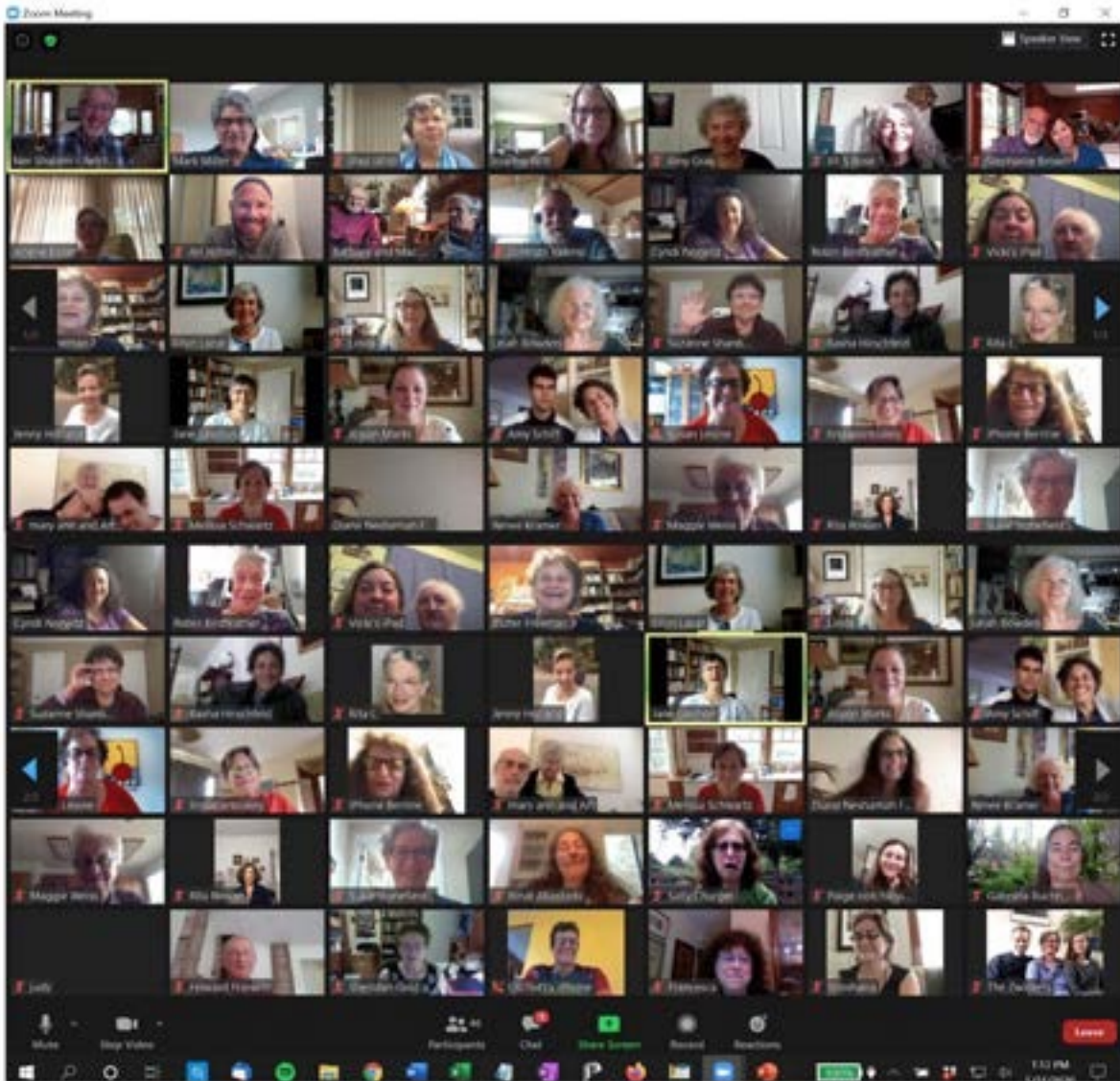


Congregation Ner Shalom Holiday Booklet 5782



Respite, Repair and Renewal

Welcome to Congregation Ner Shalom

Our Mission

Congregation Ner Shalom strives to be a radically inclusive community that embraces creative and meaningful expressions of Jewish spiritual tradition and celebration through ritual, social justice action, music, learning and laughter



So welcome to our home, whether this is your first time or your fiftieth, whether you joined us last week or haven't been with us since this time last year. We're glad you chose to spend this powerful and vulnerable time of year with us. Enjoy the song and the soulfulness, the learning and the laughter. May you be moved in surprising ways. Despite the Pandemic, we are still finding ways to connect and share Shabbat, education, and camaraderie through Zoom. We will persevere.

