

Emanu-El ^S_F

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JEWISH

LEADERSHIP

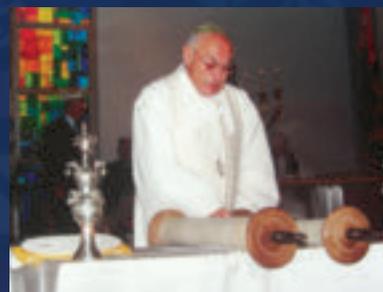
IN 2019



FEB
10 AMBASSADOR
**Dennis
Ross**



MAR
12 RETURN OF
**Tauber
SPARK!**



INTERVIEW ON THE BOOK:
**The Last Rabbi
— Leo Trepp**

UPCOMING EVENTS



Dennis Ross: Fateful Choices

Sunday, February 10, 4:00 – 6:00 pm, Main Sanctuary

Please register online.

In 2019, Dennis Ross will publish his new book, entitled *Fateful Choices*. Written with David Makovsky, this book is about the fateful choice that Israel's leaders must make if they are to preserve Israel as a Jewish-democratic state and avoid becoming a binational Arab-Jewish state. Join us on February 10 as Ambassador Ross shares his perspective at a lecture with Q&A to follow.

Having the unusual distinction of being a political appointee for four presidential administrations — two Republican (Reagan and Bush Sr.) and two Democratic (Clinton and Obama) — Ross also developed close relationships with five Israeli prime ministers over the past 30 years (Yitzhak Rabin, Shimon Peres, Ehud Barak, Ariel Sharon, and Benjamin Netanyahu). Few people understand better the history of Israel, its efforts toward peace, or its relations with the Arabs.

KOLEINU* 2019

Songs of the Earth and Sky

Tuesday, February 12, 7:00 – 8:30 pm

Martin Meyer Sanctuary

BUY YOUR TICKETS TODAY: tinyurl.com/buykoleinutix

Koleinu* is a stirring program of music, social action, and community, showcasing eight glorious voices raised in song, four gifted instrumentalists, one amazing conductor/arranger, and a special guest artist representing the Indian Canyon Nation. This magical evening celebrates nature and reaffirms our responsibility to it. Koleinu* draws from a diversity of musical genres — including liturgical sources, Yiddish, Ladino, folk, Broadway melodies, and traditional sacred chants — covering the music of Bobby McFerrin, Stephen Glass, Louis Armstrong, Elton John, Rodgers & Hammerstein, Tom Lehrer, John Denver, The Beatles, and many more!

Featuring Cantors Marsha Attie and Arik Luck, with Cantor Fran Burgess, Cantor Seth Ettinger, Cantor Alisa Fineman, Cantor Jennifer Frost, Cantor David Margules, and Cantorial Soloist Jason McKinney. Jonathan Comisar is the musical director.

Buy your tickets today at tinyurl.com/buykoleinutix!



SHALOM RAV FROM OUR RABBI

By Richard and Rhoda Goldman Senior Rabbi Jonathan Singer

This summer I will be leading a multi-generational, multi-faceted trip to Israel that will take us to Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and the north. We'll drink kosher wine, raft on the Jordan, and stop in Safed for three of our youth to celebrate their bar/bat mitzvahs. The trip will also provide the opportunity to dialogue with settlers and Palestinians on the West Bank, discuss the tech revolution taking place there, and engage with Reform Jewish leaders working for an equal place at the Israeli table. Beginning the last week in June and running through the first week of July, this trip will mark my second foray to Israel this year (having just been there as part of a Reform/Conservative Bay Area Rabbi trip organized by the Consul General's office).

While such trips to Israel are filled with meaning, spiritual connection, and joy — because Israel is so beautiful and there is so much to do there — they are also important in terms of how we envision and work together for a stronger Jewish future. We live in a “bipolar” Jewish world, where two of the significant Jewish population clusters are equally dynamic and creative, not unlike Babylonia and Jerusalem of the ancient period, each of which produced a Talmud that has guided Jewish life for the past 2,000 years. Our new reality also represents significant change that can be worrisome to some as influence shifts and we

What the trips do, whether it is a synagogue journey, a Birthright experience, a semester abroad, or a rabbinic mission, is build bridges of understanding and debunk myths about one another. When we as Reform Jews dialogue with Israelis in that beautiful land, they come to see that we are a vibrant engaged community, with hundreds of children learning in our school and families of all

types embracing Jewish values. Our version of Judaism is growing rather than disappearing. And while we are there in person, we see that, although the politics and conflicts are complex, there are Israelis working on the ground for peace, human rights, and intergroup understanding, and who are making progress. The trip becomes a myth buster for both sides and helps remind us that we are at an amazing point in Jewish history, where we have to figure out how a vibrant Diaspora and a vibrant State of Israel can move forward — not just in celebration of Jewish life, but as a light to the nations building a better future for all.



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become equal forces in the Jewish journey, with Israel no longer the junior partner, either politically or economically. When shifts occur, people wonder whether we will continue to support each community going forward or whether we will turn inward and not consider the needs of the other. Certainly, there are those in both communities who assert that each should go its own way. From that Israeli perspective, the American diaspora is diminishing and Reform Judaism represents assimilation, while there are those in our community who so dislike certain Israeli political decisions that they want to pull away from a place that doesn't seem to respect their expression of Judaism, or that could be abandoning the peace process.

Reinhold Niebuhr, a great friend of Rabbi Heschel, taught that meeting on the personal level provides the pathway to understanding and leads to solutions of blessing.

Consider a trip to Israel, and contact me if you would like to know more about the one I am leading this summer. Know that when you go to Israel, you are not just touring, you are community building. And join with us in our work on the Israel Action Committee to keep the spirit of dialogue and engagement happening between two amazing Jewish communities that we are so blessed to be able to experience at this moment in history.

