

Fall 2011/ 5771-72

Dear Friend,

Best wishes for the New Year from Nishmat Shalom, the East Bay's Feminist Minyan. During this High Holiday season, we want to acknowledge that your ideas and energy are what make us an exciting community. We invite you to join us in prayer, study, eating, planning, community service, shmoozing...

Please consider making a donation. Our volunteer-led organization has a modest budget, but we do have expenses for childcare, mailings and publicity, information technology, and occasional special projects.

Nishmat Shalom is now in its 20th year, one of only three chavurot in the United States committed to using gender-balanced Hebrew. We celebrate Shabbat with monthly Saturday morning services in members' homes. Afterwards, we share a vegetarian/fish potluck lunch, often followed by a study session or discussion. Our prayerbook features text in both feminine and masculine Hebrew, lots of singing, and the opportunity for individuals to find their own connections to Torah. We provide professional childcare at many of our events so families with children can participate fully.

Here are some highlights and accomplishments of the past year :

- We held a summer weekend retreat, Yom Kippur Break-Fast, Tu B'Shevat seder, and Erev Shira (Evening of Song). We co-sponsored bonfires, services, and celebrations with other local groups.
- We delighted in our Torah readers and service leaders, celebrated personal milestones, and supported each other through good times and loss and illness.
- We experimented with the format of our Torah service.
- We have maintained a digital version of our original liturgy on our website, plus an audio version, available as an mp3 file, to make learning the liturgy more accessible.
- At Chanukah, we purchased gifts for a family overcoming domestic violence through Shalom Bayit, and provided organizational support to Shalom Bayit throughout the year.

You are very welcome to participate, whether you join us often or once in a while. Please visit www.nishmat.org for a current calendar. If you are not already on our email list, we encourage you to join to receive updates. Please email your name, email address and street address to subscribe@nishmat.org.

A gift at this time will show your support for the East Bay's feminist minyan. Please contribute \$18 -- or more, as your means allow -- and mail your check in the enclosed envelope to Nishmat Shalom, 2415 Grant Street, Berkeley, CA 94703. Donations to Nishmat Shalom are tax deductible to the extent provided by law as described in IRS Publication 1828, based on our status as a small religious group.

We look forward to seeing you soon at a Nishmat Shalom event and appreciate your support. Shanah Tovah. May you and your loved ones have a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year!

Lea Delson
Carol Delton
Alex Madonik
Ethel Murphy
Vicky Prager
Claire Sherman
Ed Silberman
Emily Toch
Max Weinryb