Wishing you a new year of sweetness, health and peace.



“Come, come, whoever you are. Wanderer,
worshiper, lover of leaving. It doesn’t matter.
Ours is not a caravan of despair...” Rumi

Dear Friends Old and New,

In these holiest of days, we welcome you, whoever and wherever you are. Around here, we’re not a caravan of despair. Instead, we’ve reached deep and found resilience, creatively and perhaps even hope.

If we were meeting in person, you’d most likely get a fervent hello and a hug from our greeting team and your friends at the shul.

So this is my way of offering you a virtual hug and a happy new year wish.

In this challenging time, especially, I’ve been deeply appreciative of the community of Ner Shalom. If you’ve joined us for services or classes, I hope that you too have found solace and inspiration here.

In some ways, everything is different, and in others, nothing has changed. Because what makes Ner Shalom wonderful and spiritual and inspirational is not the building. It’s the people who bring you their best from deep inside their souls.

So it is my deepest wish, whether you’re a regular or a one-time visitor from afar or anything in-between, that you will find the High Holy Day services just what you need to make it through the rest of this year. I invite you to dip into the well of hope, bask in the light of inspiration, and embrace the beautiful melodies.

And as it is said on Passover, sort of, “Next Year in the Building!”

L’shalom,
Amy Gray, President.



About Congregation Ner Shalom



The building was built in 1910 as the Cotati Women's Club. Since then it was the famous Cotati Cabaret. Today we continue the musical tradition of the building with concerts and lively musical services. We hope to be back in the building soon!

Our congregation formed in May 1982, when a small group of people came together to start the Sonoma County Synagogue Center. The congregation is affiliated with the Reconstructionist Movement, and continues that affiliation to date.

In 1994 we acquired our historic building. After moving into the building, we renamed ourselves Congregation Ner Shalom – the Lamp of Peace. We are a spirited and diverse community of people from a wide variety of backgrounds. We explore Jewish-centered paths

of ritual, learning, song, community-building, social change and mindfulness. We support our children and youth with the Nitzanim program. We welcome visitors, new members, interfaith families, LGBTQI folk, families with special needs – and you. We are also proud to be a scent-free, smoke-free haven, safe for people with multiple chemical sensitivities.

Our Torah Scrolls

Some particular items of note here at Ner Shalom. We have two Torah scrolls, each with a story of migration and renewal. Our first Torah, scribed in the 1700s, is from Sobeslav, a small Czech town whose Jewish community was destroyed in the Shoah. We see ourselves as the stewards of the memory of the Jews of that town, whose names you see framed against our eastern wall.

Our second Torah scroll is a gift of Rabbis Daria and Josh Jacobs-Velde who used the Torah in their outdoor renewal synagogue, Zmanim. It had belonged to Daria's great-great-uncle, also a rabbi, whom she never met. Some years ago his colleagues at an interfaith retreat center he'd founded sought her out to take the scroll, and she subsequently gifted it to us. The beautiful mantle was created by Ner Shalom Leiah Bowden.



Our Piano

And you will notice our baby grand piano. It is also a survivor. When the Nazis came to power, Erna Salm, a concert pianist in Darmstadt, shipped this German-made Steinway to Rotterdam. She and her husband barely escaped, eventually making it to Chicago. After the war she was able to retrieve the piano and play it the rest of her life. This piano is a gift of her son, David Salm.

Join Us

We hope that many of you will consider joining our lovely congregation this year. We are a vibrant community that values the needs, hopes and unique gifts of our members. For more information, contact Stephanie Brown at stephanieb1818@gmail.com or (650) 387-4417.

*Thank you, Members and Friends of Congregation Ner Shalom
For your generosity throughout 5781!*

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David Zwicker and Annemarie Goslow-Zwicker

Thank you to everyone for your donation!

Consider Joining Ner Shalom!

We would love for you to join our wonderful community. **Here's how:** If you would like to become a member, email Membership Chair Stephanie Brown at stephaniebr818@gmail.com.

