

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

## PURIM JOY & GIVING

Members of the congregation gathered to celebrate Purim in person and online with a variety of events. The activities featured games such as Gaga (or “Gaga Ball”, a dodgeball like game played in a fenced-off “pit” popular in Israel and at Jewish summer camps) and Mahjong. Shabbat services featured a humorous retelling of the Purim story as well.

Our most notable activity was addressing the Purim Mitzvah of *matanot la-evyonim* — gifts for the poor — sponsored by the Tikkun Olam committee during the March 13<sup>th</sup> outdoor Purim Celebration. The committee’s request for donations of personal hygiene items to fill the bags was answered in a very big way, and an assembly line of helpers went into action at the event. **Because of our efforts and donations, we provided 215 Mitzvah Gift Bags to the Compassion Center in Gilroy!**

The kids also participated in our in-person Chai School Purim party/class on March 17<sup>th</sup>. **Rabbi Dantowitz** and **Cantor Alisa Fineman** led the first half of the afternoon event with some Purim prayers, songs and stories (including an Encanto parody of “We Don’t Talk about Haman”), and then everyone participated in some fun carnival games. Thank you to the EDK class for assisting in setting up and putting the games away.



*Photos by Elizabeth Mandel*



**President Michael Oshan delivered 215 gift bags to Compassion Center Director, Tim Davis**

## Congregation Emeth

### Staff

<b>Rabbi</b>	Faith Joy Dantowitz
<b>Rabbi Emerita</b>	Debbie Israel
<b>Operations Mgr</b>	Sandi Diamond
<b>Technical Specialist</b>	Samuel Dantowitz
<b>Controller</b>	Barry Freund

### 2021-2022 Board

<b>President</b>	Michael Oshan
<b>President Elect</b>	Marcia Fishman
<b>Treasurer</b>	David Kirsch
<b>Secretary</b>	Tracy Valentine
<b>Ways &amp; Means</b>	Jay Latin
<b>Membership</b>	Marilyn Freund
<b>Communications</b>	Emily Shem-Tov
<b>Adult Education</b>	Susan Braun
<b>Education Liaison</b>	Josh Levine

### Non-Board Leadership

<b>Building &amp; Grounds</b>	Open Position
<b>Leadership Task Force</b>	Michael Heil
<b>Library</b>	Linda Riesenber
<b>Ritual</b>	Marby Lee
<b>Sisterhood</b>	Patty Baggesse, Marilyn Freund
<b>Tikkun Olam</b>	Jill Irwin
<b>Kitchen Supplies</b>	Susan Latin
<b>Historian</b>	Jack Fisher

Kol Emeth is published electronically three times per year. Congregation membership includes a subscription to this publication. If you would like a printed (black and white) copy, please contact us at [admin@emeth.net](mailto:admin@emeth.net).

**View our newsletter online at**  
[emeth.net/kol-emeth-newsletter](http://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](mailto:communication@emeth.net).

**Congregation Emeth**  
17835 Monterey Road, MH, CA 95037  
(408) 778-8200

## SPREAD THE WORD!

If you have friends who might be interested in Emeth, our membership chair, **Marilyn Freund**, would love to talk to them! Please direct them to our web site at [emeth.net](http://emeth.net) for more information about the benefits of membership or have them reach out to us [info@emeth.net](mailto:info@emeth.net) or (408) 778-8200. For some of the recent inquiries about Emeth, we've been able to answer their questions, invite them to Shabbat Services (via Zoom or in-person) and to our special Tot Shabbat and other events, and we would appreciate your help in connecting us to other interested people.



## DONATIONS TO HELP UKRAINE

We fervently pray for peace and a quick end to the violence in Ukraine. We think of all the people of Ukraine and especially the Jewish community. Our hearts ache as we read stories of the terrible situation and many have asked how to help. Here are two organizations working to help people impacted.



### World Union for Progressive Judaism Ukraine Crisis Fund

[wupj.org/give/ukraine/](http://wupj.org/give/ukraine/)

In light of the Russian attack on Ukraine, the World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ) launched the Ukraine Crisis Fund. They are asking people from all over the world to make donations towards the support of the Ukrainian Jewish community. Money will be spent on individuals and communities to ensure their safety and well-being. WUPJ, established in London in 1926, is the international network of the Reform, Liberal, Progressive and Reconstructionist movements, serving 1.2 million members worldwide in more than 1,250 congregations in over 50 countries.