SAVE THE DATES

3rd Annual Tauber SPARK Program

Tuesday Evenings, March 12, 19, and 26, 6:45 - 9:15 pm

Allow yourself to dive into our tradition and SPARK your imagination over three evenings of learning and exploration. We

want EVERYONE to take part in this innovative community-wide Jewish learning experience! Let your heart be moved by Torah; be open to a transformative and mind-opening experience with your friends, rabbis, and guest teachers. The evenings will begin with schmooze/nosh time, followed by an hour engaged in one of four hot topic SPARK study sessions with rabbis and leading guest educators. Each evening will be followed by a community-wide keynote address or seminar with special scholars/speakers. Choose from one of three courses taught by Rabbi Joshua Landon, Rabbi Jane Litman, or our own Rabbi Beth Singer. Then stay for the fantastic keynote speakers, including Rabbi Joshua Plaut and Professor Marc Dollinger.

Further details are available at www.emanuelsf.org/spark. If you have questions about this program, contact Ariana Estoque at (415) 751-2541 x307 or at aestoque@emanuelsf.org.



SPARK

SPARK

Shabbat Calendar

February

Friday, February 1

5:30 pm, First Friday Under Five Service
(*Martin Meyer Sanctuary*)

6:00 pm, Classic Shabbat Service
(*Main Sanctuary*)

Saturday, February 2

10:30 am, Shabbat Morning Service
(*Main Sanctuary*)

Friday, February 8

6:00 pm, One Shabbat Service
(*Martin Meyer Sanctuary*)

Saturday, February 9

10:30 am, Shabbat Morning Service
(*Main Sanctuary*)

10:30 am, Shabbat Morning Service
(*Martin Meyer Sanctuary*)

Friday, February 15

6:00 pm, One Shabbat Service
(*Martin Meyer Sanctuary*)

Saturday, February 16

10:30 am, Shabbat Morning Service
(*Chapel*)

Friday, February 22

6:00 pm, One Shabbat Service
(*Martin Meyer Sanctuary*)

Saturday, February 23

10:30 am, Shabbat Morning Service
(*Martin Meyer Sanctuary*)

Sponsor an Oneg Shabbat

Sponsoring an Oneg-Shabbat for Friday evening is a lovely way to honor or remember a loved one or to celebrate a Simcha. When you sponsor an Oneg-Shabbat, you help us welcome Shabbat with the warmth and community that are characteristic of our congregation. For more details, please contact Svetlana Leykin at sleykin@emanuelsf.org or (415) 751-2541 x123.

The House of Cohen

Sunday, March 31, 5:00 – 7:00 pm

Leonard Cohen was Perla Batalla's friend, mentor, and colleague. In an homage blessed by the man himself, Perla brings us Cohen's remarkable music and stories. For this performance, crafted especially for us, Batalla and her brilliant duo will be joined onstage by Cantors Marsha Attie and Arik Luck, as well as exceptional performances from within our community.

Don't miss this extraordinary evening!

Buy your tickets online at

<https://tinyurl.com/houseofcohentix>

The critics agree and you will, too!

"Batalla brings the house down!"

— The Guardian

"Onstage, offstage, digital or analog, I love Perla Batalla."

— Leonard Cohen

"Batalla's gorgeous, rich, contralto voice adds another layer of beauty to Cohen's elegantly crafted songs."

— San Jose Mercury News

"For those uninitiated to the glories of the songs of Leonard Cohen, this is a wonderful introduction. For the rest of us, it is simply heavenly."

— Sing Out Magazine

"Spellbinding!"

— San Francisco Chronicle

These concerts are funded by a generous grant from the Ingrid D. Tauber Fund.

Emanu-El Spotlight: **GUNDA TREPP**

By Byron Gordon, Communications/Marketing

“Jewry is thus reaching out in many directions, past and future, in America, the rest of the Diaspora, and in Israel. It strives towards self-realization and dialogue with other faiths, in thought and action. It is Am and it is Goy. It is unique. Judaism as religion is essential, Judaism as communality is essential, the memory of the Holocaust and the inspiration of Israel are essential. But they must be synthesized to form one organic whole. This is the Covenant.”

—Rabbi Leo Trepp, *Judaism: Development and Life*

As a survivor of the Holocaust, Rabbi Leo Trepp made it his life's mission to spread a living Judaism throughout the world, and especially to reach out to non-Jews in order to improve relations between peoples. As a respected scholar and author, Trepp made annual trips back to Germany, believing it was Germany's obligation to lead the fight against anti-Semitism and racism. He taught philosophy and humanities at Napa Valley College for more than 30 years. When he passed away in 2010 at the age of 97, Trepp's second wife (and Emanu-El member) Gunda Trepp took it upon herself to write a book about his life and his influence. Gunda is a professional writer and journalist, having served as a business editor at Berlin's daily newspaper, *Berliner Zeitung*, and also writing for other German publications, including *Spiegel Online*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, and *Jüdische Allgemeine*. Gunda recently published the German edition of her biography of Rabbi Trepp entitled *Der letzte Rabbiner: Das unorthodoxe Leben des Leo Trepp*. An English edition is planned for this year.

For Gunda, this was more than a project of passion. She views her husband's life as symbolic of a search for Jewish identity in a pluralistic world where all faiths can learn from the example set forth by neo-orthodox Jews during the time of Germany's Weimar Republic who were dedicated to helping foster the well-being of democratic society. I recently had the opportunity to sit down with Gunda and hear more about Rabbi Trepp's life and his impact on American and German Jewry.

Join us on March 26 at 8:00 pm where Gunda will be the Tauber SPARK keynote speaker.



Byron: Rabbi Leo Trepp was born in 1913 in Mainz, Germany and came of age during Germany's Weimar Republic of the 1920s. Share with me a little about his formative years.