If you are not currently a member and have purchased tickets to *all* High Holy Day services at Ner Shalom for \$193.00, we are pleased to offer a Trial Membership through December 31st for only \$42.00. Contact the office to add today! At \$235.00, it's the best deal in town, since it **includes** the price for the High Holy Day tickets! PLUS member discounts on any classes!

Please contact the office at (707) 664-8622 or info@nershalom.org.

eScrip

Did you know? You can earn money for Ner Shalom simply by signing up for an eScrip account at www.escrip.com. When you checkout during your usual shopping at participating markets, show your eScrip number and voila ~ a portion of your bill is donated to the shul. Help out today at participating local locations:

Woodland's Market
Petaluma Market
Mollie Stone's Fircrest Market
Oliver's Market
Glen Ellen Village Market
Scotty's Market

The website lists additional merchants (non-grocer) that accept eScrip. Once signed up, ask your particular market how eScrip works for them.



Nitzanim: The Flower Buds of Our Community

The Ner Shalom Nitzanim program is a rich and exciting offering for young people, K-8, and their families. It is an opportunity to deepen in Jewish experience, learning through song, prayer, nature, art, story, movement, text and discussion. Through the Nitzanim program, we will nourish our young people so they can blossom and draw sustenance from Judaism's deep and ancient roots.

With the onset of Covid-19, parents and children are maintaining connections through Zoom. We have been hosting Shabbat, Havdallah, and other gatherings online. Janet Rae and friends have recorded numerous stories and lullabies to continue weaving deep Jewish truths into the daily lives of our precious youth. Responding to Black Lives Matter and other movements in the United States, parents have been gathering on Zoom to discuss anti-racist parenting. www.nershalom.org/youth.

Celebrations

Would your teen or young adult with special needs enjoy a way to experience the Jewish holidays in a family-friendly environment? If so, you and your teen/young adult are invited to join us for eight sessions celebrating the Jewish holidays through art, music, movement, and story. We have interfaith families as well as families who are new or who are returning to Judaism. **Everyone is welcome!**

As we begin our 14th year, our sessions will take place **in person and on Zoom** to accommodate the needs of our families **as we move to reopen our community**. In person sessions are approximately 2¼ hours and Zoom sessions are 1 hour.

If you are new to the program and would like more information, please contact our Parent Coordinators: Jennifer Lorvick at jlorvick@rti.org (415) 637-7668 or Mary Ann Malinak at mamalinak@comcast.net (707) 694-4700.

Tzedek

Tzedek, the Hebrew word meaning justice, is the Social Justice Arm of Congregation Ner Shalom.

Our Music

Many people come to our services to feel enveloped by our uplifting music, much of it composed by our gifted in-house musicians.



Ner Shalom is proud to offer a variety of learning opportunities for people of all ages. Over the course of this pandemic, we have created a vibrant learning community on Zoom.



Lifelong Jewish Learning classes, programs, and workshops lean into the mystical, magical, spiritual, and textual as a way to illuminate our lives, spark our creativity, and strengthen our community.

Beit Midrash is lovingly presented through a collaboration of Ner Shalom members:

Dean, **Barbara Lesch McCaffry**
Zoom Shamash, **Shari Brenner**
Steering Committee Members:
Gesher Calmenson
Shoshana Fershtman
Basha Hirschfeld
Linda Pantoskey

Please consult the weekly e-blasts and the calendar of events at www.nershalom.org for details regarding upcoming Beit Midrash offerings via Zoom with links to registration for each of these classes.

COME LEARN WITH US!!

And nu, why not invite your friends from across the globe?

Every January there is a *Beit Midrash* Brainstorming Session to plan for programming in the coming year. If you would like to join us or have any questions, please email learning@nershalom.org.

Reb Irwin offers three fabulous learning series! Come learn with the community!

Studying the Basics

Wednesday, September 22

Third Wednesdays October-March

12:00 - 1:15 pm

September Topic: Shabbat

Our year-long study sessions with videos from Reconstructing Judaism and lively discussion with Reb Irwin continues through March 2022. It's not too late to join us for the second half of this year-long journey. Or you can join us for selected

discussions along the way. Either way, we think you'll love it!!

