

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

EMETH LOVES THEATER

Whether on stage, behind the scenes, or in the audience, Emeth members have been enjoying a wonderful season of theater!

Emeth member **Reese Levine** had his Broadway debut when the 2024 revival of the musical *The Who's Tommy* opened on Broadway in March! Reese shares the role of the 10-year-old version of the title character. Mazel Tov to Reese and his whole family on this amazing accomplishment!

Emeth members also gathered to attend various shows together over the past few months. On April 6th, a group gathered to see *On Golden Pond* at the Morgan Hill Community Playhouse, meeting for dinner before the show at Siam Thai. There were lots of Emeth connections to this show -- **Miriam Shem-Tov** played the role of Billy Jr, **Peter Mandel** and **Emily Shem-Tov** were the producers, **Marianne Snook** was the costume designer, and **Clara Shem-Tov** was the lighting designer. You may have also caught the cast of the show rehearsing in the Emeth social hall in the months leading up to the opening as well.

On February 10th, a group travelled to Mountain View to experience Hershey Felder as *George Gershwin Alone*. This one-man show illuminated the life and music of the legendary tunesmith whose work shaped a distinctly American style of music. On February 25, a group went to see *I Loved Jew, I Loved Jew not*, at Congregation Shir Hadash, which featured gripping stories of antisemitism as well as uplifting tales of allies of the Jewish people.

In November, a group gathered for SVCT's *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, produced by **Elizabeth Mandel** and featuring amazing projections by **Peter Mandel**.

Previous theater outings had included *The Outsider* and *Becky's New Car* at Limelight by SVCT.



Sarah, Josh, and Reese Levine after the premiere of *The Who's Tommy* on Broadway



A scene featuring Reese as ten-year-old Tommy



Emeth members with Miriam Shem-Tov, who played Billy Jr. in SVCT's production of *On Golden Pond*



With the success of these outings, we hope to plan many others in the months to come. Keep an eye out for notices or please reach out if you have shows you'd like to suggest a group outing for!

Emeth members at *George Gershwin Alone* at the Mt. View Center for the Performing Arts



Emeth members with at SVCT's production of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* in November with the lead actor

Congregation Emeth

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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.

Congregation Emeth

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*Non-Voting Member

SHABBAT HOSTS & TORAH READERS NEEDED

Volunteers are needed to host upcoming Shabbat services. Hosts provide challahs and dessert, set up for the Oneg Shabbat reception, pour juice and/or wine, and help to clean up.

Being a Shabbat host is a great way to honor a loved one on a special birthday, yahrzeit, or anniversary!

Available dates are:

Saturday, May 18
Saturday, June 8
Friday, August 23
Friday, September 13
Friday, September 20



Please email admin@emeth.net if you would like to volunteer for one or more of the dates. Thank you!!

Chanting Torah is a wonderful part of our Shabbat morning services. Whether you chanted last month or many years ago, we're happy to help you with your *aliyah*.

Or maybe you'd like to begin chanting Torah?

Each *aliyah* is 3 (often short) verses. Rabbi Dantowitz is happy to provide an audio file, a copy of the Torah portion, a photo of the portion in the scroll, and personal help as needed. Please honor us, your congregation, by accepting the honor of chanting Torah on a Shabbat morning.

Please contact Rabbi Dantowitz to let her know when you'd like to chant Torah.

Here are the upcoming dates:
Saturday, May 18
Saturday, June 8
Saturday, July 20
Saturday, August 17
Saturday, October 12 (Yom Kippur)
Saturday, November 23
Saturday, December 21



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Karen Marblestone Perry



Karen Marblestone Perry

As I reflect on the past nine months and our summer listening tour, I am grateful for the opportunity to hear from so many of you about your hopes for our Emeth community. Your input has been so helpful as we work to develop a comprehensive five-year strategic plan that will build on our strengths and guide us to an even stronger future.

What I hear loud and clear is a desire for more social interaction and engagement opportunities. You want ways to connect with fellow members, build meaningful relationships, and strengthen the bonds within our community and outside our

congregation walls. I'm so encouraged that this input has already gotten some exciting new groups and programs off the ground:

- An active theatre group attending fun productions such as the Gershwin show and *On Golden Pond*
- A walking/hiking group exploring the beautiful trails around us
- The creation of a new *Havurah* program
- Wine tasting events to explore new neighboring wineries
- Expanded holiday celebrations including live music shabbats, Chanukah Latke Contest, second annual Purim Bowling event, the Women's Seder, and our approaching Community Passover Seder
- Sports groups to join friends in an upcoming Giants game and more
- And even more programming initiatives still in the works!

