

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

2021 ANNUAL MEETING: LOOKING TOWARDS BEING BACK IN PERSON

At the Congregation Emeth Annual Meeting on June 27th, congregation leaders and members gathered to review the past year and look forward to the year to come -- including sharing plans to reopen the building and to begin coming together once again in person. Services are expected to resume as soon as late July in a hybrid manner with both in person and online options available. There have also been many upgrades to the building this past year, including a redecorated entrance lobby and an improved air filtration system. The library is also currently undergoing a cosmetic and organizational upgrade.

Elections were held for the 2021-2022 Congregation Board, welcoming in new President Elect **Marcia Fishman**, who had previously served on the Board and then had taken on the role as Administrator for this past year. With her return to the Board, we will be looking to hire a new part-time administrator/office manager. **Susan Braun** was also reelected to the Board as the Adult Education representative and **Marilyn Freund** to her role as Membership Chair. The other Board members will continue their current two-year terms: **Michael Oshan** as President, **David Kirsch** as Treasurer, **Tracy Valentine** as Secretary, **Jay Latin** as Ways & Means Chair, **Emily Shem-Tov** as Communications Chair, and **Josh Levine** as Education Liaison.

In the annual meeting, the group also honored **Peter Mandel**, who is stepping down after many years of service as President and Past President of the Board. Peter and his wife **Elizabeth Mandel** have been involved with Congregation Emeth for over 20 years and their daughters, Alexandra and Emily, grew up at Emeth. We can't thank him enough for the wonderful contributions he has made -- and will continue to make -- to our Emeth community, and for the wisdom and wit that he provides.

Treasurer David Kirsch gave a financial update in the meeting, explaining that with the reopening there will be an increase in costs next year, leading to the need to do some fundraising. If you are interested in being part of those efforts, please reach out!



Our second Annual Meeting over Zoom



Rabbi Dantowitz and President Elect Marcia Fishman
in the renovated entry hall

Congregation Emeth

Staff

Rabbi	Faith Joy Dantowitz
Rabbi Emerita	Debbie Israel
Technical Specialist	Samuel Dantowitz
Controller	Barry Freund

2021-2022 Board

President	Michael Oshan
President Elect	Marcia Fishman
Treasurer	David Kirsch
Secretary	Tracy Valentine
Ways & Means	Jay Latin
Membership	Marilyn Freund
Communications	Emily Shem-Tov
Adult Education	Susan Braun
Education Liasion	Josh Levine

Non-Board Leadership

Building & Grounds	Dale Foster
Leadership Task Force	Michael Heil
Library	Linda Riesenbergl
Ritual	Marby Lee
Sisterhood	Patty Baggese, Marilyn Freund
Tikkun Olam	Jill Irwin
Kitchen Supplies	Susan Latin
Historian	Jack Fisher

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View our newsletter online at emeth.net/kol-emeth-newsletter.

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

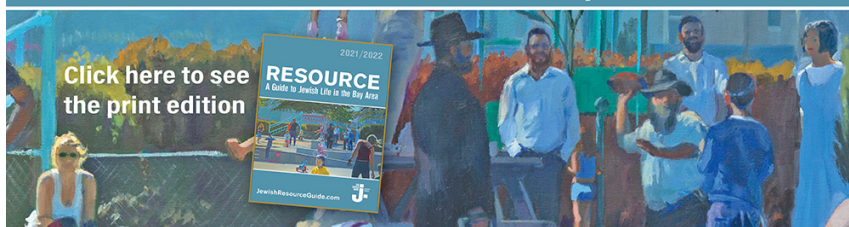


To submit articles and/or event photos, please email them to Communications Director / Kol Emeth Editor, Emily Shem-Tov, communication@emeth.net.

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RESOURCE 2021

A Guide to Jewish Life in the Bay Area



As we emerge from this past year, community connections are more important than ever. J. The Jewish News of Northern California is offering our congregants a complimentary copy of the new print edition of Resource, a directory providing access to over 400 Jewish organizations here in the Bay Area, including summer camps, local synagogues, food markets, film festivals and more.

