.com/shares/cf3a8a4cd-02d47348ed59485127a542c>
- The first two "Faith of our Neighbors presentations were on Islam and Mormonism. The fourth, to be held in fall 2017, will be on Christianity in the Lutheran tradition. All are invited!

THE FACES OF PURIM AT EMETH

Photos by Elizabeth Mandel



PURIM HIGHLIGHTS

Great turnout!
 Unique Persia-meets-Wizard-of-Oz spheel by **Aliya Glatt**
 Creative spheel costumes by **Rachel Neto**
 Better-than-usual wine
 Awesome job by **teens!**
 Great help by **EDK parents**
 Tot table
 Balloon animals, games, face painting, prizes,...
 Reading by **Stuart Gallant** of our new Megillah!



*Editor's Note: See the "Wizard of Purim", written by Aliya Glatt and recorded by Harlan Glatt on You Tube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=UZrZ5b2snKQ&app=desktop>*

SCHOOL SCRAPBOOK

PLAYGROUND



The playground tiles are being installed so we are starting to put play equipment in place. We appreciate the families' patience as we move forward on this.



Chai School students present Grant Gordon with a thank you banner for his hard work

Save the Date:
Sunday, August 20
Playground ribbon cutting
and ice cream social!

TU B'SHVAT AT CHAI SCHOOL



Students plant a tree for Tu B'Shvat
with Morah Jarson

TOT SHABBATS

Marilyn Freund organized three Tot Shabbats this past year for children aged 2-4, with as many as 10 little ones attending. Co-chaired by **Lori Goldsmith**, activities ranged from reading stories to making challot covers to potting plants (for Shavuot) to filling hamentashen (for Purim) to Israeli dancing with **Morah Hana** and the Chai School students.



Israeli Dancing



Shabbat Rituals at Tu B'Shvat

Save the Date: Friday, September 8 - HHD Tot Shabbat



Rachel Neto is thanked by EDK
students for being assistant leader



Rabbi Israel is thanked by Education Chair
Daria Ogden for taking on the extra job
this past year of Religious School Principal

Congregation Emeth has been blessed to have professional and experienced Hebrew teachers, unique for a congregation our size and in our small community. Watching the students progress through the year demonstrates the capability and expertise of these teachers: **Joelle Wolf, Hana Cidon, and Paula Marsh**. Sadly next year Paula is unable to return, although she will substitute whenever possible. **Rabbi Israel** will be working with our b'nai mitzvah students, Joelle will be teaching our older readers and Hana will be teaching our newer readers. This staff is a great blessing and deeply appreciated!

HEBREW SCHOOL



Hebrew School teachers: Paula Marsh,
Joelle Wolf, and Hana Cidon are thanked
by Education Chair Daria Ogden

THANK YOU 2016-2017 BOARD

The end of the year is an appropriate time to reflect back on and thank the board for their leadership in the past year, their commitment to Emeth, and the wide range of tasks they perform.

Becky Neto - President

Becky has completed her second year as board president and has generously agreed to continue for a third year. Becky also provides advice to religious school, has run the Purim carnival for many years, and coordinates our b'nai mitzvah program.



Susan Braun - Vice President

Susan performs special tasks as required in support of the president. Her outreach resulted in the hiring of our new administrator, Charlene Rose.

Susan Meyers - Past President

Susan chaired our successful Capital Campaign, was instrumental in establishing the Interfaith COMMUNITY of South County, is kicking off our Tikkun Olam committee, runs "Getting to Know Emeth" programming, and coordinates the annual Mah Jongg fundraiser.



Michael Heil - Treasurer

Michael brings an exceptional thoroughness of analysis and reporting to the treasurer's job, enabling the board to have a clear understanding of financial status at all times. He is currently finalizing the 2017-18 budget, an extremely time consuming but essential piece of work.