Gunda: My husband later wrote that the German middle class missed the chance to form and be a democratic society in the truest sense. Much of the middle class withdrew and left it to the right wing, which grew stronger by the late 1920s. Rabbi Trepp had just completed high school at that time, and as anti-Semitism had become so bad, he became greatly concerned. In the 1930s, he came to Berlin to visit the neo-orthodox rabbinical seminary. At this time, it was expected that one couldn't be a rabbi without having a doctorate. Rabbis were asked to be knowledgeable in both secular and religious fields. He pursued his studies in philosophy, psychology, and philology at the University of Frankfurt and the University of Berlin and received his Doctorate in 1935. He was ordained in 1936 at the Rabbinical Seminary of Berlin.



As Chief Rabbi of the State of Oldenburg in front of his synagogue

Rabbi Trepp led his first rabbinate in Oldenburg, overseeing 15 synagogues. How were these congregations able to survive during the Great Depression and the relentless anti-Semitism?

When he arrived in Oldenburg, the number of congregants had dwindled from a high of more than 1,000 to approximately 300, as many German Jews had already made the decision to emigrate. The National Socialists continued to make things so difficult for the Jews. For my husband, however, nothing could have prepared him for this rabbinate as he encountered terrible poverty and hunger, as in this part of the country the Nazis had already been elected into government and they taxed the Jewish community at very high rates. The Oldenburg congregation became financially depleted. Helping Jews in any way put you at risk of being an outcast in the larger German community. Many Jewish merchants were unable to work and could not sell their goods. Without the assistance of those few farmers who still purchased from Jewish merchants and that of the *Reich Association of Jews in Germany*, as led by its president Rabbi Leo Baeck, the small synagogues that still remained would have perished much sooner.

(Note: This interview has been edited and condensed for clarity and length.)

If he knew things were only worsening for the Jews, why did he choose to stay in Germany? Why not emigrate with other German Jews?

As he would tell me, he wanted to influence German Jewish life, so for him leaving Germany was not his primary desire. He was young and ambitious. With this in mind, it makes sense that he accepted a new position as the rabbi of the largest congregation in Cologne, where he was supposed to start in January 1939. You must understand that as bad as the anti-Semitism was becoming during the 1930s, many German Jews still believed that it would pass. They did not imagine things could ever get as bad as it did (and this was still years before the Germans implemented their plans for the “Final Solution”). Hitler wanted to rid Germany of its Jewish population. Many German Jews, like Trepp, felt so deeply German and there had always been times of pain for the Jews. However, his wife Miriam de Haas was an assertive woman and felt it best to leave.

This gets fascinating. Miriam was a kindergarten teacher, right?

Yes. She also happened to know that Britain’s Chief Rabbi, Joseph Herman Hertz, vacationed in Switzerland every year. In summer 1938, Miriam sought his advice on what to do and if he would assist them in possibly leaving Germany. Of course, Leo remained conflicted. His congregation in Oldenburg continued to dwindle, but he felt responsible for them.

Did they eventually meet with Rabbi Hertz?

Yes, they met him in St. Moritz and asked him if he would assist them in getting out of Germany. He replied, in no uncertain terms, NO. I quote: “You are the captain of this ship. You have to stay until the ship sinks.” Can you imagine hearing those words?

What was Rabbi Trepp’s reaction?

He was 25 at the time and responsible for his shrinking congregation in Oldenburg. He wasn’t sure what to do. He later wrote: “I was grateful for Rabbi Hertz’s advice. And I went back with a deeper sense of knowing what I really needed to do.” So, he was more certain than ever to stay in Germany. But it was a fateful decision. On November 9, 1938, his synagogue, along with many others, was burned down on what is now known as *Reichspogromnacht* (also known as *Kristallnacht*). He and Miriam were arrested and, within a few hours that night, the Nazis had gathered all of his congregants – men, women, infants, and the very old. That is when Rabbi Trepp understood that this was happening on a far bigger magnitude than he had thought possible.

How did they get out?

Luckily for Miriam, she together with the other women were released the following day while the men were sent to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in Oranienburg. She immediately returned home and sent a telefax to Rabbi Hertz saying, “The ship has sunk. What to do?”

Rabbi Hertz sent two visas for her and Rabbi Trepp, who was released from the camp nearly three weeks later on condition he leave Germany within two weeks. Both stayed in London for a year, with Leo receiving an offer to lead a synagogue in Manchester. They did have relatives in the United States on the East Coast, however, and by 1940 they made the decision to leave England.

What were Rabbi Trepp’s impressions of American Judaism at this time?

He first found work leading a congregation in Greenfield, Massachusetts. It was there that he eventually contacted Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan (the founder of Reconstructionist Judaism). Along with Kaplan, Rabbi Trepp saw a lapse in religious life among American Jews. While doing good social work was important, there was no strong relationship to religious Judaism. As someone who was raised to be Jewish in everything he did, it was something of a shock to him. It appeared to him that Jews would go to shul but once they left it, it seemed their Judaism left as well. Kaplan asked him to be an editor of the Reconstructionist magazine and through Kaplan, Leo felt he found another neo-Orthodox rabbi who was looking for meaningful change in American Jewish culture, someone who was looking to develop Judaism and make it more relevant in the lives of Jews. Otherwise, it could become meaningless.

This was also a time when Rabbi Trepp encountered the racism of the Deep South, yes?