J.'s 2021 Resource Guide to Jewish Life in the Bay Area is a great connector for our community. If you would like to receive a copy, please send your name and mailing address to anna@jweekly.com with the subject line "Resource - Free Copy".

The digital version of Resource is also available at on the [jweekly website](http://jweekly.com).

We also encourage you to sign up for J.'s free e-newsletters (www.jweekly.com/newsletter/) to stay connected to the larger Bay Area Jewish community. You'll get highlights of current Bay Area Jewish news and culture stories, as well as columns, op-eds, food reviews and lifecycle announcements.

WELCOME OUR NEW STAFF MEMBER, SAMUEL

After an extensive search, the Board is excited to welcome Samuel Dantowitz to the Emeth Staff as our new part-time Technology and Communications Specialist, where he will be helping to improve and maintain the Emeth web site, promotional material and graphics. He'll also be assisting with technology solutions, email announcements, the membership directory, mailings, and performing other administrative and technical tasks.

Samuel has a degree from Berklee College of Music in business and psychology. When not working at Emeth, he is a Manager of Delivery Operations with Amazon Logistics and is occasionally involved in music projects, some of which we've seen from time to time in our services. You can reach Samuel at

tech@emeth.net



Samuel Dantowitz

BUILDING COMMUNITY

Michael Oshan, President



Michael Oshan

June 15th was a special day. For many, a day of liberation as the State of California's Covid-19 restrictions were lifted in most situations for fully vaccinated people. That being the case, I am feeling like our community, our *Kehillah*, has survived relatively well and it feels like we did the right thing by keeping our building closed. We have learned a new way of connecting with each other through Zoom technology and our Board has determined that it makes some sense to keep sharing our

sabbaths and holidays over the internet even as we return to full activities in our Jewish community center at Congregation Emeth.

With this in mind, we have received generous donations to purchase the necessary equipment to upgrade our technology to have "hybrid services." We now realize that we can increase overall participation if we have an option for congregants who cannot attend in person to join us online for various events. For someone of my generation, it feels a bit like Tomorrowland, but I am hopeful that we will have all of the bugs worked out long before the High Holy Days this year. The official reopening ad hoc committee has been meeting to make final plans for a full reopening of our building and we will be providing updates soon.

It has been very gratifying for all of us involved in the selection committee to have made such a right choice in the selection our rabbinic leader. Who knew when she was hired that it would be over a year before she would even be able to spend any time at our physical space? **Rabbi Faith Joy Dantowitz** has really done a remarkable job of leading us throughout the year, even as she has yet to meet many members of our community face to face, without the use of technology. She was there through the year with a few "drive-by" events and creative programs for *Shabbat* on Zoom. We have been able to hold very well organized and educational adult education classes over the internet and our children's school programs have received rave reviews.

We have completed another term for the Emeth Board of Directors and while most of the Board is continuing for another year or two, we will have a new President Elect and several new committee chairs. I anticipate a great year to come as we continue to prosper in our holy space. If we could get through the past year we can certainly thrive when we have the chance to be together again, touching, eating, singing and enjoying each other with a renewed appreciation for our lives.

As always, I encourage all members to get involved. We have several very active committees and there will be a variety of continuing opportunities to get involved in Emeth. Thanks for being safe and keeping our *Kehillah* alive!

I can be most easily reached through email: president@emeth.net.

June 2021

Table of Contents

1	ANNUAL MEETING UPDATES
2	J'S 2021 RESOURCE GUIDE
2	NEW STAFF MEMBER
3	PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
4	RABBI'S MESSAGE
5	VIRTUAL EVENTS
6-7	MEMBERSHIP NEWS
8	TIKKUN OLAM UPDATES
8	EDUCATION UPDATES
9	UPCOMING FALL EVENTS



Donate your car, boat, or motor home to Congregation Emeth and help our congregation. Visit truenate.com to fill out a simple form online, or call the toll free number (800-899-7054) and say you'd like to donate to Congregation Emeth. Your vehicle will be picked up free of charge. It does not need to be working and you will receive a tax receipt.

