

Fall 2012/ 5772-73

Dear Friend,

Best wishes for the New Year from Nishmat Shalom, the East Bay's Feminist Minyan. During this High Holy Day 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, celebrating, planning, community service, shmoozing...

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

Nishmat Shalom is now in its 21st 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 potluck lunch, often followed by a study session or discussion. Our services feature prayers 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 that families with children can participate fully.

Here are some highlights and accomplishments of the past year :

- We held a Yom Kippur Break-Fast and a Tu B'Shevat seder. 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.
- At Chanukah, we purchased gifts for a family overcoming domestic violence through Shalom Bayit.
- We offered words of appreciation to Vicky Prager at a special event in February thanking her for her ten years of service to Nishmat Shalom as newsletter editor and many years as davening coordinator.
- We held a special Shabbat service in June greeting our former leyning coordinator Nathan Martin, on his visit from Philadelphia, at which he offered a Torah teaching.
- A new team of volunteers took over the editing, printing and distribution of the newsletter.
- We continue to meet regularly at Community Decision Meetings at which we discuss the business of our community, striving to reach consensus with mutual respect. All are welcome to participate in these meetings.
- We continue to be sustained by the volunteer efforts of many individuals who host events; organize and publicize events; lead prayers; chant Torah; maintain and update our mailing list, email list and website; respond to public inquiries; coordinate childcare; maintain our treasury; maintain our Torah and Ark and repair as needed; move the Torah, Ark and boxes of books each month from home to home; offer teachings and lead discussions after lunch; cook delicious food for our potluck gatherings, and more.
- We have maintained a digital version of our original liturgy on our website, plus an audio version, available as mp3 files, to make learning the liturgy more accessible.

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
Alex Madonik
Deborah Pearl
Ed Silberman
Alice Webber

Carol Delton
Ethel Murphy
Claire Sherman
Emily Toch
Max Weinryb