Yes. For a time, he led a congregation based out of Newport News, Virginia. He also worked as a broadcaster, providing commentary and editorials. He sought to appeal to both Christians and Jews, but eventually was fired from radio when he hinted that Judaism is based on an ethical life and that discrimination against another people, namely African-Americans, is not ethical and that could not be reconciled with Jewish life. In 1944, he wrote in a newspaper that while American soldiers were fighting for democracy and freedom, we should not forget that if we are to stand up for these values overseas, we should live by these same values here at home. For Leo, having experienced the concentration camp in Germany, he could not understand how people here in the United States could discriminate against someone because of their race, color of skin, or religion. And worse, he could not accept that any Jews would consider going along with this blatant racism. Some Jewish shop owners responded that if they sold merchandise to black people, then no one would shop from their store. There were Jews who told him that if they don’t discriminate against the African-Americans, then they, too, won’t be accepted. Anti-Semitism was virulent as well. Rabbi Trepp would write later that he saw signs such as “no access for negroes, Jews and dogs.” It all became too much for him and for Miriam, and they left eventually, making their way to the West Coast.

Wasn't it at this time that Rabbi Trepp finally received confirmation about the rest of his family in Europe?

In October 1947, his daughter Susan was born here in America. She is named after his mother, Zipora, because Leo had learned that his entire family had been murdered in the Holocaust, with the exception of a cousin who escaped to Israel and his brother Gustav whom he was able to get out of the concentration camp and into England. Gustav would later become an Orthodox rabbi and move to Israel.

What would you say was the lasting impact that the Shoah had on Rabbi Trepp?

For him, surviving the Holocaust made it imperative to expand the Jewish community. He wanted to educate Jews to lead a Jewish life, and if the Jews became engaged with a non-Jew, his goal was to make new Jews! He became very open to conversion. He always said that as a community, we cannot help it. There will always be Jews who will meet non-Jews and our best option is to make them Jewish. We must make Judaism so attractive that they can't help but want to be Jews. That's our best option. He once wrote that he would define a Jew as a person who feels he or she belongs to the Jewish people under whatever circumstances, no matter what. Living a Jewish life to him meant not only having the values and living them but also being aware that what we do, we do for a reason, namely that this is how God wants us to live our lives. To him, Torah and Judaism contained the most ethical and humane guidelines to leading a meaningful life. He devoted his life to teaching Jews and non-Jews alike about Judaism. When he came to California, he first built the synagogue in Berkeley (Congregation Beth-El). Later, he received an appointment to teach at Napa Valley College. He founded new congregations in Eureka (Temple Beth El) and Santa Rosa (Congregation Beth Ami). Many of these Jews, some of them newly converted, became pillars of their local Jewish community.

Did it matter to Rabbi Trepp whether you were Reform or a Conservative Jew?

For him, there was no Reform or Conservative. There was just Judaism. There is just being an observant Jew or a non-observant Jew. And he always emphasized that each Jew had to learn and grow in his or her way and decide what level of observance they could live with. This is what he tried to get across in many of his books as well. He himself put on Tefillin every morning, his entire life, right up until the very end. There was no Friday without Kiddush, no day without prayer. At the same time, he realized that Judaism had to evolve. For him, helping Jews to be "good Jews" is what mattered most. He saw the world with "Jewish eyes." Putting on Tefillin was a reminder to him that, each day, he steps into the world as a Jew. This is what he tried to get across in many of his books as well. Because of his dedication, he was loved by non-Jews in Germany as well. His book *Judaism: Development and Life* became a best-seller when it was first published in 1969; he included additional content specifically for the German audience, wanting to introduce readers to Judaism.



Rabbi Trepp visiting the University of Mainz where he taught every summer and was an honorary Senator.

Rabbi Trepp not only spread Judaism through his books, but also became known for reaching across the aisle to other religious groups, yes?

He was a proud Jew and expected from others to fully comprehend and live their culture and religion, since he saw the acceptance of the other as the core element for a peaceful co-existence. As the Hebrew Bible says, "Though shalt love the stranger." He very much stood for dialogue. That is why he eventually went to Germany to get in touch with local church leaders and to initiate a dialogue with Muslims. In the early 1970s, he guest lectured at the University of Hamburg where he initiated the first Jewish/Christian/Muslim conference. At that time, Germans were not terribly aware of the Muslim world. Rabbi Trepp identified the Muslim community as a group that needed to be reached out to. At first, the Muslims rejected Rabbi Trepp's offer for a dialogue, saying they could never sit at a table with Jews. But then in 1979, it worked, and Muslims agreed to meet with Jews.

How well was he able to reconcile the old Germany (with its Nazi past) with that of today's reunified Germany?

It all comes down to whether we want to learn from history. Of course, he was very happy when the wall came down in 1989. But for my husband, there was an even deeper meaning having to do with whether Germans would see the fall of the wall as an opportunity of promoting themselves and publicize a sort of a "new Germany," or would they choose for it to be a humbling moment, one seen with humility that also never forgets events such as the *Reichspogromnacht* that ultimately led to the establishment of the wall. He was very upset when he read in the news about anti-Semitism again rearing its head in the open in Germany in the early 2000s. It came both from the extreme right and young men within the Muslim community. He read reports about the first neo-Nazis getting elected into state parliament and the first Jews wearing a kippa getting beaten up in the middle of Berlin. His immediate response was "Did we fail? Did we completely fail?" "This cannot be," he said. "Germany must cry out against this." He said in a speech something that I share with you:

“A people that forgets its past is weakened, since history is the measurement for future behavior, and if you don’t have this measurement, if you don’t have this benchmark for behavior that is only created by your history, then you are no longer writing history. At one point you will look back and see nothing but a series of consecutive events that have no meaning or relationship or purpose.”

Rabbi Trepp wrote more than a dozen books on Judaism. He helped spread Judaism, its ethics and philosophy here in America and abroad. What more can we learn from him?

He influenced many young rabbis with his emphasis on conversion and that of being true to yourself and being aware of your own culture and history in order to have a meaningful dialogue with different groups. He helped educate a whole new generation of Germans about their country’s place in history and the responsibility that Germans carry to be sure that anti-Semitism and racism will eventually be defeated. What Jews might want to know about Leo was his steadfast belief that you have to be able to live in two cultures. One culture is your own people, your own faith or religion, and the other is the world around you that you have a responsibility to care about as well. He conveyed this to the Muslims he spoke to, as well as to German Protestants and Catholics.

