

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2018

CHESHVAN - KISLEV - TEVET - 5779



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@pacific.net)

COMING EVENTS

Friday, November 2, 6:30 pm. Home Shabbat Service at Carol Rosenberg's home, 501 Jones Street, Ukiah, including a dairy/veggie potluck.

Friday, November 9, Shabbat Service with Rabbi Saraleya, followed by a dairy/veggie potluck supper.

Saturday, November 10, 10:00 a.m., Torah Study with Rabbi SaraLeya.

Thursday, November 15, 7:00 pm. Torah Study at the home of Carol Rosenberg, 501 Jones St., Ukiah. The portion is Vayetzei; this Parshah tells of Jacob's dream and his further adventures.

Friday, December 7, 5:30 pm (so families with young children can join us) **Round-the-table, lay-led Hanukkah Shabbat** with candle lighting, music, story telling. Bring latkes, and dairy/veggie potluck, etc. ----->>

Friday, December 21, at 6:30 pm, Lay-led Home Shabbat at home of Barbara and Leo Stanger, 400 Clay Street, Ukiah. Family recipe night! Bring your family's most memorable dish (Please no pork or shellfish) .

Hanukkah
December 2, Erev Hanukkah
Hanukkah is from December 3-10

Congregation Kol HaEmek Welcomes One and All

To Our Annual Hanukkah Party and Shabbat Potluck



**December 7, 2018
5:30 pm**
Food, Fun, Music, Stories and Dreidel games for folks of all ages (especially the little ones)

Bring 6 candles along with your Hanukkah.

Break out your best latke recipes or bring whatever food you'd like to share for the holiday supper. Don't forget your musical instruments

Torah Portion Of the Week and Holidays

November 3 - Chayei Sarah
November 10 - Toldot
November 17 - Vayeitzei
November 24 - Vayishlach
December 1 - Vayeishev
December 2 - Erev Hanukkah
December 3-10 - Hanukkah
December 8 - Mikeitz (Rosh Kodesh)
December 15 - Vayigash
December 22 - Vayechi
December 29 - Shemot

Opportunities for Tzedakah

Kol HaEmek (the 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) Honoring and Remembrance Board
- 6) Tzedakah Fund
- 7) Rabbi's Discretionary Fund
- 8) The Marion and Sanford Frank Fund for feeding the hungry in Ukiah and Willits
- 9) Mazon - A Jewish Answer to Hunger
Call: David Koppel, 485-8910
send checks to:

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

We Remember

Maurice Marans - November
Estelle Koppel - November 5
Lillian Rothchild - November 11, Chesvan 28
Norman Feldman-November 14
Doris Rogers - November 16
Solomon Glazer - November 19
Dane Wilkins - November 19
Cynthia Suffel - November 23
Robert Leo Kisslinger - November 27
Herbert Alan Fuente - November 28
Jane Gurko - November 30
Milton Rosen - December 4
Evelyn Rapport Cohen - December 6
Mark Kinze Molgaard - December 7
Chaim Rayberg - December 10
Ephraim Coren - December 12, Tevet 9
Max Schechter December 15
Joseph E.Suffel - December 16
Esther Pelner December 19
Elizabeth Elberg - December 23
Dora Goldberg Levin - December 23
Pauline Strauss - Cheshvan 1
Abraham Cohen - Cheshvan 12
Stan Showers - Cheshvan 2
Sanford "Fritz" Frank - Cheshvan 25
Myra Cohen - Kislev 6
Louis Jonas - Kislev 10
Leon Horowitz - Tevet 3
Pearl Turovitz - Teveth 14
Harold G.Corwin - Tevet 15
Marion Margolis Frank - Tevet 20
Paul Kowarsk - Tevet 26
Dori Anderson - Tevet 26

Many Thanks, Donations to Kol HaEmek for July-September

Bruce Andich and Cassandra Andich
Ace Barash and Satoko Barash
Judith M. Corwin
Harvey Frankle and Jackie Pelner-Frankle
Dan Hibshman and Leslie Kirkpatrick
Jay Joseph and Jennifer Joseph
David Koppel and Linda Koppel
Nancy Bertsch and Ted Bertsch
Elizabeth Raybee
Norm Rosen and Karen Rosen
Helen J. Sizemore
Laurie Spence and Dale Harrison
Eva Strauss-Rosen and Stephen Somerstein
Janae Kraus Stephens and Gary Stephens
Penny Walker
Maralyn Lowenheim
Sally Emerson and Mally Arad
Joan Katzeff and Paul Katzeff
Elise Wilkins
Stephen Pasternak and Lisbeth Pasternak
Jo-ann Rosen
Carol D. Rosenberg
Margo Frank and Marc Levine
Leslie Feldman
Andy Coren and Yvonne Coren
Vergilia Dakin