Denise Weyl - Secretary

Denise creates board minutes and is a valuable participant in board discussion and decisions. In addition, she is chair of our upcoming Wine Tasting fundraiser.



Marilyn Freund - Membership

Marilyn provides a welcoming environment to all current and prospective members through creating a personal connection, decorating, food, and more. As Membership Director, she organized three Tot Shabbats this past year. She is also Sisterhood co-president.

Grant Gordon - Ways & Means

Grant brings valuable business and finance expertise to the board. He helped with the capital campaign, has led much of the work on the new playground, and has led many facility maintenance projects.



Elizabeth Mandel - Communication

Elizabeth designed and maintains our website, creates brochures, photographs events, and edits our Kol Emeth newsletter. She also works with local and Jewish newspapers to ensure publicity of Emeth events.

Mitzvah Makers

*Special thanks to our members
for their leadership and support
on recent special projects:*

- ♥ **Community Seder** - Rena Dubin and her team (p2)
- ♥ **Facilities maintenance** - Dale Foster (chair) with Michael Oshan, Grant Gordon, Arthur Rudin, and Andre Neto - new voicemail and cameras, new alarms, fixed water leak in restroom, new thermostats, pressure washed playground, plus ongoing maintenance (light bulbs, repairs, electronics...)
- ♥ **EDK trip to LA** - Rabbi Israel (p10)
- ♥ **Purim festivities** - EDK students (directed by Rabbi), parents, Aliya Glatt (sphenel), Neto family (carnival) Daria Ogden (food), Lori Goldsmith/Marilyn Freund (tot table) (p5)
- ♥ **Kitchen & pantry organization, cleaning & shopping** - Susan Latin
- ♥ **Chai School kitchen support** - always stepping up - Susan Latin & Maria Walters
- ♥ **Super Woman - pitching in whenever needed** - Cathy Silverstein
- ♥ **Trash removal** - Nicholas Lemoff, Ari Jarson
- ♥ **Dump run/Trash removal** - Neto family
- ♥ **Playground tile installation** - Grant Gordon, Dale Foster & Elizabeth Mandel
- ♥ **PA Walsh book donation coordination** - Marilyn Freund
- ♥ **Library organization and maintenance** - Linda Riesenberg
- ♥ **Tax forms & YE reminders** - Barry Freund
- ♥ **Mah Jongg tournament & fundraiser** - Susan Meyers and helpers: Marilyn Freund, Julie O'Neil, Patty Baggesse, Jan Shorr, Cathy Gill, Maureen Chassey, Aileen Teren-Foster, Cathy Silverstein, Nancy Fishman & several non-members (p9)
- ♥ **Women's Seder** - Wendy Thowdis & Jackie Stevens (organizers), Rabbi (led service) (p9)

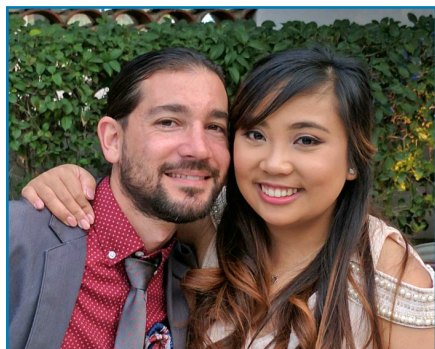
THANK YOU DARIA OGDEN, EDUCATION CHAIR

At Shabbat Teacher Appreciation Services, President Becky Neto presented Daria with a "thank you" plaque and brick in recognition of her five years as education chair.



MEMBERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

MAZAL TOV!



Barry Rudin, son of Emeth members **Arthur Rudin and Susan Braun** was married to Trixie DeLeon on May 21 in Oxnard, California.

Member **Michael Kerner** is the recipient of the 2017 Distinguished Contribution to Psychology award from the California Psychological Association. This award honors a psychologist who has improved the image of psychology by increasing the public's understanding of psychology in a significant way.