It was about being knowledgeable Jews, but at the same time to be completely open to other cultures. During the Jewish/Muslim/Christian Conference in 1979, his Muslim colleagues agreed with him, but also said that if they were to work toward a more liberal Islam, they would be banned from Mecca. That was then, however. Speaking for myself, I always try to push for his mantra.

We need to teach Germans about living Jews and a living Judaism; only then can we prevent the growth of anti-Semitism. Rabbi Trepp always said we are not just about the *Shoah*. That is not who we are. We are so much more. As a Jewish people, we are the culture and the ethics; the ethics of Judaism have influenced all of European history, and that is what people need to understand and what can help us fight anti-Semitism.

Did he ever express an interest in wanting to live in Israel?

No. Although he loved Israel and was a Zionist, and his two only surviving relatives (his brother and cousin) lived there, he was grateful to the United States and felt a deep loyalty. The last time we traveled to Israel was in 2009, a year before he passed away.

What was it like writing this book?

In many ways, it was a lot of pain since I had to leave out so much. The publisher gave me less than 300 pages, and his life was filled with enough that could fill ten times that. I had to leave out a lot. There are so many interesting sub-stories.

Share one with me.

I would have loved to explore further the meaning behind “what is God after the *Shoah*?” Leo was very clear about

it. He responded to Professor Richard Rubenstein’s original book “After Auschwitz” (originally published in 1966), in which he wrote that all existence is ultimately meaningless and there can be no God. Trepp, in his letters to Rubenstein and others about Rubenstein, said that God did not want the *Shoah*, that God suffered with the victims. More importantly, it was clear to him what God stands for: freedom and life. He is telling us what he wants. “I put before you death and life. Choose life.”

He also had an epiphany during his time while in Sachsenhausen. He recalled one night the inmates being called out in the early morning hours and having to stand for hours. One of the commanders told the prisoners they were dirt. He said, “I could command my men to shoot all of you and it would do humanity a blessing.” Trepp writes that in that moment, “I believed the order was to be given and I was going to die. I said my Shema and told God that, “if it is your will that I should die here, I will die for you.” He wrote that in that moment, he felt God’s presence. He said God was standing next to him and that “God was suffering with us.” He later said he never experienced that type of

feeling again, the feeling that God is there, and to know that God would go with the Jews to the darkest of places and he would still be there for them. Leo saw the Holocaust in a way that, if the Jews had to die, they should die being in control and with a purpose, which, for him, was to sanctify God’s name. Writing the book, I realized that to him, having lost almost his entire family, it was a necessity to think that way. He once wrote that if he had to believe his mother had been murdered just randomly, for nothing, out of evil, he would despair.

A people that forgets its past is weakened, since history is the measurement for future behavior...

How about we address the elephant in the room. You were raised a Protestant. Why did you convert to Judaism?

Well, I’d always been very critical of religion growing up, but I still wanted God to be in my life. As a young adult, I read a lot of the feminist theology, but was not satisfied. I eventually left the church. My first husband, knowing how seriously I was searching, introduced me to Jewish philosophers Franz Rosenzweig and Martin Buber. They made perfect sense to me. So, Judaism it was! But as a German, I was convinced I could never place myself on the side of the victims because that was the only thing we knew about the Jews — that they were the victims of the *Shoah*. It seemed completely wrong. So, I never converted. Then my first husband died. I eventually met Rabbi Trepp in Oldenburg and, strange as it may sound, since he was much older than me, I fell in love with him. Apart from him being a living encyclopedia, fluent in multiple languages, which would have attracted everybody, I fell in love with his warmth, his wit, his intellect and, foremost, his complete humanity. He treated everyone he met with the same affection and respect, no matter their position in society. He was just the best human being I’d ever met in my entire life. He became everything to me.

When we went on our first vacation together, we were sitting at the beach doing nothing at all. He wrote some sign on a napkin, saying "That's an Alef, say, 'Alef.'" Yet another letter appeared, and he murmured, "Bet, say, 'Bet.'" And like that, I learned the Hebrew alphabet out of boredom just being on the beach together.

I eventually told him my feelings about conversion and why I felt I couldn't become a Jew. He replied that my thinking wasn't rational because we, the Jewish people, are so much more than the *Shoah*. That is not what makes us Jewish. If you feel Jewish and you want to be a Jew, you should learn and convert. So I learned with him. By 2001, I converted with him, Rabbi Stephen Pearce, and Rabbi Helen Cohn. Since then, I'm a happy Jew.

Has spreading Rabbi Trepp's love for Judaism infused your life with new purpose?

For me, I want to spread the idea that we can be religious Jews, who realize that we have the obligation to care



Rabbi Trepp wrote more than a dozen books on Judaism.

about others. Why? Is this stress? Is it a burden? Or is it the first step to freedom? A liberation from what many in society have chosen as their new deities? Self-seeking and self-interest? What does Torah say about it? Judaism to me is about learning and the pursuit of knowledge and understanding why I do what I do. That is one of my missions for young Jews and is a principle reason why I recently joined Emanu-El's Board of Directors. It would be great to strengthen the link between Torah and Talmud and daily life. That's why I love Emanu-El so much. We are a community which really wants to make this world a better place as Jews. Many of our leaders are great examples of it. And many of our congregants are doing just that, too; they come to study, to listen to lectures, to learn with and from each other, filling their lives with meaning and purpose.

And the other main purpose for me is to fight anti-Semitism, to counter it with education and knowledge about Judaism. I hope to do more of that in Germany. In cooperation with others, I have been working hard in trying to educate Germans that there is more to know about the Jewish people than what they went through

during the years of the Nazi government and the *Shoah*. People associate Jews with black hats and being victims. When some German students we trained last year heard that one could convert to Judaism, that Jesus was actually Jewish and that women can be rabbis, they were puzzled. So, one has to start with the basics, and to continue with teaching them about Jewish ethics and culture. They should be taught to appreciate that Judaism is a living, vibrant, and developing culture, and that the Jewish people and their set of values have been part of society and have contributed to it for thousands of years.

