

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

LEARNING ABOUT JEWISH REFUGEES IN SHANGHAI

An important piece of history shared with the community



Event organizer Joyce Maskell shared her family's story and how she connected with Holocaust Museum LA. Photos by Elizabeth Mandel.

On February 5th, Emeth hosted an event for the community to learn about the largely unknown story of the more than 20,000 stateless Jewish refugees that fled Nazi occupied Austria, Germany and Poland for Shanghai, China between 1933 and 1941. Over 150 people attended the sold-out event, which was organized by Emeth's Adult Education committee.

The event featured the curators of Holocaust Museum LA's recent exhibition, "Hidden History: Recounting the Shanghai Jewish Story," **Jordanna Gessler**, Vice President of Education and Exhibits, and **Christie Jovanovic**, Curator of Collections. Attendees were also able to meet Bay Area residents with connections to this piece of history, including 95-year old Shanghai survivor **Renee Maimann Good**. Special guest speaker former **Congresswoman Jackie Speier** told the audience about how she recently discovered that her grandfather, German-born Theodor Speier, had been imprisoned briefly in Nazi Germany's Buchenwald concentration camp, and that he and his son Manfred had sheltered as refugees in Shanghai during the Holocaust.

After the presentations and Q&A, participants were treated to a wonderful reception in the social hall featuring delicious baked goods prepared by members of Emeth's sisterhood and others.

A big thank you to everyone who helped to make this event such a success, and especially to **Joyce Maskell** for envisioning the program and putting so much effort into arranging for our amazing speakers and all the details of the event. Jordanna Gessler, noted after the event in a thank you email that, "I haven't stopped talking about what a wonderful, meaningful, inspiring event it was! The synagogue congregation is warm, giving, and represent the true meaning of community."

The recording of the event will be available on the emeth.net web site.



Back row: Rabbi Faith Joy Dantowitz, Joyce Maskell, LA Holocaust Museum Curators Jordanna Gessler & Christie Jovanovic, Susan Braun. Front row: Former Congresswoman Jackie Speier, Shanghai survivor Renee Maimann Good



Curators from Holocaust Museum LA presented about the Jewish History of Shanghai



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REMEMBERING KAREN HARRIS

Elizabeth Mandel

Karen Harris, a founding member of Congregation Emeth and our first treasurer, passed away on February 9th.

Although confined for over 20 years to a wheelchair and a small, shared space in a skilled nursing facility, Karen was an inspiration to all who knew her. She exuded intelligence, determination, and warmth.

Karen was a role model for all of us. While her physical condition left her unable to read and with limited mobility, Karen used every resource at her disposal to make her life as fulfilling as possible. This included listening to the news and pushing her body to take advantage of limited occupational and physical therapy opportunities. She collected and cared deeply for friends: (Visitors to other residents would meet Karen, be drawn to her, and become her friend, continuing to visit her for years.) Karen practiced gratitude daily, celebrating small kindnesses that came her way as well as her friends and their successes.

Karen was an ardent feminist. Prior to her health problems, she had her own accounting business, and she told stories of the obstacles she encountered as a woman in the 70's getting a mortgage and a credit card. She could talk politics forever! One of the few disappointments she expressed was not being able to participate in the recent Women's Marches.

Karen was proud of her Judaism. She loved her family dearly and leaves behind a son Daniel and granddaughters Hannah and Samantha. She was a devoted older sister to brother Gary and sister Arlene. She will be missed by all who were blessed with her friendship.



Karen Harris z"l

Yahrzeit Updates

Up until now we have been notifying members of their yahrzeits based on the Hebrew calendar. Many congregants have preferred to light a candle and remember those who have died based on the English date.

If you would prefer getting notification based on the English date and have the Rabbi read the names at the Shabbat nearest the English date, please let us know by writing to Yahrzeit@emeth.net.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Peter Mandel, President



Peter Mandel

Occasionally, I'll just close my eyes and consider "How are things going?" I know, that's a pretty general question. What things am I considering? And that, in itself, poses a problem. Because my assessment depends on whether I am zooming in or zooming out. (No, I'm not talking about the videoconferencing app.) If I zoom out and think about the world's challenges, it's very easy to get overwhelmed.