Michael has practiced as a psychologist in Santa Clara County for the past 31 years, with a focus on custody evaluations, co-parent counseling, psychotherapy, and expert work for the court. He serves on the Board of Directors for Palo Alto University, is the Educational Director and lead lecturer for the Association of Advanced Training in the Behavioral Sciences, and consults with the San Jose, Salinas, and Morgan Hill Police Departments, screening officers involved in fatal shootings to assess their fitness for active duty. Michael also sits on the Death Review Team for Santa Clara County, working with the District Attorney to provide input on domestic violence incidents. Previous recognition includes being named 2014 Forensic Psychologist of the Year for Santa Clara County.

FOND FAREWELLS

Stuart and Hilda Gallant

After just two short years at Emeth, Stuart is retiring and he and Hilda are moving to Lincoln, CA. We are sad to see them leave and wish them well.

Hilda says, "We will miss the warmth and friendship of everyone we met, as well as the wonderful help and kindness we experienced during my several surgeries. Emeth is a unique Congregation with a wonderful Rabbi and amazing group of volunteers."



Natalie Abmont

Natalie has moved to Idaho, following her son Joe, his wife Denise, and granddaughters Addysen and Ashtyn. Natalie's absence is already felt in so many ways. Mazal Tov!



Natalie was recognized by President Becky Neto at a recent Shabbat service for her years of contribution to Emeth

Natalie reflects, "I do miss Emeth. Such a comfortable, comforting place to be with so many genuinely caring, friendly people. Rabbi Debbie ... what can I say, I miss her wisdom."

IDF VIDEO - LONE SOLDIERS

Sarah Langerman, daughter of **Robert Langerman** and a member of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) was recently featured on an IDF video featuring Jews who have chosen to come from other countries to serve Israel. <https://www.facebook.com/NefeshBNefesh/videos/10154587871837336/?fref=mentions>

The video says: *At any given time there are thousands of Lone Soldiers serving in the IDF, protecting our homeland. As we mark 69 years of independence, join us in saluting these brave young men and women who nobly chose to leave their friends and families to serve the country we all call home. Please share this video, tag all the Lone Soldiers you know and post a few words of appreciation to our brave young heroes.*



SISTERHOOD NEWS

WOMEN'S SEDER

Susan Braun

How good it is, and how pleasant,
When women dwell together in unity.

--- *Hinei Mah Tov*, adapted

Emeth's women's seder is different from a family seder in that we speak about women. We relive the story of our escape from bondage and move towards the freedom of making choices as well as claiming responsibility for those decisions.



Always behind the scenes: Cathy Silverstein and Marilyn Freund

JOIN US!

Marilyn Freund & Patty Baggese
Sisterhood Co-Presidents

Sisterhood has been busy: delivering bags of **hamentashen at Purim** to shut-ins, **dinner and viewing of *The Zookeeper's Wife*** at Santana Row, updating **Mazal Tov books** for b'nai mitzvah families, supporting members in need through **Rachamim**, and much more. Join us in having fun while making a difference!



Back L-R: Rabbi Debbie Israel, Dawn Chaffin, Robin Yacono, Aileen Teren-Foster, Julie O'Neil, Wendy Thowdis
Front L-R: Marilyn Freund, Georgi Braun, Hilda Gallant, Susan Braun, Susan Meyers, Nancy Fishman

Our seder, organized by **Wendy Thowdis and Jackie Stevens** and led by **Rabbi Israel**, took place in Wendy's lovely home.

We began with the legend of Miriam's Cup which established the seder highlighting women's roles in the Exodus. The Four Questions focused on hearing the voices of our mothers, celebrating heroic deeds of our fore sisters examining the pharaohs of present day and celebrating empowerment as Jewish women. The Ten Plagues focused on modern day issues as well as ways we enslave or limit ourselves.

We felt a special and memorable spirit of camaraderie.