### HIAS

[www.hias.org](http://www.hias.org)

HIAS stands for a world in which refugees find welcome, safety, and opportunity. Drawing on their Jewish values and history, HIAS provides vital services to refugees and asylum seekers around the world and advocates for their fundamental rights so they can rebuild their lives. HIAS is closely monitoring the situation in Ukraine and neighboring countries and is responding with emergency humanitarian assistance to those who are displaced.



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Michael Oshan, President*



Michael Oshan

Greetings to all of Emeth members, friends, and families. We have now reached the two year point in our Covid-restricted lives, and finally it seems that there is a light at the end of the long tunnel. Spring is here, the wildflowers are beginning to bloom, and we are slowly returning to normal activities. We have been successfully holding hybrid services with live participation in our sanctuary and Zoom for members who may not be quite ready to attend in person. Many congregants have mentioned that the Zoom format works better for them on those days that they are too stressed from the week's activities to do what it takes to get themselves to the live services.

For this reason, I anticipate that we will continue with the online option for the foreseeable future. We have had a few successful in person events, a hike on the Coyote Creek trail, Purim activities, and several outdoor meetings with the youth programs.

As we ease back into full in-person participation, the Emeth Board is very conscious of on-going security issues that we must address for our members to feel safe. Safety from health concerns and the growing number of antisemitic threats that are prevalent these days have prompted our leadership to continue to enhance safety procedures. Over the next weeks you may be aware of an increase in our security surveillance system, and it is likely that we will be installing new security fencing around the building. We have had a professional security company provide us with a complete review of our property and we will be implementing a variety of upgrades. Most of these upgrades will not be noticeable to many of you, but I assure you that we are putting significant effort into making our facilities as safe as possible. When I was writing this article, Santa Clara County was still under a mandate to wear masks indoors. With that in mind we have purchased N-95 disposable masks which are available at the entrance to the building. We will continue to follow all County Health guidelines. At this time, masks are strongly advised but optional for all vaccinated individuals indoors.

Another development is that we once again are sharing our building with a compatible church tenant. The Morgan Hill Seventh Day Adventist Church will be holding Saturday services in our sanctuary on days that do not conflict with our own scheduled services and Jewish holiday activities. They will also have an evening program at our building on Wednesday evenings. This particular congregation is conducting their services mostly in Spanish. As of this writing they have used our facilities on two occasions and I am impressed at how conscientious they have been in respecting our property. They will be on a trial basis for now, but if all goes well it may be a long term relationship.

We have been treated to beautiful music and harmonies with **Rabbi Dantowitz** and **Cantor Alisa Fineman** over the past year; but alas, Cantor Fineman will be returning to her Congregation in Carmel Valley in next fiscal year, and we wish her well. We also have been lucky enough to have had our **Emerita Rabbi Israel** lead a service and it is a treat to be able to call on her when Rabbi Dantowitz has a conflict or is otherwise unavailable.

I continue to encourage our members to share Shabbat meals and to create small *chavurah* groups to enhance the Jewish experience of Emeth. My wife, **Susan Meyers**, and I frequently share Shabbat with others and it is always a pleasant evening. I hope to see you all at our upcoming programs and I wish you a happy springtime, my favorite time of the year.

I can be most easily reached through email: [president@emeth.net](mailto:president@emeth.net).

## March 2022

### Table of Contents

- 1 PURIM JOY AND GIVING
- 2 DONATIONS TO HELP UKRAINE
- 3 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
- 4 RABBI'S MESSAGE
- 5 EMETH READS
- 5 RELIGIOUS SCHOOL UPDATES
- 5 MEMBER NEWS
- 6 MEMBER VOICES
- 7 RECENT EVENTS
- 8 TIKKUN OLAM UPDATES
- 8 ADULT EDUCATION UPDATES
- 9 UPCOMING EVENTS

# Rabbi's Message

*Rabbi Faith Joy Dantowitz*

*"For now the Winter has passed, the rains are over and gone, the blossoms appear on the earth,  
..the song [of the turtledove] has come." -[Song of Songs 2:11]*

After two long years of the pandemic, when the month of Adar arrived this year, we could relate differently to the Talmudic statement of the rabbis: *Mi shenichmas Adar marbim simcha*. When Adar enters, joy increases.

The January COVID surge has passed and there are more opportunities to safely join together. What a joy it was to celebrate Purim at the temple, including the pre-Purim party with 40 people there. Seeing kids and adults join together doing a mitzvah, playing games, enjoying hamentashen and simply enjoying one another's presence was uplifting. Lo, the Winter has passed—and we are emerging as a congregation—reconnecting with one another in person.