All our wishes for complete healing to:
Laurie Spence
Lee Wacht
Judy Corwin

From the Rabbis

By learning how to love ourselves, we learn how to love our neighbor. By learning how to love our neighbor, we learn how to love the stranger. And by learning how to love the stranger, we learn how to love God.

Rabbi Sheila Peltz Weinberg

Condolences to Reid Edelman and the Edelman family on the death of his brother Harlan. (from the obituary)

Harlan Brett Edelman
(January 7, 1962- September 27, 2018)
Loving son to Harvey and Carol Ann Edelman and cherished brother of Reid Edelman and devoted brother-in-law to Deborah Edelman. Adored by his nephews Eli and Noah, whom he loved with all his heart and whom he could always make laugh. A passionate teacher and counselor at Lowell HS and other schools for more than 20 years, he was a strong advocate for students and was committed to looking out for the “underdog.” He was a masterful teller of stories, a detailed and eloquent chronicler of his family history, and a careful observer of life. He will always be treasured for his humor and kindness. He loved good food, good stories and a good party, often playing Broadway show tunes on the piano by ear to the delight of all assembled. His compassion and ability to listen made him a deeply valued friend to many. Cause of death: Sarcoma of the jaw. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to a charity of your choice.

Kol HaEmek Board needs a new member!

This is your opportunity to become a KHE Board member and have your opinions on Shul management and Jewish life in Mendocino County heard and implemented!
For more information call Sherrie Ebyam
1-530-414-1104

The Parsha Chukkat -- a Drosh by Noah Edelman

My Parsha is about the ritual of the red heifer, which is a law that is not explained in the Bible and no reason has indeed been found. In fact, the name of my Torah portion is “Chukkat” which means “unexplained law.”

The law of the red heifer states that if someone is in contact with death, whether by being near someone when they die, being in a graveyard, touching any part of a dead body, etc., they are in need of ritual purification. In the Torah portion they are described as “tamei” which is translatable as “unclean” or “impure.” I should explain “unclean”; it does not mean dirty but means spiritually unfit to serve in the sanctuary

The *tamei* person must, therefore, do the ritual of the red heifer. The ritual states that a perfectly red, unworked, unharmed, unblemished red cow must be slaughtered by one person and burned whole (by another). While it is burning, hyssop, cedar and something scarlet must be thrown into the fire by the priest. Then the ashes must be collected by a different person and mixed with water from a stream which is living water. Then this water mixture must be sprinkled on the unclean person by *another* person on the third and seventh day after they were in contact with death. On the seventh day the person for whom the ritual is being done must bathe, and afterward they are purified and ready to re-enter the religious community.

Today, since we do not have this ritual, everyone is “tamei” for those who want to build a 3rd Temple in Jerusalem, we would have to find a pure, red heifer and do this ritual before the Temple sacrifices could be started again!! So far no one has found a perfectly red heifer but there are many who are looking!!

The commandments in the Bible are often called good deeds. The Hebrew word for a commandment is “**mitzvah**.” A mitzvah without an explanation is called a **chok**. A mitzvah which has an explanation in the Bible or can be explained is called a **mishpat**.

The bimbam website defines a mitzvah as a call to integrity, which is my favorite explanation of a mitzvah. The law of the red heifer is a chok, yet some parts of it make sense. For example, it makes sense that there is a ritual of some sort to do when someone dies, and it makes sense that it would happen soon after the death.

Yet much of the ritual still makes little sense to me. Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel claimed that if we don’t understand the point of things, we may come to understand them by doing them (although that may not help us right now as we can’t do the ritual without a pure red cow!) One thought about why we should do a chok is that it is a test of faith in God. Only someone with faith in God would do unexplained things detailed in the Bible, like not wearing wool and linen in one fabric. A mishpat, on the other hand, has reasons, such as the rules about not stealing or lying, and therefore might be done by someone who does not agree that they must be done because they are God’s will.