What do you see as Rabbi Trepp's legacy?

I think there are three. One is to be a devoted Jew, to be concerned about other people, and to be an engaged citizen as a Jew, and because one is a Jew. To view the world with Jewish eyes and to enter conversations and dialogues with others as a Jew, to stand up for the values that our people have conveyed over thousands of years. To be authentic and to expect the same from others; that is who he was and what he stood for. To always be open for dialogue, but never downplay or hide one's own convictions and values just to please others. To debate and to argue always with openness and the knowledge that, when it comes to religion, there is no objective truth. In a speech, my husband once said that if the monotheistic religions would learn to add the insights of their beliefs instead of dividing them even further, there might just be a chance for peace.

Which leads to his second message, that is: We cannot live together by the concept of tolerance since it always carries an inequality. But nobody stands above another one. The base for a decent and peaceful co-existence has to come from the notion that everybody has been created equal by God. Nobody is in a position to take his or her human rights away, or to grant it.

And third, for the Germans, his message that the new generation, according to the Talmud, should not bear guilt, but will always carry the responsibility to be at the forefront of the fight against anti-Semitism, and any kind of hate against another person based on religion, race, gender, or sexual orientation. I think all of these messages are still powerful.



In 2003, Rabbi Trepp receives a Torah scroll from Karl Kardinal Lehman in Mainz that the Catholic church had hidden during the Pogroms in 1938 and that the priest had found in an attic decades later.

FAMILY AND YOUTH

Youth and Family Education (YFE) programs at Emanu-El bring together a large number of talented individuals — including 18 lead teachers; 17 teacher assistants; and 51 teen teachers, volunteers, and staff. One of the most special aspects of our programs is how involved and integrated our clergy are.

Throughout Jewish history, rabbis often have had full-time occupations in addition to their roles as community leaders, counselors, and teachers. For example, Maimonides was a physician, and Rashi worked with his family in local vineyards. Thankfully, Emanu-El rabbis and cantors are able to devote their full attention to our community and the many hats they wear here.

Our YFE programs provide Emanu-El's youngest congregants with a multitude of opportunities to connect with our rabbis. On Sunday mornings, every student starts his or her day with a rotation of rabbis and cantors leading *T'fillah*. The short service is musical, interactive, fun, as an intentional reinforcement of core Jewish blessings and values. And each member of the clergy brings a unique style to the experience, so routine doesn't have to mean repetitious. During the fall semester, first-graders take "field trips" to each rabbi's office, which is how they get to know their way around the building and feel at home. These children explore the art work on display, ask questions they have prepared ahead of time, and have the opportunity to converse, up close, with those they are used to seeing on the *Bima*. In other grades, rabbis join classes in the Reuben Rinder Chapel to unroll a Torah and allow them to explore it up close. These are beautiful moments to experience together, as both the object and the leaders are demystified a bit and made more approachable.

As students get older, they are even more ready to interact with and learn from our clergy. Third- and fourth-graders get to spend time each week with Cantors Attie and Luck, learning Jewish music connected to holidays, the Hebrew language, and Israel. Fifth-graders spend the winter/spring semester with the cantors learning trope (Torah chanting). And in *Beyachad* (our 4th-/5th-grade YFE program), Rabbi Bauer meets with families to explore the core Jewish values recited in the blessing *Eilu Devarim* (including visiting the sick, making peace where there is strife, welcoming guests, accompanying the dead for burial, and providing for wedding couples). The rabbis are an integral part of the sixth-grade program, leading the Shabbat Experience learning services as well as the family and student weekend retreats. And every student works individually with both their guide rabbi and cantor for six months leading up to the day when they become B'nei Mitzvah.

I have often said that the learning in elementary grades is focused on building a foundation of core Jewish experience and knowledge, but the most exciting and dynamic learning opens up for students in our adolescent

education program. Eighth-graders learn with Rabbi Beth and Rabbi Rodich, exploring *Tough Questions and Sacred Choices*, considering large ethical and civil issues through a Jewish lens: they also travel to Los Angeles for a Jewish Legacy weekend. Ninth-graders explore the *Shoah* and Israel with our Director of Adolescent Education, Ariana Estoque. Tenth-graders study theology and American Jewish history with Rabbi Jonathan (and travel with him to New York City!). Eleventh-graders learn about comparative religions with Rabbi Fenves. Seniors participate in a seminar class with Rabbi Bauer, examining Jewish life on college campus as well as a deeper dive into Israeli and American politics (they also travel to Washington DC for the AIPAC Policy Conference). New this year, we have added a monthly Friday night Shabbat experience just for teens in 9th through 12th grades — TISCH (Teens in Spiritual Communal Happenings) — which includes spiritual time with our clergy. Everyone may know that each B'nei Mitzvah student has one-on-one time with a guide rabbi in the last months of their preparations, and many have gotten the opportunity to study for an hour with a rabbi during a YFE family day.

There are so many touch points and magical moments and great learning that happen at every age throughout our programs. And even more touch points behind the scenes as these great leaders, learned teachers, and pillars of our community invest time, heart, wisdom, and *kavanah* into making YFE a core and integrated part of our Emanu-El community.

Lom Friedman
Director of Education



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As a large congregation, we recognize the importance of small group connection, so we create many opportunities for learning, socializing, and enjoying local culture together. Refer to the Community or Social Justice pages on our website for more information and staff contact information.

Remember to register online in the MyEmanu-El portal for all of these programs (unless otherwise noted below) so we know to expect you.