These are just the initial steps as we build out the full five-year strategic plan. The plan will establish a roadmap for achieving our shared goals around spiritual growth, learning opportunities, social programming, fundraising, and more.

But crafting the plan is just the beginning—we need your continued involvement and participation to truly bring it to life. Our congregation only thrives when we all take an active role and contribute our energy and talents to the community. I invite you to engage and let your voice be heard as we collaboratively shape our future in the weeks and months ahead. Together, we can create experiences that uplift us all spiritually, intellectually, socially, and communally. I'm excited for all that lies ahead.

Musician Lior Ben-Hur delights us at Shabbat Services -- set to return May 10

We had an amazing musical Shabbat with guest Lior Ben-Hur on March 8th, followed by a lovely oneg filled with members and guests. Special thanks to Peter Mandel, Kathy Coencas, Wendy Thowdis, and Denise Weyl who joined in an "instant choir" that evening and learned a couple of songs to help lead in the service, and to Rick Coencas for helping out behind the scenes.

We're delighted to have Lior back with us for another event and hope you'll join us on May 10th as we honor our religious school teachers and students. We hope to see you there!



April 2024

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Rabbi's Message

Rabbi Faith Joy Dantowitz

Dear Congregants,

Anticipation. Since October 7th I wondered when I would be able to return to Israel. After a month, I learned from colleagues in Israel that they were grateful for visitors. It is something we can do to show support. Bearing witness. *Bikur Holim* – visiting the sick. *Nihum Avelim* – comforting the mourner.

When physically able, the ability to show up in person speaks volumes. The power of presence was one of the most important aspects of my visit to Israel at the end of January/beginning of Friday on a Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) Solidarity mission with 35 Reform Rabbis. Each hug; each hello; each thank you; was a moment of support and connection. My week in Israel was an extended *shiva* call to a traumatized and transformed country. A sweet highlight was meeting Sarah Langerman who grew up at Congregation Emeth and made aliyah a few years ago. She lives in Jerusalem and works for MASA.

I witnessed the magnificent resilience of Israelis. Everyone is involved in supporting others. As Reform Rabbis, it was especially meaningful to offer our support to our Israeli colleagues, spiritual frontline providers. Rabbi Yael Vurgan is the rabbi of ten communities in the Gaza Envelope which suffered unspeakable horrors, murders, sexual violence and kidnapping.

Survivors from one of the Kibbutz Nahal Oz spoke with us at their temporary home of Kibbutz Mishmar HaEmek. My heart was in my throat as Naomi spoke about her family's experience as terrorists raided her kibbutz. They shot at their front door which jammed the lock—perhaps saving their lives. While hiding in their safe room they emptied their kids' toy box, since they could not use an actual bathroom. She is not sure if she will ever feel comfortable going back home.

My colleagues and I bore witness to the pain of the hostage families. I bore witness to friends with children serving in the IDF in Gaza. We listened to the pain of Israeli society—not knowing when this War will end—what is victory—how to ensure safety for Israelis and how to end the pain of War for thousands under Hamas' control in Gaza.



**Rabbi Faith Joy Dantowitz
overlooking the city of Jerusalem**



**Rabbi Dantowitz with
Sarah Langerman**



**Rabbi Dantowitz with the delegation of CCAR rabbis and members of
MARAM (the Council of the Reform Rabbis in Israel)**

Rabbi Gilad Kariv, the first Reform Rabbi to be a Member of the Knesset spoke with us and emphasized that the situation is much bigger than Hamas-existential threat (the Iranian alliance). We saw in April with Iran's missile attack, that the support of allies was critical for Israel's safety. He shared that Israeli leaders must be brave enough and strong enough to admit they can not do this by themselves. He pushed back against the false stories from Prime Minister Benjamin "Bibi" Netanyahu and others who say this is a binary situation: Hamas or Israelis. (cont)

RABBI LETTER, CONT.

(cont. from page 4)

Rabbi Kariv shared that while we know the huge challenges of a corrupt Palestinian Authority, “we are not trying to create a heaven – we are asking us what can be done down here on earth. None of the Western governments or other Arabic regimes are going to do the work of rebuilding Gaza.”

There is so much pain.

