



The Newsletter of Kol HaEmek (Voice of the Valley)

P.O. Box 416, Redwood Valley, CA 95470 phone 707-468-4536

Please note: all submissions sent by the 20th of each month to Carol Rosenberg ([carolrosenberg@sbcglobal.net](mailto:carolrosenberg@sbcglobal.net))

## Coming Events

- Saturday, January 7, 2012 at 10:00  
Bar Mitzvah of Robert Joseph, son of Jennifer and Jay Joseph at Barra's Mendocino, 7051 N. State Street, Redwood Valley
- Friday, January 13, 6:30 p.m. Kabbalat Shabbat led by Robbie Gitlin, followed by vegetarian potluck supper.
- Sunday, January 15, Shul School 10:00-12:15.
- Sunday, January 15, Feeding the hungry call Dan Hibshman 462-7471 to help.
- Saturday, January 21, 7:00 p.m. Movie

*Bonjour Monsieur Shlomi.*

- Sunday, January 22, Shul School 10:00-12:15
- Sunday, January 22, 12:30 Community Meeting and Board prepared Luncheon (See flyer!)
- Friday, January 27, 6:30 p.m. Kabbalat Shabbat with R. Shoshanah, music by Joel Cohen on the cello, followed by vegetarian

## Bat Mitzvah

Sigrid White invites you to celebrate

with her family, as her daughter

Leila Achtoun

is called to the Torah

February 11, at 10:00 AM

The service will be at the

Space Theater 508 W. Perkins St.

Ukiah

Kiddish to Follow Please RSVP  
<sigrid.white@gmail.com>

## Movie of the Month Jan. 21, at 7:00

*Bonjour Monsieur Shlomi*

Shlomi is a caretaker of everyone in his family, that is, from his feeble grandfather to his sickly older brother and their disgraced father. Shlomi also cooks each family member's favorite meal to keep them on an even keel. Problem is, Shlomi's pretty much invisible to those he cares for -- until a math test at school catches the attention of Shlomi's teacher, who suspects that a unique personality lies behind that dormant facade.

## ***Opportunities for Tzedakah***

**Kol HaEmek** (Voice of the Valley) is funded by your member dues as well as your generous contributions to a **number** of funds including:

- 1) Building Fund
- 2) Religious School Fund
- 3) Scholarship Fund
- 4) General Fund
- 5) Memorial Board Fund
- 6) Tzedekah Fund
- 7) Rabbi's Discretionary Fund
- 8) The Marion and Sanford Frank Fund for feeding the hungry in Ukiah and Willits
- 9) Congregation Eshel Avraham in Beersheva, to build a bomb shelter for their nursery school.

Make out a check to KHE or you can send your own check to: Masorti Foundation for Conservative Judaism in Israel, 475 Riverside Drive, Suite 832, New York, New York 10115

Questions? Call:

**David Koppel, 485-8910**

**send checks to:**

**Kol HaEmek, P.O. Box 416, Redwood Valley, CA 95470**

## ***Portion of the Week an Holidays***

January 1, 2012 Happy Fiscal Year

January 7 - Vayechi

January 14 - Shemth

January 21 - Vaera

January 28 - Bo

## ***We Remember***

Pearl Turovitz - Tevet 14

Dori Anderson - Tevet 26

Murray Choen - Shevat 2

Nathan Zorkowitz - Shevat 3

Raymond Glickman - January

Joseph Brooks Miller - January 15

Ken Holden - January 15

Jacob Borkan - January 16

Tom Lowenstein - January 21

Rodney Sandler - January 25

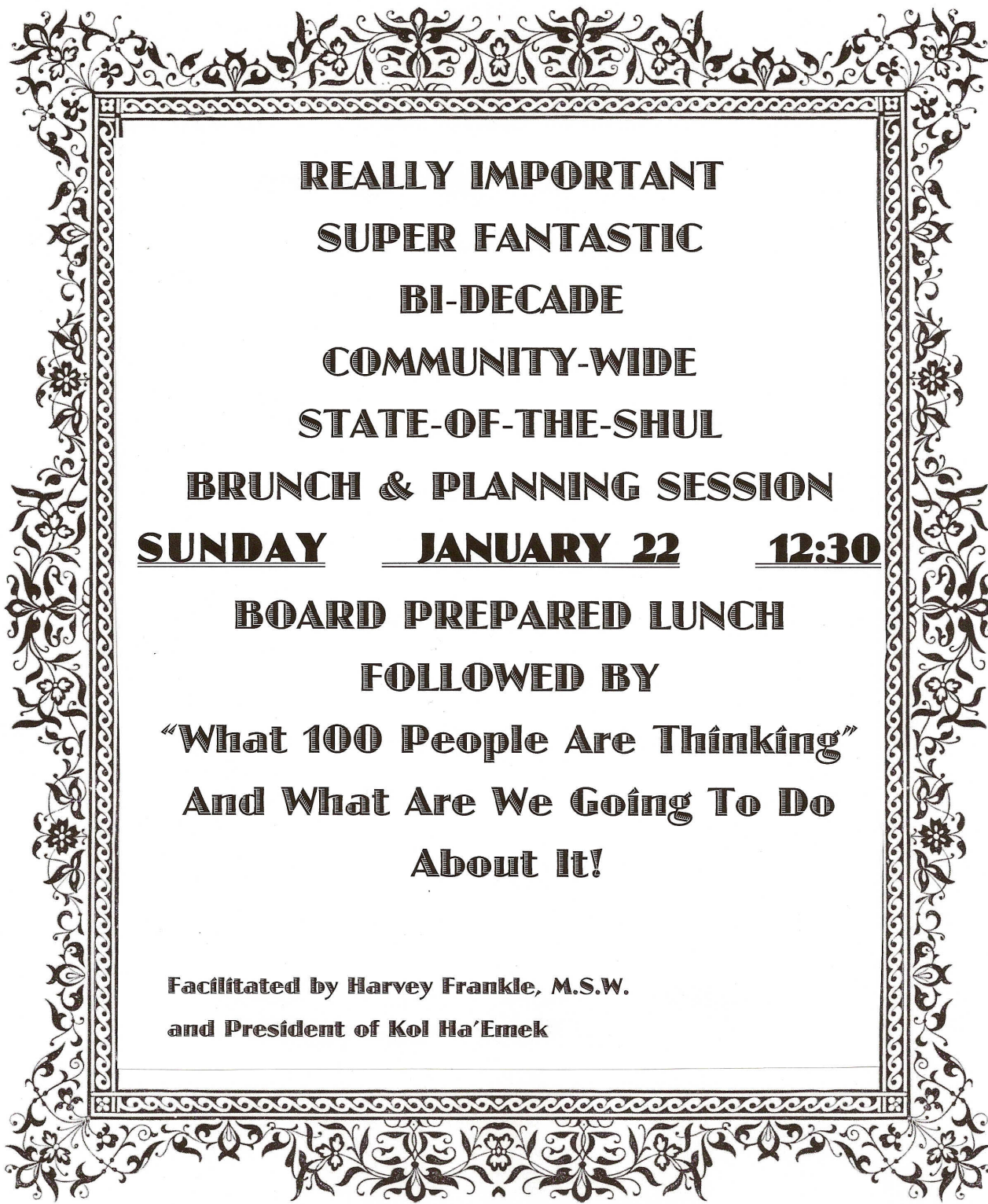
Joshua Edelman - January 30

Arnold Kerr - January 30

Dear KHE Chaverim,

To each of you who helped make our High Holiday services so wonderful this past fall, a big TODAH RABBAH! Other years, I have sent personal thank-you notes. But here we are lighting Chanukah candles this evening, and the note writing hasn't happened. So please know I really appreciate your participation, whatever form that took. I feel so blessed by the warm sense of community that comprises Kol HaEmek. Blessings to you as we light our candles of liberation and miracles.

*Shoshanah*



**REALLY IMPORTANT  
SUPER FANTASTIC  
BI-DECADE  
COMMUNITY-WIDE  
STATE-OF-THE-SHUL  
BRUNCH & PLANNING SESSION  
SUNDAY    JANUARY 22    12:30  
BOARD PREPARED LUNCH  
FOLLOWED BY  
"What 100 People Are Thinking"  
And What Are We Going To Do  
About It!**

**Facilitated by Harvey Frankle, M.S.W.  
and President of Kol Ha'Emek**

## HARVEY FRANKLE

It's late at night. I'm sitting up in bed with my headlamp on lighting up a fresh yellow pad, ready to leaf through the 30 or 40 interviews I've done so far just to give you a taste of what I've already learned, and here it is: I set aside an hour an evening between Rachel Maddow and John Stewart to conduct what - five to ten interviews before tuning in to the Daily Show, leaving enough time, of course, to do the dishes. I look down at tonight's results: three filled-out survey forms, I missed John Stewart, and I hadn't yet done the dishes! So maybe Marshall McLuhan is right: the medium **is** the message. Three people I don't know terribly well took an average of a half hour each and I enjoyed every minute of it, and I think they did too. Nothing very profound was said, minor adjustment-type things made, ie. signing up to get the Shema again, connecting with our Chevra Kedusha - the burial society, finding out about the Hannukah party at Helen's, etc. Nothing really profound, but reconnecting, adjusting, trying to really understand this diverse community of ours - Tikkun Olam, fixing the Universe on a small scale. Maybe something like this needs to be done annually, just checking in with everyone "how ya doin', what's goin' on, what should we do next, what's for dinner?"