If I zoom out, I am easily overwhelmed: I had thought that the idea of a country initiating a war of conquest a concept left in history. Yet Russia is attempting exactly that.

I also see the ongoing impact of climate change without the necessary commitment across the world to take effective action. I see wildfires across the country to an extent previously unknown in our lifetimes, and have even had to evacuate my home not long ago due to an approaching wildfire.

I see that we have just lived through a pandemic that caused over one million deaths in our country alone, with deep division over how to respond to the crisis. And now, in this past week, I've seen earthquakes that have killed over 40,000 people.

It is so easy to get disheartened when I zoom out. However, then I zoom in....

I see that our state has taken concrete steps to address climate change, including widespread adoption of renewable fuel technologies, and Santa Clara county has the highest share of zero emission vehicles in the state.

Our county was the first in the nation to take aggressive steps in dealing with Covid and we have had one of the lowest Covid death rates of any large county in the country.

Our economy is still healthy, and the state of California is poised to be the fourth largest economy in the world when compared to all other countries. And if I zoom in further, I seen the quality of life in the South Valley continue to improve year after year with a great Morgan Hill community center, recreation center, aquatic center, soccer center, a local playhouse, a thriving and growing downtown, and solid educational opportunities for our kids.

Finally—if I zoom in one final time—I feel the warm and loving embrace of my personal family that is thriving and happy. And, I feel the love of my Congregation Emeth family: The emotional support of a wonderful Jewish community with inspiring religious services, engaging holiday activities in which to participate, wonderful educational opportunities such as the recent Shanghai Port of Refuge event, and a beautiful physical home, our synagogue, a blessing for a small yet thriving congregation.

So, when it's so easy to be overwhelmed with the world's challenges when my view is zoomed out, I just need to remember to zoom in to realize how much better the world really is and appreciate all my blessings. When I engage with the Congregation Emeth family, enjoy the activities, share time together at services, all these things give me energy and joy. I invite you all to do the same.

February 2023

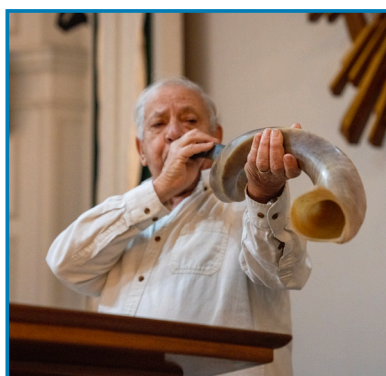
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Interfaith MLK Day Event

On January 15th, many congregation members joined the Interfaith COMMUNITY of South County for a special event honoring the life and vision of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Special thanks to St. Mary's for hosting, the inspiring speakers, and the fabulous choir, which featured some Emeth voices.



Photos by Richard Coencas



Rabbi's Message

Rabbi Faith Joy Dantowitz

Dear Congregants,

One of the great joys I have found living in Northern California is to enjoy God's creation. On the same day, it is possible to walk along the ocean cliffs and walk through a Redwood forest. Growing up and having lived most of my life in New Jersey, a beach day meant endless sand, sun, water and perhaps some rocks to climb. Here in NorCal, I am amazed each time I see the dramatic cliffs by the ocean and soak up views along Rte 1 even if I'm not walking out to the water. As well, the Redwood trees' majestic stature humble me and pierce my soul with their beauty. As the Psalmist says:

Mah gadlu ma'asecha Yah m'od amku machsh'votecha

How majestic are your works Adonai, how subtle your designs. [Psalm 92]

Here at Congregation Emeth, I find joy in God's human creations—the unique individuals who comprise our congregation. Each brings their own beauty to our community. The heart-stirring awe I find in nature is complemented by the uplifting caring of our *Kehila Kedosha*—our holy community. Through compassion, commitment, love and dedication to our community, Congregation Emeth brings more beauty into the world.