**Rabbi Faith Joy Dantowitz**

I'm eager to get to know each of you. What are your interests? How would you like to connect more with the congregation, with one another, with Judaism? I'll be reaching out to you and invite you to reach out to me as well.

Lo the Winter has passed, but the darkness still persists.

Our hearts are turned to the crisis in Ukraine. We are encouraging donations to the World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ) and HIAS. A few of my NY colleagues traveled to Poland days before Purim to bear witness to this crisis. One friend, Rabbi David Wilfond, found his own relatives among the refugees—the mother, daughter and grandmother. The husband and son were not allowed to leave Ukraine. It was a bittersweet reunion to find family amidst millions of refugees and learn of their heartache. The women have since safely arrived in Israel.

How can we make a difference? We can make financial donations. We can send supplies with someone traveling to the area. We can lobby our elected leaders to help with refugees. We can help refugees in or near our own communities. We can think global and act local. Our Purim mitzvah—*matanot la'evyonim*—sending gifts to the poor—mitzvah bags for the homeless—was one of many ways we can help make even a small difference in our world.

As Passover approaches, we are reminded by the rabbis *B'chol dor vador chayav adam lirot et atzmo k'ilu hu yatza miMitzrayim*—In every generation we are to see ourselves as if we personally went from slavery to freedom.

As we witness the tragedy in Ukraine, we think back to 80 years ago when our ancestors were slaughtered at the hands of the Nazis and ignored by bystanders. Today, when Ukrainian refugees enter Poland they are welcomed by helpers from various faiths and nationalities, including Israel.

*Yatza miMitzrayim*—we are fortunate that most of us are not physically escaping from oppression and war. Yet, we recognize that we are all experiencing a 'going out' from "*Mitzrayim*"---narrow places.

After these past two years of the pandemic—we are emerging from constricted spaces—physically and emotionally. We will hopefully safely gather with family and friends for the most observed Jewish ritual—Passover Seder and sing with gusto, *Dayeinu*. It would have been enough.

If only God had brought us out of Egypt (narrow places), *Dayeinu*.

If only God had given us the Torah, *Dayeinu*.

If only God had helped us survive these years of the pandemic, *Dayeinu*.

If only God had enabled us to recognize the holy sparks in one another, *Dayeinu*.

## EMETH READS

### EMETH READS PARTICIPANTS LEARN FROM CHILDREN OF HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR

Our winter meeting was fascinating. Our book discussion of “Sonia’s Song” by Sonia Korn-Gimani, was enriched as her adult children, Renee and Anthony joined us to share their mother’s story and her perspective on today’s political environment.

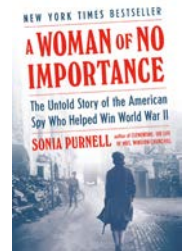


Born in 1931 Germany, Sonia tells the story of her childhood living in Germany under Nazi domination; of being told she is an “official enemy of the German State; hiding with her family and in an orphanage with her brother. Renee and Anthony, following their mother’s wishes, tell her story to remind us to speak up when we hear of language that promotes hate.



The author’s children, Anthony and Renee, were able to join the discussion over zoom.

You are invited to join us for our next Emeth Reads meeting on May 11th at 7:00PM. We will be reading and discussing “A Woman of No Importance” by Sonia Purnell, published in 2019. This award winning biography of Virginia Hall, an undercover agent in France during WWII, highlights the story of a woman who helped turn the tides of history. It is a fascinating read and we are sure to have an engaging discussion. We look forward to seeing you on the 11th of May!



## RELIGIOUS SCHOOL UPDATES

Chai School had a wonderful Grandparents/Special Friends day on March 3rd. This was **Marcia Fishman’s** terrific idea. Having the class on Zoom we were able to welcome guests from New York to Washington State as well as California. The teachers engaged the students and their grandparents in meaningful lessons. Exploring the Jewish values of *Shalom Bayit* (a peaceful home) and *Hakarat Tov* (gratitude), many heartwarming reflections were shared.

It’s already time to start thinking about the next school year 5782-5783. As we begin our planning for next year’s Chai and Hebrew school and EDK, we want to hear from you! Our goal is to return to more in person learning and much needs to be done, teachers, times. Please reach out to [education@emeth.net](mailto:education@emeth.net).

## MEMBER NEWS



Mazal Tov to **Shari and John Andreadis** on the birth of their first grandchild, Avery Rayne (Abundance of Light), daughter of Sara and Greg Brodick on 3/16/22!