Yiddish Tish

First Wednesday of every month

12:00 - 1:30 pm

Join us to read the work of Yiddish writers in the original, translate together, discuss, laugh and enjoy. And miraculously, no previous Yiddish knowledge is required.



Reb Irwin calls all members to join him for this special *Beit Midrash* series The 4 T's: Time, *Tefilah*, Text, and Tongue, The Foundations of our Tradition Sundays October 10th, November 14th, December 5th and 12th Noon - 2:00 pm

When Reb Irwin talks of Talmud, *gematria*, or *Shemini Atzeret*, do you wish you had a footnote you could look at to double-check what exactly that means? Now's your chance to plant yourself more firmly in your Jewish knowledge!

Session 1, October 10th, Time:

An introduction to the rhythm of Jewish time – days, months, feasts, fasts, and the sweet weekly return of Shabbat.

Session 2, November 14th, *Tefilah*:

An introduction to Jewish prayer and the prayer book, looking at the history, order, structure, and constant reworking of our liturgy.

Session 3, December 5th, Text:

A look at the Jewish library: what are our formative texts – biblical, rabbinic and mystical? How do we use them today?

Session 4, December 12th, Tongue:

Hebrew can be an impediment to Jewish engagement for many of us. Reb Irwin gives a crash course in Hebrew structure and key vocabulary to help make Hebrew more of a window than a wall.



Images: Yarmukian Goddess, Sha'ar HaGolan, Northern Israel ca 6400 BCE (L)
 Goddess Inanna/Ishtar on an Akkadian Empire seal, 2350 BCE, modern day Iraq (R)

**The Sacred Feminine in Judaism:
 An In-Depth Exploration
 Fridays October 1st, 8th, 15th and 29th,
 11:00 am - 12:30 pm
 Led by Kohenet Ruach D'vorah Grenn,
 Shoshana Fershtman, and Adrienne Momi**

In this series, in which we offer varying perspectives, we will explore the pre-Hebraic, pre-Judaic Goddesses of the Ancient Near East and how they embodied the Sacred Feminine; the Hebrew Goddesses and their presence in the Biblical text, and the *Shekhinah* in ancient and modern Jewish mysticism.

Session 1, October 1st:
 Ancient Roots: Pre-Hebraic, Semitic, and Ancient Near Eastern Goddesses
Led by Kohenet Ruach D'vorah Grenn

Session 2, October 8th:
 The Hebrew Goddess and the Sacred Feminine in Biblical Text
Led by Shoshana Fershtman

Session 3, October 15th:
 The Mystical Feminine Experience
Led by Adrienne Momi

Session 4, October 29th:
 Experiencing the Sacred Feminine - An Embodied Theology
Led by Kohenet Ruach D'vorah Grenn and Shoshana Fershtman



**Poetry, Light and the Language of the Spirit:
 A Poetry Workshop with Diane Frank
 Monday, December 6th
 12:00-2:00 pm**



"Dawn at McClure's Beach" © Jeffrey S Bartfeld

Poetry is the language of the soul. It's a powerful technique to access your inner wisdom and express it with power and beauty. In this workshop we will explore:

- Poems inspired by light and your inner vision;
- Writing techniques to make your language sing;
- How to express the language of the soul with power and beauty;
- Wildness, meditative silence, leaping and light;

- How to write a poem that is larger than you are.

All writers are welcome – from raw beginners to seasoned poets who need a jumpstart for their inspiration. The workshop will include a generous helping of ideas to make your poetry more expressive, along with a writing session and time to share a poem. Each poet is welcome to bring a short poem for Diane's close attention.

We are delighted to welcome Diane as a new-ish member of Ner Shalom and a new teacher in Beit Midrash.

Jewish Spiritual Concepts as a Basis for Healing

Wednesday, January 12th

12:00 - 1:00 pm

Led by Reb Judith Goleman



Most of us struggle with self-doubt – occasional or pervasive – unsureness of our acceptability by others – myriad threats to our self-love. This one-hour class will look at spiritual concepts in Judaism that support a process of deepening of our love and acceptance of ourselves.

Judaism holds concepts such as these: that the feminine aspect of Divinity, God's nature indwelling inside of the creation, the *Shechinah*, has a profound and committed and unending love of us; that our innate true nature is part of Divinity; and that our inner structure as humans may cause us to separate from or be unaware of our true nature, and we may be acting in a variety of humanly imperfect ways, but that God is patiently waiting for us to return to our full and true self – these concepts can support our development of authenticity and self-love.

