

**Music! Culture! Glamour!****BCC at 45 – A Gala Brunch and Concert***Marc Breindel and Tracy Moore*

BCC's annual awards ceremony for 2017 will celebrate the artists who have filled our Jewish lives with music for almost half a century, as well as community members who inspire us in every way. We will honor eight cherished BCC artists and leaders at the historic Saban Theatre in Beverly Hills on Sunday, March 26.

Our musical honorees have graciously offered to perform a once-in-a-lifetime concert to follow a sparkling mimosas-lox-and-vegan-delights brunch. We'll also honor two individuals, Agnes Herman and Richard Lesse, who have infused our congregation with blazing community spirit.

These six artists who have provided the melodic heart to our BCC spiritual lives will regale us with song at our BCC@45 Gala Brunch and Concert:

**Cantorial Emerita Fran Chalin**

Fran served as BCC's Cantorial Soloist and co-clergy from 1993 to 2008, leaving an indelible mark on our community. Today Chaplain Fran provides spiritual counseling and hospice care in the Jewish community and makes beautiful music with Singing for Peace Yiddish

Chorus and the Klezmer Band Gay Gezunt.

**Cantor Don Alan Croll**

The singing, acting, dancing Cantor Don Croll came to BCC in 1986, straight from Broadway appearances with Bernadette Peters and Donna McKechnie. Last month, Don became the new spiritual leader of BCC's sibling congregation, Beth El Binah, in Dallas. We're thrilled that Don is coming home to sing for us, and to let us celebrate him!

**Tamara Kline**

Before coming to BCC, our gifted Tamara composed television commercials for Barbie and Pepsi, scored

music for Oprah Winfrey and the Disney Channel, and composed the theme for the CBS Winter Olympics. Now also a marriage and family therapist in Beverly Hills, Tamara writes and plays soulful music for BCC.

**Jeanelle LaMance**

Jeanelle has beautifully accompanied BCC's cantors, choir, and visiting performers at High Holiday services and other events for 18 years. She's piano accompanist for Zingen far Sholem Yiddish Chorus and Gay Gezunt, a Klezmer band started at BCC 20 years ago. Jeanelle is also a much-loved piano teacher.

**Phranc**

Perennially known as "the All-American Jewish Lesbian Folksinger," Phranc has performed original electropunk, new wave and other genres since the 1970s. Now predominantly an artist whose paper and cardboard constructions engagingly reflect butch culture, Phranc's work has been shown across the U.S.

**Cantor Juval Porat**

Classically trained (in Germany and Israel) and incredibly creative, Cantor Juval has been uplifting BCC souls since 2008. From sacred song to pop culture, as prayer leader, choir director, songwriter and CD soloist, Juval unceasingly delights and inspires as a spiritual and musical guide along our life journeys.



# OBSERVE PURIM WITH OPERATION PB&J

Traditionally in Judaism, the observance of Purim involves several "commandments." Primary among them are:

- 1) Listening to a reading of the megillah (the Book of Esther)
- 2) *Mishloach matanot* (or *shelach manot*) — the giving of gifts to friends and/or neighbors
- 3) *Matanot L'Evyonim* — giving to the poor



Though we typically do *matanot l'evyonim* by collecting money to give to good causes, this year at BCC we'll be taking part in a special Purim tzedakah project on Friday, March 10 after services or on Shabbat morning, March 11 at Ohr Chayim. "Operation PB & J" started a few years ago and has grown here in LA, as well as in other cities. As LA's organizer Albie Cohen explains, "on Purim night (or at another convenient time) members of your institution make peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and assemble kits for the homeless. We provide the material for the kits (hats, gloves, socks etc.). On Purim day, they hand them out to homeless in the community, either individually or by delivering them to homeless shelters."

Ashira Weinreich and her mother Tara will be heading up Operation PB & J for BCC. We'll ask individuals to make contributions to help pay for each kit to be given away (suggested donation \$10, but anyone can help whether or not they can contribute money). On Sunday, March 12, we'll need a few volunteers to deliver the kits to some pre-determined shelters, probably downtown.



## Big Bang Theory! Does Purim

Bring your inner nerd and let's make the Universe Great Again!

On Saturday evening, March 11 at 6:00 pm, everyone is invited to join the BCC clergy as we join our colleagues and friends Rabbi Zach Shapiro and Cantor Lonee Frailich of Temple Akiba for a light-hearted look at the solar system!

All ages and costumes are welcome. Hamentaschen will be served.

Temple Akiba is at 5249 Sepulveda Blvd. in Culver City (some of us remember when BCC's High Holy Day services were at Temple Akiba more than 20 years ago).

For news, events and keeping in touch with the community: Like us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/templebcc](http://www.facebook.com/templebcc)

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<b>1 issue</b>	<b>3 issues: 10% disc.</b>	<b>6 issues: 20% disc.</b>
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website: [www.bcc-la.org](http://www.bcc-la.org)

Rabbi Lisa Edwards is available for private appointments. Please call at least a week in advance, if possible, to schedule.