When we join together in community, we bring more holiness into our lives and the world. Your presence is a gift to all of us. Please join us and invite friends and friends-to-be to join us in amplifying the beauty of our congregation and the world. In this newsletter you'll read about some of our recent gatherings and upcoming events. Join us. Get involved. Spread the beauty of our holy community.



Rabbi Faith Joy Dantowitz



Photo by Rabbi Faith Joy Dantowitz

Fall Events

In October, we gathered together in our sukkah to celebrate Sukkot. The religious school students made their own graham cracker sukkahs and on October 14th we held a "Noodles at Night: Shabbat Dinner and Services" event.



On October 2nd, a group gathered at the Live Oak entrance of Anderson County Park for a *Tashlich* service along the river.



On October 16th, for the first time in three years we were able to celebrate Simchat Torah in person by dancing with the Torahs, unrolling one and reading from the end and beginning. Cantor Richard Schwartz, joined us for an evening of music and dancing.



MEMBER NEWS

We are delighted to welcome new families to Emeth -- Ali and Evan Stephens and Uma; Barb and Joel Wolfson and Lia; Bonnie Waldman and Nick Gumas and Lila Waldman; Traci and Alex Yunerman and Ella and Aiden; and Jessy Irwin and Ari Rubinstein.



Barb Satink Wolfson, Lia Wolfson, & Joel Wolfson



Ali and Evan Stephens with four-year-old Uma



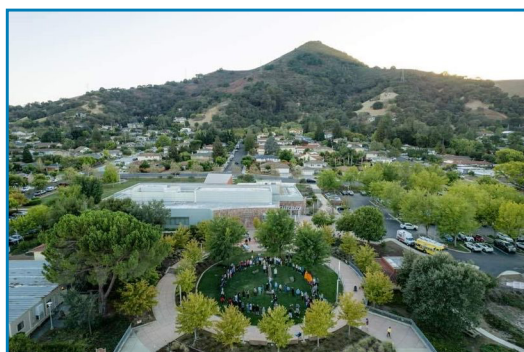
Bonnie Waldman and Nick Gumas and Lila Waldman



Traci, Alex, Ella, & Aiden Yunerman

Morgan Hill Peace Monument

Members of Congregation Emeth participated in the unveiling of the Peace Monument, by sculptor David Middlebrook, on International World Peace Day, September 21. This was a special day of celebration encouraging unity, friendship and hope for a better world among all people. The monument is located in the Morgan Hill Civic Center Plaza.

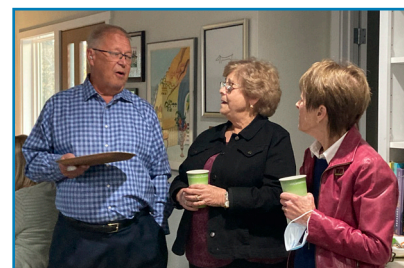


Annual Progressive Dinner

Patty Baggese

On October 29th, the annual Progressive Dinner was held. We started at Marcia Fishman's home for some delectable appetizers. We then walked to Ronnie Wilner and Nancy Fishman's home and enjoyed even more appetizers. We then drove to Susan Meyers and Michael Oshan's home for a wonderful selection of soups and salads. Following that course, we drove to Denise Weyl's home where we enjoyed several desserts and drinks. It was an evening of delicious food and a lot of visiting, catching up and reminiscing.

We are looking forward to another Progressive Dinner this year and hopefully it will take place in the summer/fall so we can enjoy the outside.