I guess I won't get to share the information with you this time, only to reiterate I'm less than half way there and it's already been a profound, moving experience for me. Thank you all for your openness, warmth, and honesty.

Tune into our annual community-wide meeting to get the total picture and see what we all look like and where we want to go with it. Let's recreate this community so that it truly reflects our needs and desires. The general meeting is on **Sunday, January 19th, from 12:30 on**. Let the Board of Directors cook you a wonderful brunch and keep you supplied with coffee, tea, and nosherei, while we work out our future together.

The Shema's editors would like to encourage more participation by the community by submitting your comments in the form of letters, editorials, droshes of the weekly readings, recipes, articles, haiku, etc. Please send to Carol Rosenberg at 501 Jones, Ukiah or e-mail [carolrosenberg@sbcglobal.net](mailto:carolrosenberg@sbcglobal.net). She'd love to hear from you.

You may see an occasional episode of Chronicles, when space permits. Maybe 15 years ago, Andy Coren, when he and Yvonne were editors of the Shema, asked if I would write a history of the Jewish people in serial form. I modestly proceeded to write a history of the world from a Jewish perspective and got as far as David before bogging down. We'll be reprinting those first 10 chapters and I'll try to unbog myself, (if that's a word) if the interest is still there.

Please let us know what you think - about anything!

***KHE Donations in September 1, 2011- October 31***

Judy M. Corwin in Memory of Dorothy Corwin and Stan Showers

Judy M. Corwin

Isa Davila and Amunka Davila

Rachel Elkins and Dana Thibeau

Cassie Gibson and Chris Gibson

Robbie Gitlin and Karla Gitlin

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Susan Sher and Hattie Sher

Eva Strauss-Rosen

Nancy Merling

Jan Stephens and Gary Stephens

Milton and Mildred Rosen Foundation in memory of the work of Milton Rosen

Sally Emeson and Mally Arad

Joan Katzeff and Paul Katzeff

Betty Lacey

Charlotte Rapport and David Rapport

Marlana Rivers

Josaphine Silva

Divora Stern

Andrea Silverstein and Dennis Patton

Charles Seltzer and Lark Letchworth

Carol D. Rosenberg

Anonymous a very generous donation given anonymously

Izzy Green

Darline Bergere and Josh Bergere

Steven Levin and Joan Levin

Shoshanah Devorah

Andy Coren and Yvonne Coren

Carol Orton

Sherrie Ebyam

David Vilner

Leslie Batz and Daniel Wentworth

Shari Epstein and Tom Jacobson

Mark Levin and Kathy Crosby

Ramin Aaron Louyeh and Matthew Brooks-Miller

Joel Cohen

Janice Berman

Lon Pacheco

Ann Marie Rohan

Vergilia Dakin

## **The Afterlife**     *Bat Mitzvah Drosh by Emma Barash*

.... My parsha's setting is a big famine in and around Egypt. Many people are hungry and go to the Pharaoh's palace to get food and supplies to stay alive. At that time, Joseph is second in command to the Pharaoh and he is the one appointed to deal with the starving people. Joseph meets his brothers in the palace, the same brothers that had sold him into slavery years before. They did not recognize Joseph, because the last time they had seen him he was a little boy, but Joseph recognized them.

Joseph had a little brother, Benjamin. He was Joseph's only full brother. Joseph called all his brothers to a private chamber and told them Benjamin must stay, but that they were free to return home. This is where my portion begins, when the fourth oldest of Joseph's brothers, Judah, begs him to please allow Benjamin to return home to their father and to keep him, Judah, in Egypt instead; "I guaranteed to return the lad to my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him back to you, I will have sinned against my father and will forfeit the privilege of associating with him for all the rest of my lifetime, both in this world as well as in the afterlife."