Mazal tov to **Scott Bassett and Debbie Zajac** on the birth of his first grandchild, Micah Andrew Cevallos, son of Katie and Pete. Micah was born on November 6.

**Miriam Shem-Tov and Reese Levine** had a wonderful time in San Jose’s Children’s Musical Theater production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* in February, and were thrilled to have Rabbi Dantowitz come to see the show!



## MEMBER VOICES: MARIE ESCOBAR

### SHARING OURSELVES WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD

What are our opportunities to create in our society a deeper bond of peoples with Judaism?

Rabbi Dantowitz had us meet with Sally Priesand the first female Rabbi, and she relayed a quite charming story from when she was a little girl and her father had requested her mom prepare a Passover dinner for an entire group of church nuns. And just recently, Rabbi Israel invited a member of the Interfaith community and her congregants to come study together King David's psalms!

Just a few weeks ago, I was invited by some local Methodists to see the TV program "The Chosen." I had never seen it, and barely heard of it. The comments as we were watching the episodes together helped me see that there is the need for more information to those outside of Judaism. The people attending had lots of questions, such as: "What were or are the beliefs about a coming Messiah? What does it mean to be involved in Jewish study? Are women allowed to also study as much? Can Rabbis be married? Why exactly do Jews create the tents?"

On the third session, a bread was brought out with the announcement, "Here is CHallah!" It was pronounced as the "cha" in "cha,cha,cha dancing." I courteously corrected with the proper guttural sound, "challah" with a smile.

The prayers that are recited in the series and the themes are so similar to all practicing Judaism. The scenes even though that it was filmed in Utah provided a lively discussion of all of our trips to Israel and particularly Jerusalem, especially the Old City.

Friends, let us not miss an opportunity to pro-actively creating the world of care, respect and cooperation by letting and allowing others to have a deeper understanding of Judaism, by having an ideal to truly share... kinda reminding me of the song in "The King and I", "Getting to know you".

*Getting to know you, getting to know all about you! Getting to like you, getting to hope you like me!*

### MARIE'S PICKS:

#### PJ Library

Rabbi Dantowitz had recommended this endearing monthly book club that sends books for children on a monthly basis. These lively stories instill Jewish values and culture in a very creative way into a child's heart and mind. After being a member of PJ Library and receiving several books, my own grandson asked me, "Grandma Marie how is it that such a small boy is able to beat giants?" And we talk about being close to G-d, and having a good heart to do what is the best for the people and to think with our minds and not just "punches" only!! This is a positive recipe to accomplish impossible things!

PJ Library, a non-profit organization, brought to families through the generosity of local Jewish community in partnership with local philanthropists and the Harold Grinspoon Foundation (HGF), sends out free Jewish children's books and music to families "with Judaism as part of their lives,"

[pjlibrary.org](http://pjlibrary.org)  
[info@pjlibrary.org](mailto:info@pjlibrary.org)



#### Shalom Sesame

Sesame Street has created productions that support Shabbat. My son every Friday afternoon just connects the various videos to surround sound and we hear Grover's friendly voice. It also is very helpful when the kids bring their friends to the house, because Sesame Street brings familiarity to kids.

Some of our favorites, available on Youtube and DVD:

**[Shalom Sesame: Shabbat Shalom, Grover!](#)**  
**[Shalom Sesame: The Missing Menorah](#)**

It is very delightful to have these Sesame Street songs in the background, and the most important thing is that it truly endears children to Shabbat!



*Thank you to Marie! If you are interested in sharing your thoughts in the next newsletter, please contact [communication@emeth.net](mailto:communication@emeth.net).*



## RECENT EVENTS

### SISTERHOOD'S CHANUKAH BRUNCH

It was wonderful to have Sisterhood's Chanukah Brunch (Dec 5) back in person! Twenty-one women attended the event which was hosted by Marilyn Freund and Patty Baggese. The Social Hall had been transformed into blue and white Chanukah celebration splendor, and treats ranged from mini bagels and schmears to kugels and fresh fruit to sufganyot for dessert. Guests signed up for Emeth's Rachamim Monthly Support Program and donated to Second Harvest Food Bank. One guest gave Keurigs coffee makers to Emeth for future events!