Progressive Dinner photos by Elizabeth Mandel

MORGAN HILL STANDS UNITED AGAINST HATE

Jill Irwin

It all started with **Susan Meyers** and **Michael Oshan's** wedding anniversary celebration in San Rafael, where Susan spotted a sign. The sign read, "San Rafael Stands United Against Hate" and she wondered if we could do that for Morgan Hill. It was decided to bring it to the city council, as we wanted their approval before putting up signs. **Stewart Gill** had a connection with Morgan Hill's City Council, who suggested that the Library, Culture, and Arts Commission (LCAC) would be best to help us. What happened next was just unbelievable!

During a meeting with LCAC, **Jill Irwin** decided to search the internet for "United Against Hate." Not only was there a website devoted to this campaign, they already had a boiler plate poster! All we had to do was ask them to make one for Morgan Hill. But wait, there's more. It turns out that there is an official United Against Hate week in November! LCAC and Emeth's Tikkun Olam members joined forces to get posters AND hold a special event to kick off the week! As you can see by the picture, the attendance was super!



Posters are proudly displayed at various merchants all around Morgan Hill. Stewart and Jill continue to work with LCAC to make this a year-long event, not just one week in November. We plan to get an activity at the library in the next few months to focus on the younger generations, hoping to stop the hate that may have been perpetuated through the older generations.

We are so excited by the response that all started with one simple question: can we get posters for Morgan Hill, too? Let's all keep asking the "what if" questions that make a big difference in our world.



Jill Irwin and Stewart Gill led the way for the Morgan Hill United Against Hate poster campaign, and many Emeth members participated in the kickoff event.

BECOME A TIKKUN OLAM CHAVER (FRIEND)

Our Tikkun Olam, "Repair the World", Committee, focuses on opportunities for our Congregation to give back to our community. We do this through specific actions such as providing meals to the Safe Park program and supplying personal hygiene bags for those who are unhoused. We are looking for friends to assist us in a new way.

The Tikkun Olam Chaver might be called upon to provide support and advice for a variety of programs, for example:

- Giving suggestions related to a specific proposed activity, or suggesting a new program, project, or need in our community;
- Making a few (4-6) phone calls to Emeth members encouraging them to attend an event or participate in an upcoming venture;
- Participate with implementing a specific project.

Tikkun Olam Chaver members will receive Tikkun Olam meeting minutes and will be welcome, but not required, to attend meetings.

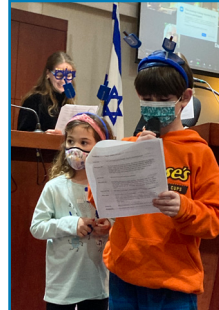
Can we count on your support as we launch this new opportunity to serve your Jewish community? You'll just be adding your name to a list of people we can call as we need support or assistance! If you're interested, please contact **Jill Irwin** or **Susan Meyers** at

tikkunolam@emeth.net

CELEBRATING CHANUKAH

Emeth members and guests brought lots of light to the season with a variety of Chanukah celebrations. On December 11th, Emeth Sisterhood held a High Tea Chanukah Brunch. Many attendees dressed the part with fancy hats and gloves! On Friday, December 16th, we held a delicious latke competition as part of our evening's activities and were delighted to award Marby Lee as the Latke Cook-Off winner! Thank you to everyone who helped with Shabbat dinner on 12/16 including Rita Fisher, Marcia Fishman, Marilyn Freund, Brigit Strongin, Bonnie Waldman, Nick Gumas, and Joel Levine. On December 21st, we held a Hanukkiah lighting with hot chocolate, donut treats and singing outside in front of Congregation Emeth. We were joined by newly elected Mayor Mark Turner and Police Chief Shane Palsgrove.

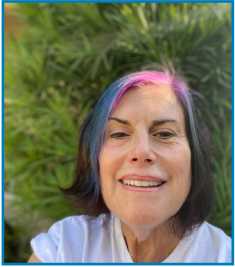
Sisterhood Chanukah photos by Shari Andreadis. Menorah lighting photos by Rick Coencas. Chanukkah play and dinner photos by Elizabeth Mandel.



Congratulations to the Latke Cook-Off winner, Marby Lee.