Reflecting on the past year, recognizing the good

Rabbi Faith Joy Dantowitz



Rabbi Faith Joy Dantowitz

One year ago (7/1/20) I moved to California from New Jersey, in the first months of the pandemic. I eagerly anticipated meeting congregants here at Congregation Emeth and did not know what to expect vis a vis a worldwide pandemic and how I would be able to build relationships.

My installation service this past March was a beautiful Shabbat celebrating the covenant between rabbi and congregation. While some synagogues hold such a service immediately after a rabbi arrives, I believe waiting until a connection was already truly established between myself and the congregation led to a deeper Shabbat of meaning. While ideally it would have been wonderful to be together in person, that wasn't possible. Instead, learning from the spiritually uplifting worship experiences from High Holy Days to Shabbat to Chanukah – this was an evening of deep connection. I am grateful for everyone's support and honored to be your rabbi.

The following week, Congregation Emeth held its first Zoom Seder. **Student Rabbi Cantorial Soloist Mira Weller** and I led a Family Seder. A highlight of the evening (2nd night of Passover) was the many congregants who stepped up to participate in a Readers' Theater *Maggid* – telling of the story of Passover. Passover Play awards to all and especially stand out performances by Miriam (**Miram Shem-Tov**); Pharaoh (**Reese Levine**) and the amazing sheep who bleated wonderful “bahs” (**Josh Levine**). The Women's Seder led by **Jackie Stevens** and **Wendy Thowdis** was a powerful evening celebrating women in the Passover story and our own experiences as women.

I was honored to officiate my first Congregation Emeth *Bat Mitzvah* service with **Clara Shem-Tov** and her wonderful family present from West Coast to East Coast to Israel. Being the only *Bat Mitzvah* student this year, during a pandemic, I am proud of Clara's perseverance and look forward to her continued Jewish learning in EDK and beyond.

The Religious School year ended on a high note of a beautiful Shabbat honoring teachers and students in May. I'm proud of all of our students, grateful to our wonderful teachers and our fantastic parents. A year ago, we had no idea how we would address the challenge of learning by Zoom during a pandemic. As we saw that Shabbat and heard throughout the year, our students deepened their Jewish knowledge and Hebrew skills.

As Summer approaches and California reopens, we are planning for our temple reopening as well as High Holy Day services. I am grateful for vaccines and the ability to meet everyone in person in the weeks ahead.

Hakarat Tov – recognizing the good – is a Jewish gratitude practice. Reflecting on the past year, it's amazing to notice all of the positive experiences we had. It's also important to recognize what a difficult time this has been for so many--- victims of COVID-19, survivors, family members, and all of us who suffered loss from the death of a loved one to loss of dreams unrealized/milestones unable to be marked as expected.

Soon we will join together and reflect on what we are grateful for and what we look forward to leaving behind from this pandemic year.

As we engage in *Hakarat tov*, we will thank God for the gift of life. It is traditional to recite this blessing on joyous occasions including when we see someone for the first time in 30 days:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהֵחֵינּוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְנוּ הַזֶּה.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech HaOlam Shehecheyanu v'kiyamanu v'higiyanu lazman hazeh.

Blessed are You Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universes for giving us life, sustaining us and enabling us to reach this joyous time.

VIRTUALLY TOGETHER

OFFICIAL INSTALLATION OF RABBI DANTOWITZ, MAR 19

It was with great joy that Congregation Emeth officially installed **Rabbi Dantowitz** on March 19th at our virtual Shabbat service, joined online by congregants, friends and members of the Rabbi's family.