Upon returning home from Israel, I found our community faced with Ceasefire resolution proposals in both Morgan Hill and Gilroy City Councils. When I shared this news with my friends in Israel they were perplexed and asked: do we have resolutions about every country in the world? Are we experts on Middle East peace—will a resolution change what is happening there—no—but I am seeing how the process caused more pain in our community. Many Emeth members were at these painful meetings. It is not an overnight solution, but I’m grateful that Rabbi Debbie Israel, Imam Ilyas Anwar, and I are working together with our Interfaith colleagues on healing. City Council members responded they are eager to be part of the healing too.

This poem, **From the place where we are right**, by Israeli poet Yehuda Amichai urges up to open our hearts to one another.

*From the place where we are right
Flowers will never grow
In the spring.*

*The place where we are right
Is hard and trampled
Like a yard.*

*But doubts and loves
Dig up the world
Like a mole, a plow.
And a whisper will be heard in the place
Where the ruined
House once stood.*



B'sorot tovot--May we know better times--and let us celebrate being Jewish together in community.



Share your interests in flower arrangements, menus, decorations, and more. Join us in creating wonderful memories together!
Contact **Karen Perry** at president@emeth.net if interested.

Did you know that Congregation Emeth has a scholarship fund to help with the cost of summer camp?

Interested in learning more?
Contact Melissa Pardo, Emeth Administrator,
admin@emeth.net



PURIM FUN



The annual Purim shabbat services featured costumes, a clever *Let's Make a Spiel* written and directed by **Marcia Fishman** starring our congregants, and a great Tikkun Olam sock and undies collection fulfilling the mitzvah of helping the poor. A Purim pizza dinner and homemade hamentashen added to the joy!

We also enjoyed our 2nd annual intergenerational Purim bowling event. Join us again next year for this fun new Emeth tradition!

Emeth also hosted a storytime at BookSmart where **Marilyn Freund**, **Melissa Pardo**, and **Emily Shem-Tov** read stories and Marilyn organized a variety of fun Purim crafts and treats.



EMETH LIBRARY

Did you know that Emeth has an extensive library of Jewish books that are available to borrow? Next time you're at Emeth, check out the library area!



Special thanks to **Linda Riesenberg** and **Marcia Fishman** for all the work organizing the books.

WELCOME

A big welcome to new member **Shari Geffon!**

WOMEN'S SEDER

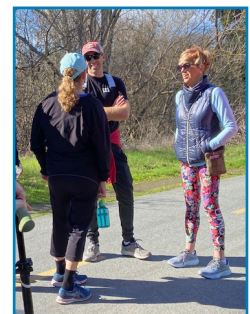
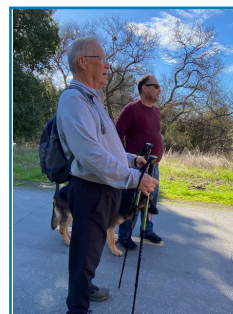


Wendy Thowdis and Jackie Stevens collaborated with Rabbi Dantowitz to plan and co-lead this year's annual Women's Seder on April 9th. It was a powerful evening with over twenty women gathering together at Wendy's home for an early celebration of the holiday, featuring delicious food, meaningful conversation, and lovely company.



Marianne Snook, Marilyn Freund, Karen Perry and Aileen Teren-Foster were among the attendees photographed at the event by Elizabeth Mandel.

TUB'SHVAT WALK



On January 28th, a group of Emeth members and their dogs met to walk along the Coyote Creek Trail. Special thanks to Adam Henig for organizing! It was an absolutely beautiful day out!

We hope you'll join us for the next hike at Mt. Madonna on April 28th.

GAN EMET – OUR JEWISH CEMETERY



For over four decades, Congregation Emeth has managed a dedicated section of the Gavilan Hills Memorial Park in Gilroy.



Secure Your Legacy: With just a few pre-need plots remaining, we are offering exclusive discounts to Emeth members. As real estate values soar, these plots serve not only as a final resting place but also as a sound investment for the future.

As part of the arrangement for Gan Emet, Congregation Emeth's Ritual Committee and Rabbi Dantowitz offer the required services when a loved one has died. The committee and rabbi also regularly check Gan Emet to confirm Jewish standards are maintained. Preselecting burial plots and purchasing them in advance are a gift one gives to one's survivors

Act Now: Don't miss this rare opportunity to secure a burial site in South County at current pricing. With limited availability, we urge you to seize this chance to preserve your legacy and honor your traditions with grace and reverence. For more information, please contact admin@emeth.net.