One option I considered as a topic for this talk, was to talk about forgiveness, a large issue in this story. The topic of forgiveness didn't appeal to me though. It seemed too obvious. The subject that really stood out for me was in the end of the line I have just quoted, where it says "both in this world and in the afterlife". That last word was the one that appealed to me. It is a subject that I sometimes study in my Buddhist school, and also about which I've heard other people ask questions.

What intrigued me was the fact that in all the years I've gone to shul school, and maybe even before that, I have only heard passing reference to the idea of the afterlife as a concept in the Jewish religion. When we began to investigate, it became even more interesting. I sent an e-mail to our rabbi, Shoshanah, regarding the lines that engaged me. She wrote back and said that the original Hebrew text pertaining to both lines did not mention the afterlife. This made me even more curious about the topic. How could the original texts be translated so differently? On further discussion with Shoshanah, she confirmed that the English translation we quoted was from a well-respected source, namely the Jewish Publication Society. The topic started to grow on me as it appeared to be more of a mystery.

Shoshanah explained to me that there are four levels of understanding the Torah text. The first is called Pshat, or the literal meaning of the words, the simplest form of translation. The second is Remez, which means 'hint', so this level invites the reader to come up with associations to the text - what the words evoke - rather than just the literal meaning of the words. Next is Drash, an interpretation of what the words mean, not exactly the words themselves. Lastly, is the secret meaning of the text called Sod, which refers to the deepest revelations hidden within each verse of Torah. We found that the translation that referred to the afterlife was either Remez or Drash because the word "afterlife" is NOT in the literal Hebrew text. In the torah the exact wording is "Kol Hayamim;" or "all the days" in English.

All the days. Well, there are a lot of ways to interpret that particular phrase and I discovered that the commentator, Rashi, a Medieval French Rabbi, thought that it meant "In this life as well as in the afterlife". And the modern Jewish Publication Society translator decided to incorporate Rashi's suggestion into his translation. Quite odd to figure out, depending on how you look at it, that this topic isn't truly mentioned in the Hebrew! No matter, I like it this way. Not only that, but the Amidah prayer, a prayer which we say every day, has several references to "You revive the dead". M'chayei mayteem ata. "And you keep faith with those who sleep in the dust". Oomkayaym aymoonatoe leeshaynay afar. "You are loyal to giving life to the dead, blessed are you who bring life to the dead". That is one of the interesting things for me. The Amidah prayer is something we say many times in our lifetime. It is not a part of the torah, but one of our oldest prayers. I know how to read Hebrew now, but I admit I don't always know what I'm saying.

As I mentioned in the beginning of my talk, I sometimes study the topic of the afterlife at my school. It is in some ways different, and in some similar to the various Jewish views. In the Jewish religion, there have been different views over the centuries regarding what happens after death. The Torah talks of a place called Sheol. It is said that when you die, your body and soul goes down under the earth to join your fathers, or ancestors.



Then, about 2,000 years ago, there were two sects within Judaism, the Pharisees and Sadducees, or the rabbinical sect and priestly sect. The former believed in resurrection and the latter believed that nothing occurred after death. After the destruction of the second temple, the Pharisees predominated as did the belief in resurrection, and that is how *m'chayei meitim* came to be in our Amidah prayer. In this case it was believed that the bones would re-assemble and reanimate for a final judgment. Those who have performed mostly good deeds go to "heaven", and the ones who have more bad than good deeds couldn't go up and stayed in *Gehenna*, until they atoned for their sins a year, maximum. An interesting note is that there actually was a place near Jerusalem, called *Gehenna* that got its dark reputation from the fact that human sacrifice was performed there. So Jewish custom says that when we die, we must be buried, not cremated or embalmed. The flesh returns to the earth and the soul returns from whence it came. The bones remain to serve as the new framework for eventual resurrection.

In addition, some 2000 years ago, Rabbi Akiba believed that we could help those who've died continue on their soul journey, and that is how the Kaddish got introduced as a prayer for the dead. The idea was that reciting the kaddish for a particular person not only makes the mourner feel better, but helps the departed soul to purify and ascend in non-earthly realms. The Mourners' Kaddish itself doesn't have a reference to death. It is a prayer you say after somebody dies, but refers to the glorification and magnification of God's presence in the world.

Another Jewish idea of what occurs after death is called transmigration. Since the Middle Ages, Kabbalists and Chasids have believed that after death the soul will take a journey and can alight in another being. In that case, the soul is stripped of its former personality, and how a soul will reincarnate depends upon what that soul still needs to work on here in the bodily form of this life. So we see a variety of Jewish views of the afterlife, but probably the most commonly held Jewish view is that people live on after death through their children and their good deeds.