We will draw from Jewish prayer language, as well as teachings from the Baal Shem Tov and other Kabbalistic and Hasidic sources.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~



Rabbi Maurice Harris will give a brief presentation of how Israelis and Palestinians have gotten to the place they're now in, followed by an overview of some of the different proposals for resolving the conflict that are gaining increased attention among Israeli and Palestinian officials and activists.

Rabbi Maurice uses a dual-narrative approach to teaching about the history of the conflict, so his goal is to give an understanding of the different ways both peoples remember the past and give meaning to their current struggles. As we look forward, he will rely in part on how the two narratives play a part in determining what kinds of resolutions to the conflict might be possible in the coming year.

How Did We Get Here and Where Could We Go from Here?

Israel and Palestine Today

Sunday January 30th

11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Led by Rabbi Maurice Harris of Reconstructing Judaism

L' Shana Tovah
from
Congregation Ner Shalom's
Board of Directors

*May blessings bestow our beautiful community throughout all of 5782!
With love and gratitude*

Amy Gray, President
Amy Schiff, Vice President
Linda Pantoskey, Secretary
Mark Miller, Treasurer
Stephanie Brown
Basha Hirschfeld
Elaine Leeder
Art Magnus
Alison Marks
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Linda Schneider

They say that the way our inclusive community comes together to support one another is astonishing. Despite fire and pandemic, we have persevered, our love only growing stronger throughout our challenges. They say the classes and services are a blast, even on Zoom. These days, our music touches our hearts in our homes. Guitar, flute, voice, drum or shofar, the sounds are still a core element of our services. The Good Shabbos Band hasn't stopped playing. They find the prayers, meditations, and insights of our spiritual leadership, led by Rabbi Irwin Keller, inspirational and hopeful.



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Welcome a new year with a new writer-An award-winning literary book author, I bring a fine arts and anthropology backstory to tasteful and grounded sales and brand storytelling; product description-scripts- book editing-email newsletters-real estate copy-grant writing-so much more! Some of my clients include: A UC Berkeley Press author with the newly published, *Light on Fire: The Art and Life of Sam Francis*-Sotheby's San Francisco International Real Estate-JNI International-Contributing writer to *The Brooklyn Rail*- Editing a manuscript for an award winning *LA Times* author-Think Tank Photo-Mindshift Gear-Writing successful grants for individuals applying to the Pollock-Krasner Foundation and the Creative Capital Grant- so much more. **HIRE ME** today or when you are ready for a **trusted** writer! References Available. Thank you! L'Shana Tova!

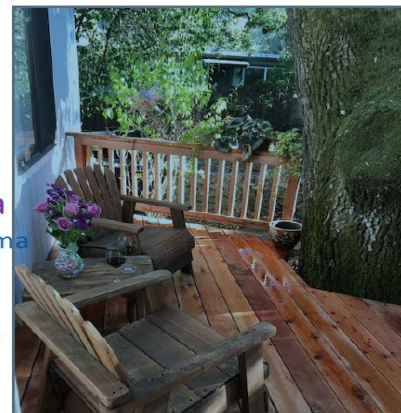
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Shanah Tovah 2021 Peter M Krohn

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*High Holidays
at
Ner Shalom*



Greetings to all for a sweet New Year. May
this be a year of resilience and revitalization,
of joy and deep calm, and of love's abundance.

Barbara Lesch and Michael "Mac" McCaffry

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*Wishing the Ner Shalom community a year of
health, sweetness and joy!
Rabbi Irwin Keller and Family*

*From my family to your family, L'Shana Tova!
May the new year bring you
blessings!*

Vicki, Robert and Rachel Allen



*Wishing our sweet community a year of strength,
health and peace. Shanah Tova!*



Susan Levine and Jim Lauer



*Thank You for Choosing Ner Shalom as
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People know there's something special
about Congregation Ner Shalom.*



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Learn more about our spirited Congregation at www.nershalom.org.

There, you will find information about our Tzedek social justice program, Good Shabbos Band recordings on SoundCloud, links to register for Beit Midrash, the link to sign up for the weekly newsletter eBlast and the donate button.

Thank you for choosing to spend your High Holy Days with us.
L'Shana Tovah!