MAH JONGG MAVENS

Susan Meyers, Mah Jongg Tournament Coordinator

Thanks to the wonderful teaching of **Cathy Gill** (with some assistance from **Susan Meyers** and **Patty Baggese**) our Emeth Mah Jongg class was a huge success! After the six-session class, we have grown from five to eleven players. We will hold another class if you are interested in learning to play: contact me at mahjongg@emeth.net!



Our annual Mah Jongg tournament has become a "staple" in the local Mah Jongg community. Thirty-two women, many of whom have played in all six of our tournaments, enjoyed breakfast, mah jongg, lunch and prizes this year. The annual tournament makes it possible for us to contribute about \$1,600 each year, or a total of \$9,600 over the six years. Funding from the tournament has supported student scholarships, camper-ships, the playground, and EDK trips to Jewish Los Angeles and Jewish San Francisco.



SAVE THE DATE: SEPTEMBER 9 - PROGRESSIVE DINNER!

All members are invited to this annual Emeth social event. Please consider being one of our hosts. Contact **Patty Baggese** at sisterhood@emeth.net to offer your home. We need you!



Progressive Dinner!

EDK TRIP TO JEWISH LA

Meghan Lee, EDK member

Photos by Rachel Neto

This year, the teens (including myself) of Emet Dor Kef (Emeth's "fun generation") traveled all the way to Los Angeles, driven in a full van by **Rabbi Israel!** The trip down was a bit rain-swept, but we made it there safe and sound. We stayed in one of the dorm buildings of the AJU (American Jewish University).

Friday night we had a traditional Shabbat meal, Erev Shabbat services and a couple of mixers to get to know the teens of Temple Emanu El of the Redlands and Ohr Tzafon of San Luis Obispo. Joining our Rabbi as leaders were **Rabbi Jay Sherwood, Rabbi Janice Mehring, and Rachel Neto**, our EDK assistant leader.

Shabbat morning, we had an early breakfast and Shabbat service, so we could make it to Disneyland. Rabbi Jay gave us a Jewish scavenger hunt of Disneyland, and we were off in the Happiest Place on Earth. We broke into groups and my group found the *mezuzah*, *ner tamid*, and apples and honey all inside the park. We even found where they sell kosher food. (There were 21 Jewish items on the list!) We concluded the first night with a peaceful Havdalah service.



Disneyland



With teens from Emanu El (Redlands) and Ohr Tzafon (San Luis Obispo)

The next day, we went to the Sinai Cemetery to see their amazing mosaic of American Jewish history and their Holocaust memorial garden. Then we trekked to the Wilshire Boulevard Temple, Los Angeles' oldest synagogue. We toured the magnificent sanctuary, complete with a near panoramic mural of Jewish history up until the 1930's and splendid architecture.

Afterwards, we had lunch at Nagilah, a restaurant with a dairy side and a meat side in the center of Jewish Los Angeles. I had never seen so many Jewish shops and restaurants. Nearly every man was wearing a *kippah* (headcovering). After lunch, we went to the Museum of Tolerance to view their Anne Frank exhibit, which

was unique and inspiring. To end the day, we had a game night and the answers to the Disneyland Scavenger hunt were revealed.



Santa Monica Pier

Sadly, our Sunday activities were curtailed because of a terrible impending rainstorm so we left quickly. Avoiding worst of the rain, we did see a little flooding.

A good time was had by all, and the trip was definitely worth it.

ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE WORKSHOP FOR TEENS

Levi Glatt, EDK member Photos by Elizabeth Mandel

*Responding to rising anti-Semitism and anti-Islamism, Rabbi Israel invited the South Valley Islamic Community teens to join with our high school and middle school teens and their parents for a very special program. She engaged **Jacqueline Regev**, Education Director of the Central Pacific Region of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), to facilitate our program. Levi Glatt, sophomore, reflects on his experience of the interactive program:*



It was also very cool for me to get to meet the Muslim community of Morgan Hill. We had a chance to talk about our own cultures and traditions, which made me realize that we actually share a great deal in common. I enjoyed learning about some Muslim customs, and teaching them about the Jewish traditions of which I have been raised.