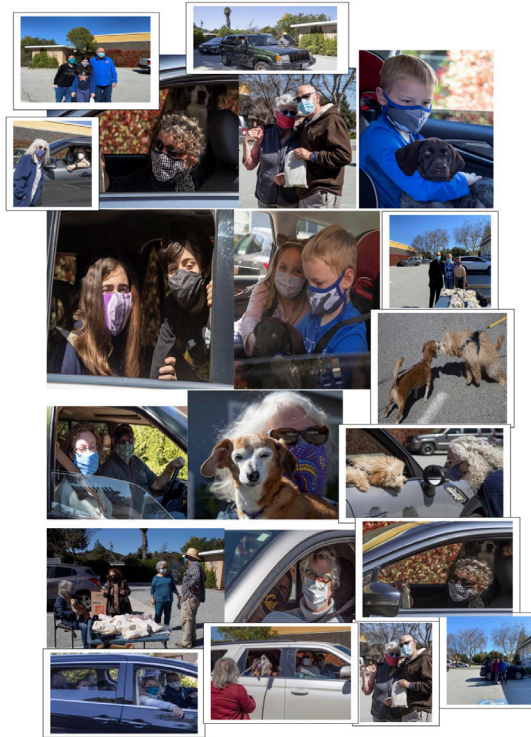


Cantor Alisa Fineman collaborated with Rabbi Dantowitz to plan the service which included remarks from Congregation President **Michael Oshan** as well as reflections from Rabbi Dantowitz. The Rabbi received blessings from **Rabbis Debbie Israel, David Vaisberg, Mary Zamore**, and **Cantor Alisa Fineman**.

Daniel Dantowitz produced three videos for the service. The Congregation Emeth Virtual choir, a wonderful multi-generational group, performed ***Od Yavo Shalom*** (Peace will come). Cantor Fineman and Rabbi Dantowitz sang ***Shalom Rav*** (Great Peace) with wonderful harmonies that Daniel included from arrangements he transcribed. And the Rabbi's four sons sang a beautiful melody for ***Ahavat Olam*** (Eternal Love). Thank you to everyone who attended and to all who participated in Congregation Emeth's first virtual choir.



CELEBRATING PASSOVER TOGETHER, DRIVE-THRUS AND ONLINE SEDERS

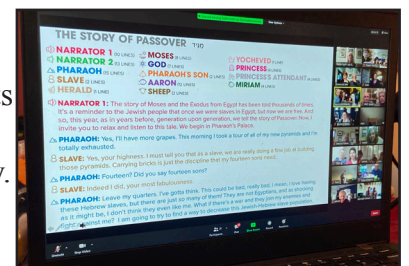


On March 21st, congregants were invited to participate in a "Passport to Passover" Drive Through where they received a Passover gift to enhance their holiday celebrations.

Elizabeth Mandel was on hand to capture some great photos of congregants – plus many of their canine buddies!

Emeth also hosted an interactive online Second Night Congregational Seder on March 28th with

Rabbi Dantowitz and **Student-Rabbi Mira Weller** leading and many congregants participating in a lively retelling of the Passover story.



The Emeth Sisterhood also hosted a vibrant Women's Zoom Seder led by **Rabbi Dantowitz, Wendy Thowdis**, and **Jackie Stevens**. We appreciated their enormous planning and leadership for this thought-provoking opportunity to learn from historic Judaic women and their impact.





MEMBERSHIP NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATES AND STUDENTS!

Higher Education:

Congratulations to our graduates

Aliya Glatt, Sarah Zajac, Samuel Perry, and Ellie Rabin!

High School:

Ross Gordon, son of Grant Gordon, graduated from Gilroy High School where he attended the Biomedical Science Academy (BSA). Ross will be attending Worcester Polytechnic Institute this fall where he will be majoring in Mechanical Engineering.

Nick Lemoff, son of Brian and Sony Lemoff, graduated Sobrato High School and will be attending UC Berkeley in the fall.

Talia Jordan, daughter of Melanie Jordan, graduated from Live Oak High School and will be attending UC Santa Cruz.

Junior High:

Alexa Gordon, daughter of Grant Gordon, graduated from Jr High and will be continuing with High School at Chartwell School.