The closest of these views to Buddhism is transmigration. Similar to the Jewish belief in transmigration, Buddhists' believe you return to life in the form your karma gives to you. They trust that the human body is one of the hardest forms to achieve, because you must have great good karma to alight in a human body. Both Jews and Buddhist believe that the soul can be purified by proper action while alive. Buddhists see the body as an impermanent vehicle which will eventually die and decay. Theravada (Southern Buddhism) traditionally cremates the body some 7 days after death, following a week long ceremony which marks the end of a person's life and highlights the impermanence of all phenomena. Part of the ceremony is the chanting of certain Buddhist Mantras which specifically remind those present that from birth to death this impermanence is evident and that without the wisdom to understand this impermanence we are all just wanderers throughout our many rebirths. The final part of the ceremony is the cremation of the body. Like Judaism, Buddhists perform many of their ceremonies in prayer and chant, of which I've had MANY experiences!

Independent of religious affiliation, in a state close to death, it is said that some people seem to be communicating with their ancestors, or some type of spirit, almost as if they can feel their presence in the room with them. If the dead truly stay with us maybe they only show themselves when we need them. They could either save us from the illness, situation, or help calm down the dying. It's sad to think about, but it happens. The people who are calling out may be seeing a future; a future of life continuing through their descendants. That would be a pleasant thought for me.

I can't say I have had much of an experience with the afterlife, because in this life I haven't died yet! Though the idea of life after death intrigues me, and reading and thinking about it taught me the limits of what a person is given to know, it's a difficult thing to realize how small we are. It's even a little scary!

Last summer I went backpacking in the King's Canyon for the first time. Looking at the sheer scale of its cliffs and winding trails in a place so remote made me realize how much I fear. I fear the unknown and want to stay in places familiar, but recognizing that some never get to see outside the wall, inspires me to want to try new things and make new friends. I know for certain I have this lifetime, and maybe others, to do something out of the ordinary! Currently, I enjoy many activities. I hope to do much more in this life. My grandpa says, "the other side must be a wonderful place because nobody has come back". あのよは、ええところなんじゃろうのう。だれもかえってこんものう。

**Dear KHE Chaverim,**

When I arrived in Ukiah back in 2003, I was disappointed to learn that there was no umbrella ministerial association in the area. I like meeting my clergy colleagues. That is still the case today. But this past fall I attended the first 3 gatherings of local clergywomen, and what an affirming experience that has been for all of us. Our getting together grew out of a few colleagues' desire to welcome the new Methodist minister to town. (The former minister, Lisa, who came with her family to many KHE events, is now serving in Half Moon Bay). The seven of us who met on that occasion so enjoyed being in the same room together, that we decided to meet again, and open our group to other clergywomen we knew of. We're now up to 15, and there may be a couple more out there. Who'd a guessed?

We ourselves were astounded to discover how numerous we are. We cover the area from Ukiah to Willits, and religiously we are Methodist, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, The First Christian Church, Seventh Day Adventist, Center for Spiritual Living (formerly known as Religious Science), Unity, and Jewish (namely me!). I volunteered to host our October gathering, and it fell at the end of *Succot*. So we ate in my *succah*, and none of the women had ever been in a *succah* before. I waved the *lulav* and *etrog* for them with the accompanying blessings, and I put in a *Shechechyanu*, because this really was a first!

The first female rabbis were ordained in the '70s. I can't say when each of the above churches first started ordaining women. We learned from one colleague, who has been through divinity school and whose work acknowledges her clergy status, that nonetheless she couldn't be ordained in her church because she is female. She was excited to share changes happening in other geographical areas, such as in Oregon, where a few women of her church have achieved ordination. And women in our group who've served elsewhere shared stories of going to ministerial association meetings and being ignored by the veteran male members. One such group actually dissolved itself, so there were no more meetings for the clergywoman to attend, and then reconstituted itself free of females. One woman shared that she'd faced a lot of resistance when she was hired as the first female minister to serve her current congregation. Some folks left, and notices against a female spiritual leader were put on parked cars. But the church has since hired a second full-time clergywoman to assist the first.

At least three of the women are older than I am, and quite a few of us came to be clergy after years of working in other vocations. But there are those among us for whom this is their first profession, attending seminary right after college. One even grew up in a church with a woman pastor whose modeling influenced her decision to become a minister. Another shared that when she was leaving a former pulpit with a man coming in to replace her, a child in the congregation piped up with "I didn't know that men could be ministers!" I've heard the same story told a few times over the years by women rabbis.