Your Community Engagement Team:

Terry Kraus

tkraus@emanuelsf.org, x111

Shelby David

sdavid@emanuelsf.org x177

Ann Jackson

ajackson@emanuelsf.org x138

Frana Price

fprice@emanuelsf.org, x0

Rebecca Reiner

rreiner@emanuelsf.org, x170

Weekday Activities at the Temple

Choose one or more and participate!

Cooking for Congregants

Thursdays, February 7 and 14, 9:00 - 11:00 am, Emanu-El Kitchen

No charge; drop in.

Be one of six volunteers preparing meals for Emanu-El congregants who are facing significant life challenges. For those dealing with a serious illness, new birth, or death of a loved one, food



frequently becomes a low priority, so the support provided by this program can make a huge difference! "Cooking for Congregants" is led by former restaurant owner Gail Laghi and chef Sari Swig.

Register at the temple website by the Tuesday before each cooking day, or call Frana Price at (415) 751-2535.

The Stories of Your Life: Guided Autobiography and Life Review Writing

Monday, February 4, 10:00 am - noon, Room 53

No charge; any skill level welcomed.

Join this free and friendly group that meets monthly to share stories on assigned themes. It's an opportunity for self-reflection and the chance to tell your unique story while also getting to know other warm and wonderful members of our congregation. No writing experience is necessary and new participants are always welcome! Online registration is required. For more information, contact the group facilitator Nancy Alpert, LCSW at nalpo@igc.org.

Scrabble

Mondays, February 4, 11, and 25, 11:00 am - 3:00 pm, Room 57

No charge; drop in; all ages & experience levels welcomed.

Do you enjoy the challenge of putting letters together to form words? Join the Scrabble group and play a rousing game or two! Expand your vocabulary along with your social circle. Bring a Scrabble set (optional) and, of course, your appreciation of words. Scrabble meets every Monday except when the temple is closed.

Mah Jongg

Tuesdays, February 5, 12, 19, and 26, 1:30 - 4:30 pm, Rinder Chapel

No charge; drop in.

These sessions are open to all levels of experience, but you must know the basics as there will be no teaching — play time only! Arrive within the first half hour if you have any questions.

Bridge Club - Lessons and Game

Tuesdays, February 12 and 26, 10:00 am - noon, Rinder Chapel

Cost: Members \$25; friends of members \$30

If you are beyond the level of novice, join this very popular and lively group for duplicate-style bridge. Play while improving your game. Certified bridge instructor and American Contract Bridge League champion Deborah Murphy is the instructor.



Congregant Groups & Gatherings

Meet other congregants at these weekend and evening get-togethers! Register online! Contact Terry Kraus (tkraus@emanuelf.org) with any questions.

Emanu-El in the Neighborhood

Build Emanu-El in your community with neighborhood gatherings.

Do you love your local coffee shop or farmers market? And does bringing a little Emanu-El into your neighborhood appeal to you? If you're looking for a volunteer opportunity close to home, consider becoming a neighborhood liaison to reach out to congregants in need, coordinate neighborhood events, and welcome new congregants. Or volunteer to host a local community get-together in your home.

The Tribe for Men Workouts! Great People, Great Workout! Great Tribe!

Sunday, February 3, 10:00 - 11:00 am, Advanced Wellness, 2940 Geary Boulevard

Cost: \$8 to cover beverages (any excess goes to charity)

On Sunday, February 3, Tribesman Leo Shveyd is opening up his gym — AW-Personalized Training & Sports Performance — exclusively for the Tribe for Men where he will tailor a workout for all Tribe members. Leo will lead you through an energizing routine and a few lessons to carry forward in your own training, after which coffee, green juices, coconut waters, etc. will help you come down from the endorphin rush!

The Men's Group with Rabbi Jonathan

Sunday, February 24, 9:30 - 11:30 am, private residence (location provided upon registration)

Men of Congregation Emanu-El have a monthly opportunity to socialize and study with a member of the clergy at a private home. This cross-generational group provides a small group experience so important to building community.

The Men's Group monthly events are always held at the same time unless otherwise specified. All Men's Group events are congregant only and require registration.

Thanks to a donation from a member of the Men's Group, the majority of gatherings are now offered for free!

Two Baby Groups Available!



Drop in with your little one (birth to 2 years) and spend time with other parents. Join us as we prepare to welcome Shabbat on Fridays and celebrate Havdalah on Mondays. Enjoy music, stories, puppets, and more with Early Childhood Educator Mimi Greisman. Take advantage of a wonderful opportunity to connect with other parents and create lasting friendships!

Bagels and Babies

Fridays, February 8, 15, and 22, 9:30 - 11:00 am, Martin Meyer Reception

Mazel Tots!

Mondays, February 4, 11, and 25, 9:30 - 11:00 am, Martin Meyer Reception

Cost: Free for members; \$10/session for non-members (with first session free)

Stay tuned to future editions of the Chronicle for information on the following groups:

- The Tribe for Women (for moms with children ages 0-18)
- The Women's Group (gatherings throughout the year for all adult women of Emanu-El)
- Interfaith Group (gatherings for Emanu-El Interfaith members and families)

DEVELOPMENT

Donate Online!

Making a contribution to Emanu-El is a meaningful way to honor friends and family while supporting the synagogue. Please visit our website (www.emanuelf.org/support-us/), select "Donate Now or Annual Giving," and follow the steps to make a gift. You will receive an electronic confirmation, followed by an acknowledgment letter in the mail. If you need assistance, contact Talia Rothman in the Development Office at trothman@emanuelf.org or (415) 750-7554.

Appreciated Stock Gifts

Did you know that you could make charitable gifts — including your Emanu-El Membership Dues and Impact Fund gifts — by donating your appreciated stock? This is a great way to avoid capital gains taxes while supporting the Congregation.