This ritual is very specific, but it does not address the process of grieving, and it is difficult that I have this Torah portion given that my grandmother died recently.

Rabbi SaraLeya and I talked about the Jewish tradition around death and dying. In the Jewish tradition the body is washed in water and dressed in a linen shroud. The body is buried as soon as possible, either in the shroud or in a plain wooden coffin. After the burial the family members say the Kaddish prayer, and often will sit at home for 7 days being comforted by the community. Every year the Kaddish is said on the anniversary of the death.

Noah's Drosh continued:

Having a ritual when people die is common, and most religions have a set of rituals related to death. The red heifer ritual is unique in that it is separate from the mourning process, and is rather about impurity. Despite this difference, there are similarities among the religions: for example, in terms of the importance of timing, and burning and/or washing of something.

Yet every religion has unique aspects to their rituals. In the Pomo Native American tradition the person is buried, yet *all* of the person's possessions are burned, and after a year, the body is dug up, cremated, and reburied.

Continuing, I ask: Why does the Bible tell us to do these things to purify ourselves? My thoughts are contrast between life and death; I have been struggling with finding some specific aspect of the contrast between life and death that creates this difference, an element that is so big and large and important that it requires this ritual purification. After all, something that was never alive is not inherently spiritually unclean.

Then in shul we talked about the Torah portion and an idea occurred to me. Perhaps when a person is alive, they are a combination of good and bad - pure and impure. Then they die. The "good" side of their life goes on to whatever is after death. Yet their impurities are like dirt, stuck to their body. We have a possible answer: a dead body is only carrying the negative side of a life.

Death can also have an effect on a community, aside from affecting people's emotional and spiritual state individually. If so, that might explain why there are so many people who must be involved in the ritual of the red heifer; the community would work together to purify themselves and gain a full sense of closure.

Parsha Chukkat also states that when somebody dies indoors, the room and the items in the room also become impure. Inanimate objects are also affected by death! This brings us back to the idea of impurity "clinging" to things and people and places. I think that the idea might be that when somebody dies indoors, that place is in the midst of that death, and must be purified by a ritual so the space and items can also be used for everyday life.

In conclusion, I chose to talk about this part of the Parsha because it is about a command--a rule in the Torah rather than an event that happened. This made the portion seem easier to relate to and understand. In writing this drosh and studying this parsha, I have learned that rules sometimes make sense and sometimes don't make sense, yet we have something to learn from all of them



A dreidel is marked with four Hebrew letters: Nun, Gimel, Hei and Shin. These letters stand for the Hebrew phrase "Nes Gadol Hayah Sham", a great miracle happened there, referring to the miracle of the oil.

The letters also stand for the Yiddish words nit (nothing), gantz (all), halb (half) and shtell (put), which are the rules of the game! There are some variations in the way people play the game, but the way I learned it, everyone puts in one coin. A person spins the dreidel. If it lands on Nun, nothing happens; on Gimel (or, as we called it as kids, "gimme!"), you get the whole pot; on Hei, you get half of the pot; and on Shin, you put one in. When the pot is empty, everybody puts one in. Keep playing until one person has everything. Then redivide it, because nobody likes a poor winner.

Know Your Community

The following is an interview with Kol HaEmek member, Jo-ann Rosen. If you would like to be featured here, please contact Susan Sher @ ssher@pacific.net



I was born in Hollywood, CA immediately at the end of WWII.

I have lived in Mendocino County since 1979.

My favorite places in Mendocino County are my home and my Mariposa neighborhood where through long-term relationships, we've learned to depend on and accept one another.

I am thankful that my life has offered opportunities to help me get a handle on things that are most challenging about my personality, the things that cause me and others suffering or discomfort and help me and those around me be happier.

One of my fondest childhood memories is being in nature for the first time -- around a little brook running through a forest of pines and seeing the light filtering down into the water.

People I look up to are: This question has changed for me over time. I've come to realize that the more I look at any human being who I admire, I see they haven't acted in isolation but rather, reacted to conditions that surrounded them that came together to make them; they became the product of circumstances beyond their control such as their upbringing, their parents, people they met along the way. So I see that each person can't take total credit for what they have achieved, but rather recognize who has influenced or supported them on their life paths.