Elementary School:

Brianna Grabscheid, daughter of Tamara and Joel Grabscheid, and Noah Latin, son of Susan and Jay Latin, made it through elementary school and each graduated from 5th grade.

And Jacob Henig was asked by his third grade teachers to speak to next fall's incoming third graders for inspiration!



Ross Gordon



Nick Lemoff



Alexa Gordon



Melanie and Talia Jordan



Brianna Grabscheid

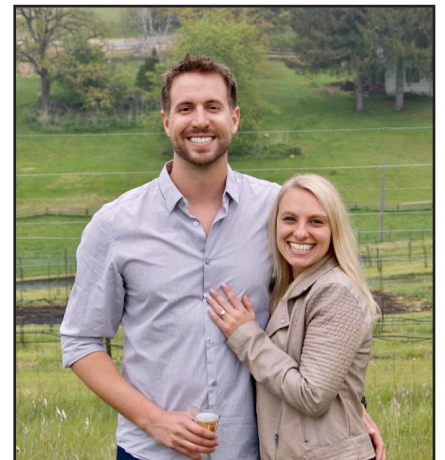
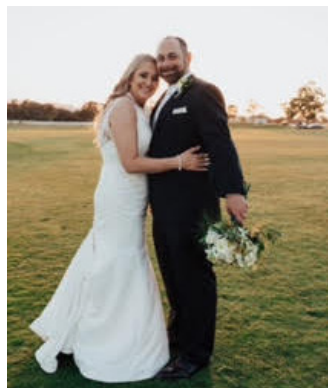


Noah Latin and Teacher



Mazel Tov to Jackie Stevens
on the marriage of her son, Michael
Stevens to Danielle Biesanz (June 2021)

Mazel Tov to
Patty and Jim Baggese
on the marriage of their son,
Aaron Baggese
to Katie Powell (May 2021)



Aileen Teren-Foster and Dale Foster's son
Andrew Foster got engaged on May 15th
to Abby Schrode in Wisconsin.
Their wedding is scheduled for Aug 2022.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR RECENT BAT MITZVAH CLARA!

Congratulations to **Clara Shem-Tov**, daughter of **Emily and Shachar Shem-Tov** on her Bat Mitzvah on April 24th! Family, friends, and congregation members joined over Zoom to celebrate the special day, and her grandparents and great grandmother participated from Israel. Clara chose two wildlife organizations for her tzedakah recipients - W.E.R.C. in Morgan Hill and the Israeli Wildlife Hospital (IWH) located in the Safari Zoo in Ramat Gan, a place that Clara has visited many times during her trips to visit family in Israel.

In addition, Clara completed a mitzvah project where she put together over 100 hygiene kits to hand out to unhoused people in local encampments with some of the key items they were asking for such as socks, hand warmers, and toiletries. When she learned that there was also a big need for blankets, towels, and jackets, she collected items from friends and many of you in the Congregation. Thank you to all of you who helped her with this project!



Clara Shem-Tov

A FOND FAREWELL TO DALE AND AILEEN

Long-time Emeth members **Aileen Teren-Foster** and **Dale Foster** recently announced that they will be relocating to La Quinta (south of Palm Springs) this summer. The couple joined Congregation Emeth in 2010 after going back and forth between this congregation and Temple Emanu-El for a few years. They immediately felt that everyone was so welcoming and that the congregation really made them feel at home. Aileen notes that, "Emeth is so responsive to interfaith families and Dale jumped right in with me to become an active part of the congregation." In 2014, Aileen was called to the bimah along with four other women to make their B'nai Mitzvah as part of the first group taught by Rabbi Israel.

Aileen writes that, "It will be very difficult to leave and we wish we could take all of you with us. We have plenty of room for visitors and our plan is to come back at least annually for a visit. We will try to attend as many services as possible before we leave and hope we have an opportunity to say goodbye to everyone in person. With services continuing on zoom, our plan is to stay connected."

We wish them the very best on their new adventures and know that they will be missed here!