If you are making a stock gift, please use the following information:

First Republic Securities Co, LLC
Account Name: Congregation Emanu-El
For Further Credit to Account Number: 33L064574
Clearing Firm: Pershing LLC
Pershing LLC DTC# 0443

Note: Please make the Development Office aware of your stock gift before it is transferred so your donation can be tracked and appropriately directed as you wish. Email Talia Rothman at trothman@emanuelf.org or (415) 750-7554.

Corporate Matching

Many Bay Area companies will match your gift dollar-for-dollar. Please contact your company's matching gifts coordinator to obtain a matching gift form and determine whether your gift to Congregation Emanu-El can be matched.

Thank you to the following companies for matching our member's donations:



B'NEI MITZVAH



Miriam Mimi Kovriga

Bat Mitzvah:
February 2 – Main Sanctuary
Parents: Irina & Alexander Kovriga
Torah Portion: *Mishpatim*



Maya Egrie

Bat Mitzvah: February 9 –
Martin Meyer Sanctuary
Parents:
Lisa Kessler & Glenn Egrie
Torah Portion: *Terumah*



Madelyn Garfinkel

Bat Mitzvah: February 9 –
Main Sanctuary
Parents:
Kimberly & Jonathan Garfinkel
Torah Portion: *Terumah*



Chloe Hall-Sherr

Bat Mitzvah: February 23 –
Martin Meyer Sanctuary
Parents: Karen Hall & Steve Sherr
Torah Portion: *Ki Tissa*

Welcome New Members!

Mr. Jonathan Abramson	Mrs. Anna Nikhinson
Ms. Tristen Chang	Mr. Joseph Oropeza
Ms. Dani Dhari	Mr. Ryan Rich
Ms. Michelle Gooel	Mr. Ben Shisler
Sarah Miller	Mrs. Carly Siegel
Mr. Benjamin Miller	Meyer Steckenberg
Mr. Paul Nikhinson	Mr. Daniel Steckenberg
Miriam Nikhinson	Ms. Gabrielle Zagorin

Welcome Back Rejoined Members!

Miriam Cohen	Mrs. Karen Gould
Norah Cohen	Ms. Sarah Raitzin
Charlotte Cohen	Mrs. Miki Habryn
Ms. Allison Cohen	<i>(This is a correction to the</i>
Mr. Eli Cohen	<i>January issue.)</i>

Mazel Tov to Our Members Who Have Experienced Joy

Judy and Gary Grossman on the birth of their granddaughter, Delia Grossman Cano (daughter of Daniel Grossman and Laura Cano) born on December 14, 2018 in Grenada, Spain

Susan Rothstein and John Koepfel on the birth of their granddaughter, Elodie Ji Na Koepfel

Jill Nisson and Herk Confer on the birth of their daughter, Sabine Nisson Confer

Jessica and Matt Gorelik on the birth of their son, Samson Elijah Gorelik

Stephanie and Nate Pollack on the birth of their daughter, Vivian Ariella Pollack

Lauren Weiss on the birth of her son, Leo Stanley Weiss

Anna and David Bell on the birth of their son, Andrew Isaac Bell

Condolences to Our Members Who Have Suffered Recent Losses

Susan Friedman (Michelle Jean) on the death of her mother, and Ian Friedman on the death of his grandmother, Joyce Friedman

Stacy Byrne (Rick) on the death of her mother, and Richard and Aidan Byrne on the death of their grandmother, Jill Schafer

Rachel Kay on the death of her mother, Rena Kay

Celebrating a Shehecheyanu Moment?

Congregation Emanu-El is a partner in the transitional moments of our members' lives. Be it a baby naming or brit milah, bar or bat mitzvah, conversion or wedding ceremony, or a recovery from illness, the Temple clergy and staff strive to ensure that each sacred "Shehecheyanu Moment" is deeply fulfilling and personal. A donation to the Emanu-El Life-Cycle Fund is a lovely way to mark a personal life-cycle experience, to honor friends or family celebrating a happy milestone or in gratitude for the services, the clergy provide during these profound moments.

Please donate online at www.emanuelf.org/donate-now/ or call the Development office at (415) 750-7554.



Congregation Emanu-El
Two Lake Street
San Francisco, CA 94118
www.emanuelsf.org

PERIODICAL

We are a vibrant, sacred Jewish community that is dedicated to advancing our members' lifelong involvement in Judaism through worship, learning, good deeds, and congregant to congregant connections.

Beth Singer,
Richard and Rhoda Goldman, *Senior Rabbi*
Jonathan Singer,
Richard and Rhoda Goldman, *Senior Rabbi*
Sydney B. Mintz, *Rabbi*
Ryan Bauer, *Rabbi*
Carla Fenves, *Rabbi*
Jason Rodich, *Rabbi*
Marsha Attie, *Cantor*
Arik Luck, Ben and A. Jess Shenson, *Cantor*
Roslyn Barak, *Senior Cantor Emerita*
Stephen Pearce, PhD, *Sr. Taube Emanu-El Scholar and Rabbi Emeritus*
Rabbi Lawrence Kushner, *Emanu-El Scholar*
David N. Goldman, *Executive Director and General Counsel*
Terry Kraus, FTA, *Director of Membership Services*
Elena Gary, *Chief Financial Officer*
Ariana Estoque, M.Ed, *Director of Adolescent and Adult Education*
Lom Friedman, *Director of Education*
Flora Kupferman, *Assistant Director of Youth Education*
Svetlana Leykin, *Director of Facilities and Special Events*
Penny Mika, *Director of Operations and Office Administration*
Julie Weinberg, *Director of Development*
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★ CONGREGATION EMANU-EL'S ★

shushan's
bazaar

SUNDAY MARCH 17 2019

Festivities for all ages will include carnival games, crafts, food and entertainment!

Carnival 3-5:30
Purim Spiel 5:30-6:15

Annual Purim Bake Sale

come in your favorite costume!