This changed my life: being a parent; having had a significant health challenge; living in the country; discovering I had an inner life, i.e., being able to look inside myself, knowing there was more than what was happening on the surface; recognizing I didn't have to craft a life that my parents or I envisioned. I feel like all my life, I have been working my way out of a box or many layers of emotional straight jackets.

Friends would describe me as intense, active, funky and spunky.

A talent I'd like to have is to stop my Jewish mind from spinning so much; to be able to calm my mind more.

I get the greatest joy from unexpected things, mostly deep interpersonal connections because when that happens, I feel like my heart opens as completely as I am aware of, that there can be no barrier to open-heartedness.

Something that has inspired me in my life is studying Buddhism. It has impacted me by helping me see past my Jewish wounds and has allowed me to re-embrace Judaism; it has also helped me connect more deeply to my family, be less defended and live from a less fearful place.

I worry about: everything. As a Jew, it's not possible to have a 5,000 year history without it affecting your epigenetics, your nervous system make-up. There is a joke about three people in the desert, one French, one German, and one Jewish. They are all dying of thirst. The German says "I must have a beer". The French person must have wine. The Jew says "I'm so thirsty, I must have diabetes." Even in the face of obvious circumstances, when it's not personal, the Jew will take it personally and worry about the future. It's funny and tragic and it takes its toll on us. We live from this fearful hyper-vigilant place. So I wonder how to stay vigilant and balanced and not allow a lifestyle of fearfulness to drain my ability to function.

Jo-ann continued:

If we could be less fearful, we could recognize that there are a lot of people living in difficult circumstances.

My favorite writer of the moment is **Robin Wall Kimmerer**, a member of the Potawatomi Nation who wrote *Braiding Sweetgrass*, a wonderful synthesis of indigenous culture, plant wisdom and botany.

My best parenting advice is **to embrace parenting as a spiritual path and celebrate your child for who she is. To do that you have to pay attention.**

If I have learned one thing, it is if we think we've figured something out, we should look again.

I want to try to **keep opening my heart. That may sound trite but what else is there? When we're not present, accepting and open-hearted, we can't do anything else well. When we're intimate and non-judgmental about something, life unfolds differently. The rest will take care of itself.**

In 10 years, I see myself . . . There is no point in doing that. I have no clue what any future circumstances will be. What's the point? I prefer to focus on the question of what is my aspiration for now. I want to live my life to the max, to encounter the moment completely if I have the capacity -- to live my little world as small as it is, as fully as possible.

The most memorable trip I ever took was . . . It's always the last trip. Each trip has lead to the next one. During my last trip to Israel and Palestine, I encountered the magic of human connections that broadened my view of the world and humanity.

One thing I wish I could change about the world is to help all human beings understand what it really means to be a human being so we won't fight ourselves and each other so much. I hope we can all inhabit our human limitations in a more graceful way.

I give back to my community by having the courage to be myself whenever I can.

I wish more Jews would embody the notion of "never again" shall we accept the suffering of any people. Something that people would be surprised to know about me is that after graduating UC Berkeley as a math major, my first job was as a computer programmer for BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit).

May the Lights of the season inspire us

sent by Marcela Reis

The light living within us
is radiating outward
in ever widening circles,
and gently touching others
grows stronger.

We are channels thru whom
the Light of God
can work its miracles
truly awakening us
with energies undreamed of
illuminating our lives.

We each become one of many
a progression of soft luminescences
drawing other flickering flames together
toward a universal brilliance.



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
- and sponsor Jewish education for all ages
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- 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 by Mitzvot)
- To offer to our membership in exchange for financial and
- other contributions and allow all to participate
- regardless of the ability to pay

Kol HaEmek Information & Resources

Board Members

Sherrie Ebyam - President	530-414-1104 < ebyam@sbcglobal.net >
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Moses Sunbeam	228-9980 < mosessunbeam@gmail.com >
Karen Rifkin	391-9299 < karenrifkin@gmail.com >

Brit Mila: A doctor to call for a referral to a Mohel - Robert Gitlin D.O. (465-7406),

Chevra Kadisha (Jewish Burial) Helen Sizemore (367-0250)

Community support: Willits, Divora Stern (459-9052), Ukiah, Margo Frank (463-1834)

Interfaith Council: Cassie Gibson (468-5351)

Rabbinical Services/Special Ceremonies are available; send your e-mail request to Sherrie Ebyam