ADULT ED HIGHLIGHTS

Susan Braun



Susan Braun

We wrapped up last year's programming with a wonderfully creative class. In November, **Cantor Richard Schwartz** taught a class on *Embracing Judaism as a Creative Enterprise*. Participants online and in person explored Jewish teachings on creativity. Whether one views it as a religion, heritage, culture, family, nation, people, spiritual path, or civilization, Judaism was- and is- a created phenomenon. Its laws, practices, stories, customs, and rituals were conceived in the human imagination and entered into the world through creative action.

And we have been off to a busy start in 2023! **Bonnie Fishman**, one of our members who is a classically trained Cordon Bleu Chef, hosted the first of a series of Holiday Cooking Classes in her home. Cooking demonstrations of three recipes from start to finish, cooking tips, and sampling were a part of the class. We look forward to hosting more cooking classes in the future!

Special thanks to all of the Adult Education Committee members, volunteers and Sisterhood who worked so hard to make the February 5th, *Shanghai: Holocaust Port of Refuge* event possible. The was spectacular and inspiring, and the Sanctuary was filled to capacity!

Coming up on March 14 and 21, **Rabbi Dantowitz** will hold a discussion exploring history and current events following her trip to Israel in February.



Bonnie Fishman's cooking class. Photos by Joyce Maskell

EMETH MAH JONGG TOURNAMENT PROCEEDS SUPPORT EMETH AND COMMUNITY

Susan Meyers

This Fall, our Emeth Mah Jongg Mavins hosted 40 players for our 10th tournament. Our reputation for a classy, fun, well run tournament brought players from as far as Bakersfield, San Luis Obispo, Fresno, Carmel and Santa Cruz! The players enjoy our home-made breakfast and lunch meals served in our beautifully decorated social hall. They pay \$45 for the day and purchase lottery tickets for an assembly of special Mah Jongg related prizes. Every year we divide our proceeds; 2/3 to Emeth and 1/3 to women in our local community.

This year we contributed \$1,200 to our Emeth religious school, and \$500.00 for Emeth kitchen items. Learning that women with children are in need of tents and hygiene products, the remaining \$500 made it possible for us to purchase 8 tents for women and children and special hygiene packets for women in our community.

The tournament meets multiple objectives. First, our group of wonderful women -- **Patty Baggese, Virginia Beck, Marcia Fishman, Nancy Fishman, Marilyn Freund, Cathy Gill, Janet Hopson, Jill Irwin, Susan Meyers, and Cheryl Thompson** -- enjoy the process of planning and implementing the tournament together. Second, we appreciate this opportunity to welcome our guest players. Our Emeth warm hospitality has resulted in a wonderful, positive reputation for our Congregation. And finally, the tournament offers us an avenue for contributing to the needs of our congregation and our local community.



Photos from a previous years' tournament by Elizabeth Mandel



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



Upcoming Holidays and Events

Spring is filled with joyous holidays and fun events. We hope you'll join us!

**CELEBRATE
PURIM**

PURIM SHABBAT SERVICE & SPIEL
FRIDAY, MARCH 10 @ 7:00 PM

ROLL IN THE DOUGH GAME NIGHT
SATURDAY, MARCH 11
7:15 PM HAVDALAH, 7:30-9:30 PM

PURIM BOWLING PARTY
KIDS AND ADULTS
SUNDAY, MARCH 12 @ 2:00 PM

 CONGREGATION
EMETH

Save the dates: Passover Events coming in April

**2nd Night
Intergenerational Seder**
Thursday, April 6th
6:00-8:30 pm
Join your Congregation Emeth
family for a wonderful Passover
Seder at the temple led by Rabbi
Faith Joy Dantowitz.
Catered meal.

Women's Seder
Tuesday, April 11th
6:00-8:30 pm
Led by Wendy Thowdis
and Jackie Stevens with
Rabbi Faith Joy Dantowitz.
Potluck dinner.

*Check the upcoming HaMadrach
emails for more information.*