Dale Foster and Aileen Teren-Foster

All the best as well to **Efrem Cray** and **Nathaniel Bates** as they relocate from the area. We are so glad that we were able to have them as members for the short time they were each here!



Support Emeth At No Cost To You!

Visit <http://smile.amazon.com>, select the charitable organization to support (Congregation Emeth), bookmark the page and support Congregation Emeth every time you shop! After you've done this once, Amazon will remind you – what an easy way to support Emeth!

TIKKUN OLAM UPDATES

Susan Meyers and Jill Irwin

Announcing new leadership

We are so pleased that **Jill Irwin** has agreed to serve as Chairperson for our Tikkun Olam Committee. Jill is filled with enthusiasm and a commitment to exploring new opportunities for Emeth members to engage in mitzvot that enhance the quality of life in our South County community.

Thanks to Marie Escobar, Cathy and Stewart Gill, Jodi and Doug Hall, Jennifer and Adam Henig, Jill and Jim Irwin, Sharon and David Kirsch, Susan and Jay Latin, Arlene Noodleman, Leah Robinson and Edgar Tejano, and Emily and Clara Shem-Tov, we provided dinner to the families at the Focus Safe Park the four Friday nights in May!



Jill Irwin
and her granddaughter

We look forward to July 20th At 4:00 PM when we will hold our first meeting in person since March 2020. Our July meeting will focus on our interest in learning how we can support the work of organizations dedicated to ending homelessness.

Please contact **Jill Irwin** or **Susan Meyers** at TikkunOlam@emeth.net if you would like to learn more.

ADULT ED RECAP

Susan Braun

We had a productive and inspiring year with our Adult Education offerings this past year.

In the fall, **Rabbi Dantowitz** taught a class on “Resilience” which focused on the challenges we faced during the Pandemic. We explored Jewish teachings to guide us through these difficult times.

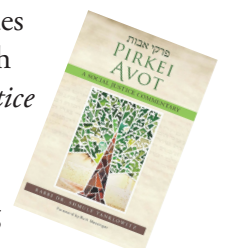
Another series, “Jewish Values & Issues Facing Us Today” explored three topics of great importance—Healthcare, Environment and Legal issues. **Sharon Kirsch** taught the Legal Issues class which was most informative.



Susan Braun

In January we were fortunate to have a series entitled “Intro to Kabbalah: Mysteries of the Zohar”, which was conducted by **Rabbi Dorothy Richman**. We were able to explore the language, stories, symbols and characters by decoding text of the Zohar and see how traditional Torah verses are used in creative ways.

Finally, **Rabbi Dantowitz** taught a six-session class on Pirke Avot-Ethics of our Ancestors this Spring. It is traditional to study this text between Passover and Shavuot. A tractate of the Mishna (and Talmud), this is unlike other Talmudic texts which focus on halakha (law) and aggadah (stories). Pirke Avot addresses ethical values and refinement of our personal values. Participants provided stimulating discussion based on the rich texts. Rabbi Dantowitz shared commentary from Rabbi Shmuly Yanklowitz’ *Pirke Avot: A Social Justice Commentary*.



Looking ahead to the Fall, **Susan Braun**, Adult Education Chair and **Rabbi Dantowitz** are planning for more wonderful learning opportunities.



Kol Emeth
Congregation Emeth
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Morgan Hill, CA 95037



SHABBAT IN THE REDWOODS

AUGUST 14, 2021

Save the date for our annual outdoor Shabbat celebration in the beautiful redwood grove, with a music filled Torah service Saturday morning and nature surrounding us in prayer.

Cantor Alisa Fineman will be joining Rabbi Dantowitz for this special service. Optional Friday night camping can be arranged as well. More details at

emeth.net/redwoods



HIGH HOLY DAYS 5782

Save the Dates!

Rosh Hashanah
September 6-8

Yom Kippur
September 15-16

Services will be hybrid with both in-person and online options to attend. Watch for more information coming this fall!