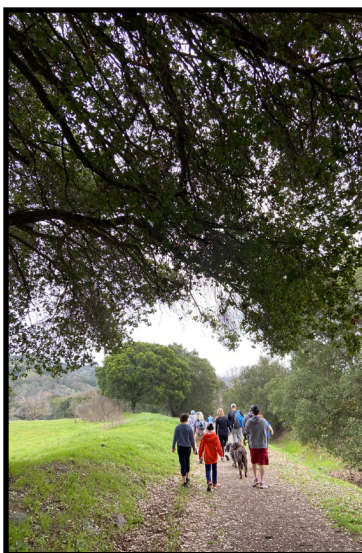


*Photos by Joyce Maskel*



### TU BISHVAT HIKE

On Sunday, January 31st, members of the congregation gathered for an intergenerational hike at Coyote Creek to celebrate Tu B'Shvat together. It was a beautiful place to be outside together and a perfect way to celebrate the "birthday of the trees" and raise awareness of our local environment.





# TIKKUN OLAM UPDATES

*Jill Irwin*

In conjunction with the Interfaith CommUNITY of South County (ICSC), Congregation Emeth provides Shabbat dinners to the residents of the Morgan Hill Safe Park facility throughout the months of January and May. More information about the safe parking program can be found in Susan Meyer's [March 23rd article in the Morgan Hill Times](#). Our Shabbat chefs work in teams to provide Friday night dinner to the current Safe Park residents. We're grateful to our January Shabbat chefs: the **Henig, Latin, Shem-Tov, Gallop, Brisbin, Noodleman, and Gil** families. We're working now on the May schedule and already have some of the dates covered by wonderful volunteers. Please contact **Jill Irwin** if you'd like to partner with an experienced volunteer to provide a portion of the dinner or if you would like more information about this or other Tikkun Olam programs.



**Jill Irwin**  
and her granddaughter

## ADULT ED HIGHLIGHTS

*Susan Braun*

We've had a wonderful set of recent adult education programs! Including:

- **Scouts, Trailblazers, Pathfinders, Explorers:** After the honor of hosting America's first female Rabbi, Sally J. Priesand, in early October, we studied the impactful lives of significant women who held quasi-rabbinic status in their communities throughout history from the 1500's to modern times.
- **The Jewish Studio Process, Led by Rabbi Margie Jacobs:** We explored, created and played through conversation with each other and a facilitated text study, intuitive use of art materials, and a process of inquiry through writing.
- **Experience Leonard Cohen:** Thanks to Joyce Maskell we were able to take our first field trip in over two years to the Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco to experience the music, poetry and impact of the late poet, singer, songwriter, and author Leonard Cohen through the eyes of three contemporary artists: George Fok (immersive audio-video collage), Judy Chicago (paintings on porcelain), and Candice Breitz (larger than life video tribute.)
- **Book of Psalms:** Advent Lutheran Church and Congregation Emeth studied the Book of Psalms together. The Book of Psalms is a collection of 150 poetic prayers in the Bible representing complaint, thanksgiving, praise, ethical rebuke to name a few. Rabbi Debbie Israel served as our guide through the history and "purpose" of psalms so that we could understand and appreciate their words.
- **Eiluv'Eilu, These and Those: Exploring Polarization In A Time of Division,** Led by Rabbi Schmiekin and Rabbi Dantowitz: Congregation Emeth partnered with One America Movement for this Adult Ed series on Polarization, focusing on Jewish texts teachings on division.



**Susan Braun**



**A group visited the Contemporary Jewish Museum's Leonard Cohen exhibit in December.**





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



## Coming soon....Passover!

After two years of pandemic Seders, this year we can join together to celebrate Passover in person! We are planning to hold a 2nd night Seder on Saturday, April 16th at 6:00 PM. Please contact Rabbi Dantowitz to let her know if you're interested!

And on Wednesday, April 20th at 6:00 PM, **Jackie Stevens** and **Wendy Thowdis** are excited to lead a Women's Seder in person this year at Wendy's home in Morgan Hill. Please RSVP to Wendy Thowdis for this special evening which will include a potluck dinner.

**Stay tuned for more  
information on  
Emeth's Annual Meeting  
and some fun summer  
fundraising opportunities**

## Save the date! Shabbat in the Redwoods, Aug 13th

Join us for the wonderful tradition of Shabbat Morning Services in the Redwood Grove at Mt. Madonna. Services will begin at 10:30am on August 13th. Watch for more information in HaMadrich.



Also, if you are interested, please join a group of members for camping on Friday, August 12th in the Valley View 3 Campground - a quiet section of Mt. Madonna with larger campsites. **Wendy Thowdis** has reserved #315 & 316 and invites others to reserve campsites around this area. Shabbat rituals & pot luck dinner begins at 6:00 pm at campsite #315.

Reserve a campsite online at [gooutsideandplay.org](https://gooutsideandplay.org)