RABBI IN DC

Rabbi Dantowitz was honored that the American Jewish World Services (AJWS) brought her to Washington DC for a powerful advocacy gathering mid-March. Together with eight other colleagues and AJWS staff, she lobbied on Capitol Hill and met with individuals from the National Security Council.



Rabbi noted that as part of the trip, "We acknowledged in each office that our hearts continue to ache over the War in Gaza and that we are also called, as Jews, to stand up for justice everywhere."

Rabbi Dantowitz met with law makers at the US Capitol including Congressman Ro Khanna

FAITH OF OUR NEIGHBORS

The Interfaith Clergy Alliance (ICA) and Interfaith CommUNITY of South County (ICSC) have brought back the "Faith of Our Neighbors" series in a new way, exploring Lifecycles. At each event in the series, the host faith community will share how they acknowledge and celebrate birth, coming of age, marriage and death. The first session of the new series, on Buddhism, was held on Sunday, March 3, at the Dhammakaya Meditation Center Silicon Valley, and a group of Emeth members participated.



EMETH AT THE WILDFLOWER RUN



Barry Freund won first place in his age category for the 5k race and was joined to celebrate by Marilyn.



Despite the threat of rain, the 41st annual Wildflower Run on March 24 was once again a sold out event, with about 1,200 participants in six races. You might have spotted quite a few familiar Emeth faces along the route -- either as participants or volunteers. The event is organized by the Morgan Hill branch of the American Association of University Women and is one of the largest runs in the country that is still completely organized by volunteers. Close to 200 AAUW members and community volunteers pitch in to make it a success.

Elizabeth Mandel, who has held many leadership positions organizing the race over the years, spearheaded all the publicity for the event and was part of the photography team. Susan Meyers, Marby Lee, Jill Irwin, Marcia Fishman, and other Emeth members helped out in many ways. Barry Freund competed in the 5k run and achieved first place for his age group! Doug Perry ran the 2k race. Karen Perry, Debbie Zajac, Emily and Miriam Shem-Tov walked the 5k route together.



Doug Perry, Karen Perry, Debbie Zajac, Miriam Shem-Tov, and Peter Mandel gather at the finish line.

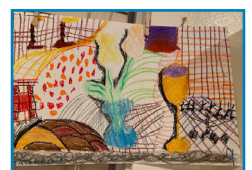


Elizabeth Mandel has been one of the forces behind the event for many years.

SCHOOL HIGHLIGHT



Cathy Gill, a professional art teacher, has been working with Emeth's religious school students on wonderful art projects for Shabbat and other holidays throughout the year.





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



Upcoming Spring Events -- Please join us!

Community Passover Seder
 With Congregation Emeth

SEDER
 Tuesday, April 23
 6:00 PM

<p>Menu</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chicken • Salad • Vegetables • Matzo ball soup • Potato kugel • Charoset 	<p>Pricing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults: \$50 (Member), \$60 (Non-Member) • Kids: \$15 (age 13 and under)
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For online payment, click here: WWW.EMETH.NET/DONATE

MT. MADONNA HIKE
 LED BY ADAM HENIG
SUNDAY, APRIL 28TH, 10AM
 MEET AT THE UPPER MILL TRAIL PARKING LOT
 HIKE FOR 1.5-2 HOURS
 FOLLOWED BY A PASSOVER FRIENDLY SNACK
 (BRING YOUR OWN)

Musical Shabbat
 with Special Guest **Lior Ben-Hur**
 Learn more and listen to him here:
<https://emeth.net/>

Friday, May 10th, 2024
 Service at 7:00pm
 RSVP to admin@emeth.net

Join us as we honor our students and teachers!

Outdoor Chitactac Services
 Saturday, April 20, 10:00am

Spring Creek Cleanup
 Sunday, April 21, 9:30am

Community Seder
 Tuesday, April 23, 6:00pm

Mt. Madonna Hike
 Sunday, April 28th, 10:00am

Emeth “Chai”light Celebration Fundraiser,
 Saturday, May 18th, 5:00pm

Emeth Annual Meeting
 Sunday, June 23

Emeth Giants Game Outing
 Sunday, August 11th, 1:00pm

**Save the date for the annual
 Shabbat in the Redwoods
 Mt. Madonna County Park
 Saturday, August 17th, 10:30am**

Extend the experience and camp out Friday, August 16
 and join together for Shabbat blessings and dinner.

Valley View Campsite #3.
 Reserve a spot near 315 here:
www.gooutsideandplay.org