I found the ADL workshop very meaningful. We all had opportunities to share our experiences and insights related to bullying, specifically when involving race, culture, and sexual identity. We learned and discussed the best ways to handle these uncomfortable situations and stand up for those in our community and the world who are being mistreated.



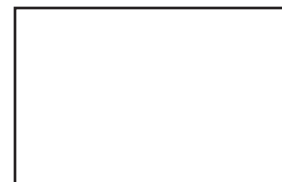
WINE TASTING FUNDRAISER SAVE THE DATE: SUNDAY, AUGUST 27

Join us for an afternoon at the beautiful Martin Ranch Winery in Gilroy for our Wine Tasting Fundraiser. In addition to tasting their award winning wines, you'll have fun bidding on great items from the silent auction, enjoy delicious appetizers, participate in a raffle, and relax in their gorgeous, remote setting. Please bring your friends! Babysitting offsite is available.

Consider donating a special service, skill, or talent for our silent auction.

In the past members have contributed flights on their private planes, an afternoon on their boat, wine tasting afternoon with picnic, baseball/basketball tickets, a gourmet meal for 6, monthly homemade cookies, etc. It's a fun way to share your special contribution with others, and a great way for Congregation Emeth to succeed in our fundraising efforts. Please call **Denise Weyl** at 408-763-7026 or email wineevent@emeth.net if you can help in this regard. Thank you!

Kol Emeth
Congregation Emeth
17835 Monterey Street
Morgan Hill, CA 95037



ADULT EDUCATION 2016-17 – MODERN JEWISH THINKERS

Rabbi Debbie Israel



This year's Adult Education study topic was Modern Jewish Thinkers. I taught the class, which was attended regularly and consistently by 16 Congregation Emeth members. We studied:

- **Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel**, who tried to awaken modern Jews to the sense of wonder underlying early Jewish teachings. He taught that God needs us as much as we need God.
- **Martin Buber**, who claimed that people deal with the world through "I-It" and "I-Thou" relationships. "I-It" relationships describe treating others as objects rather than people, and in "I-Thou" relationships, we recognize the divine in each of us. He taught that God is the "Eternal Thou."
- **Israel Ben Eliezer**, the founder of modern Hasidism, known as the Ba'al Shem Tov ("Master of the Good Name").
- **Moses Mendelsohn**, the major figure of the Jewish enlightenment, the Haskalah, who opened up the ghettos of Germany to modern culture.
- **Theodor Herzl**, the founder of Modern Zionism, who focused on Jews as a people rather than Judaism as a religion.
- **Ahad Ha'am (Israel Grinberg)**, the founder of spiritual Zionism, whose goal was to prove Judaism is a national religion and who believed returning the Jews to Israel was the way for the Jewish spirit to develop naturally.
- **Franz Rosenzweig**, one of the most original and influential modern Jewish thinkers, a German-Jewish Existentialist, who felt the importance of observance while being very tolerant of the non-observant.
- **Rabbi Leo Baeck**, whose philosophy was that every Jew is morally responsible to behave ethically; an early Reform Jewish Rabbi.
- **Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise**, who could be called the "father of American Reform Judaism," whose major influence created the Union for Reform Judaism and the Hebrew Union College.
- **Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan**, who concluded that Judaism is a civilization and was the founder of Reconstructionism which grew into a Jewish denomination. He also envisioned the creation of Jewish Community Centers.

In the fall of 2017, I intend to offer a new class series which will focus on **Pirke Avot, Ethics of the Ancestors**, specifically studying it as mussar text. A familiarity with mussar-ethical teachings—is not a class pre-requisite for this study of the classic Rabbinic text. For more information, or to express your interest in the class, email me at rabbi@emeth.net.