I was already in my thirties when the first female rabbis started serving Jewish communities. Living in Jerusalem, I studied with many very wonderful teachers, several of whom were women, none of whom were female rabbis. Yet my memory tells me that all the men I studied with were rabbis. Then, around age 50, I began to meet American female rabbinical students studying in Jerusalem as part of their seminary requirements. I met them either because they came to pray at my synagogue (that's how I first met Shefa Gold) or we were taking classes together. In 1995 I came to Colorado to teach at a Jewish Renewal Kallah of over 800 spiritually oriented Jews and was exposed to many wonderful and inspiring women rabbis. This was a sorority I wanted to be part of. I'm grateful to the sisters and brothers, teachers and fellow students and congregants who encouraged me along the way. I am not aware of having met resistance to serving as a rabbi because I am a woman.



Today there are many more women rabbis serving in Israel than when I lived there (although none are recognized by the State of Israel, because they are not orthodox). Many of you know of the decades long struggle of Women of the Wall to be able to pray out loud and read from Torah as the men habitually do. Yet strange and sorry to say, the movement toward gender equality in Judaism is not uni-directional. Just today (Dec 20), I received an email petition forwarded by a female cantor in Haifa protesting that "In Israel we are now fighting against exclusion of women [note: not female rabbis, but all women], their names, their voices, and their presence, from the public eye." Photos of women are currently excluded from public ads in Jerusalem, public bus routes have separate seating for men and women (women in the back only- this has been happening in very orthodox sections of Brooklyn, N.Y., as well; and the Israeli high court did rule against it recently), public performances and ceremonies are segregating and covering up women. To read this petition, go to

<https://www.atzuma.co.il/kolechazuma> and scroll down below the Hebrew for the English translation.

Tonight is the first night of Chanukah, soon followed by the winter solstice and a new beginning in our secular calendar. Let's acknowledge the wonderful strides toward equality that have been made in our time, and do what we can to light up the darkness on our paths to liberation. As Peter, Paul, and Mary, and now we, sing out, "Don't let the light go out."

Nishmat adam ner haShem/ The human soul is God's candle.

B'shalom oovrachah/In peace and blessing, Shoshanah

**KHE CAMPOUT, FRIDAY, MAY 25 to SUNDAY, MAY 27  
at CLEARLAKE STATE PARK  
SHABBAT/SHAVUOT CELEBRATION for all with special  
program for all of our BNEI MITZVAH**

**We've got our campsites reserved and paid for, so mark  
your calendars NOW to save these dates on  
Memorial Day Weekend.**

We are in a relatively secluded part of the campground, close to bathrooms, the swimming beach and hiking trails, with accessibility to boat rental nearby.

Send in your reservations now to David Koppel. Campground fees have gone way up since last year, but fortunately, our costs remain modest: \$75 per family for the campsite, \$36 per adult (13 and older) and \$18 per child (age 4-13) for food.



**Kol Ha Emek MCJC-Inland**  
**P.O. Box 416,**  
**Redwood Valley, CA 95470**

Our purpose is to create an environment in which Jewish culture, religion and spiritual life can flourish, to perpetuate and renew our Jewish connections with ourselves and our homes, within our community and the world.

- To provide space for religious study and prayer.
- To share life cycle events through meaningful Jewish traditions
- To offer and sponsor Jewish education for all ages
- To be inclusive of all partnerships and family configurations
- To include interfaith families and Jews-by-choice
- To network with other Jewish communities
- To educate and share our culture with other Mendocino County residents
- To be a foundation for *Tikkun olam* (healing the world) as a community through socially just actions and and by Mitzvot (good deeds)
- To offer membership in exchange for financial and other contributions and allow all to participate regardless of the ability to pay

## **Kol HaEmek Information & Resources**

### **Kol HaEmek**

**(707) 468-4536**

#### **Board Members**

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Brit Mila: Doctors willing to do circumcisions in their office or your home; Robert Gitlin D.O. (465-7406), Sam Goldberg (463-8000; Jeremy Mann (463-8000)

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Interfaith Council: Cassie Gibson (468-535; (415)-777-4545, (887)777-5247

Rabbinical Services/Special Ceremonies: Rabbi Shoshanah Devorah (467-0456) [sdevorah@gmail.com](mailto:sdevorah@gmail.com)

Tzdakah: Fund (Financial Assistance) David Koppel (485-8910)