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### G'VANIM

G'vanim "Hues (of the rainbow)" is the bimonthly newsletter of

**BETH CHAYIM CHADASHIM**  
6090 West Pico Blvd., L.A. CA 90035

Founded in 1972 as the world's first gay and lesbian synagogue, today BCC is an inclusive community of progressive lesbian, gay, bi, trans, and heterosexual Jews, our families, and friends. Everyone is welcome to attend weekly Friday evening services.

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**BCC is affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism, World Congress of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Jews: Keshet Ga'avah and the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles.**

We'll also honor these two very special community leaders:



**Agnes G. Herman**

Rebetzn, mother, journalist, social worker, AIDS activist, pioneer and humanitarian, Agnes's career spans decades from assisting BCC's founding in the 1970s, to developing the first PFLAG groups for clergy, to 40 years of lectures and articles on LGBTQ inclusion and AIDS education,

to sponsoring the first online resource center on LGBTQ issues and Judaism. Agnes richly deserves the award that bears her and her late husband's name: The Rabbi Erwin and Agnes Herman Humanitarian Award.



**Richard Lesse**

BCC's 2017 Presidents Award recognizes Richard for exceedingly generous volunteer service to BCC and the community. Richard has served as the invaluable Secretary of BCC's Board of Directors since

2011, and is a one-person Technology Committee, continually advancing BCC's in-house and live-stream tech. This June "no rest Richard" will be pedaling as co-captain of the Wheely Nice Guys team on his fourth AIDS/LifeCycle ride.

The BCC@45 Gala Brunch and Concert will be an unforgettable event, not least because it will be hosted at the historic Saban Theatre. This Spanish Art Deco style palace in Beverly Hills opened in the heyday of Hollywood glamour in 1930, as the Fox Wilshire Theatre. Classic movie stars attended the premieres of the Marx Brothers' "Animal Crackers," Marilyn Monroe's "How to Marry a Millionaire" and Julie Andrews' "The Sound of Music." Now we're taking it up a notch with the musical greatness of Beth Chayim Chadashim!

In addition to the gourmet brunch and spectacular concert, we'll host an Opportunity Drawing with prizes to kvell over, plus other special surprises. Tickets to BCC@45 Gala Brunch and Concert are on sale now through the BCC website.

## **BCC Seders Move into our Homes**

Instead of our traditional congregational Seder at BCC on the second night of Passover, this year we are encouraging our members and friends to celebrate in smaller groups in private homes. We can provide the Haggadah supplements, musical mp3s, and topics for discussion. You provide the seats. You can provide all the food or have your guests bring specific items, like wine, grape juice, charoset, matzah, vegetables, vegetarian protein dish, etc. Or you can have it catered and ask guests to share in the price. You can have a Seder on any night of Passover.



To participate, please complete our survey to indicate if you are willing to invite BCC members to a Seder at your home, or if you want to be invited to someone's home.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XLD58C8>

If you don't have computer access, please call the BCC office and leave a message for Ginger Jacobs, who will be coordinating the Seders.

Rabbi Lisa Edwards will be offering a Seder leading workshop on Tuesday, April 4 from 6:00 to 7:30 pm (followed by Torah study). Please RSVP to [lisa@bcc-la.org](mailto:lisa@bcc-la.org) by April 3.

## **YOUR FAMILY IS PRECIOUS TO YOU**

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### **Beth Chayim Chadashim's Advance Planning Representatives**

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# From the Senior Rabbi's Study Purim as a Call to Action

Senior Rabbi Lisa Edwards



PHOTO: KEINALOVE

Purim is best known as a fun holiday — costumes, parodies, and laughter rule the day, and even if you do take up our tradition's invitation to imbibe alcohol on Purim (not a popular Purim custom at BCC), you're supposed to become a happy drunk, not a mean one.

But Purim also has a serious side, sides actually, and this year I've been thinking more than ever

about those. So even though we will join in some fun this year on the evening of Saturday, March 11 (see page 2 above), I want here to give some thought to Purim's call(s) to action.

I recently discovered that it's not only Jews who take to heart the story of Esther. A particular verse from Esther has been a refrain in recent sermons of at least two queer Christian clergy friends of mine. The verse is "for just such a time," and in the story that line is part of the message Mordecai sends to the still closeted Esther (in Esther's case, she is a closeted Jew) when she is reluctant to go before the king, her husband, to try to save her people. The scene is one of my favorites in the Book of Esther. *Mi yodei-ah im l'eit ka-zot hina-at la-mal-koot* "Who knows but that you have come into royal estate for just such a time as this?" [Esther 4:14]

Mordecai's question prompts a complete change in Esther. She had been embarrassed by Mordecai's actions and afraid to act herself, for she was well aware that anyone could be put to death for approaching the King without his invitation [Esther 4:11]. But when she hears his question, she decides to do what she can, saying, "so I will go in to the King, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish" [4:16]. And Esther hatches a plan for how to approach the king, and save her people.

Mordecai and Esther are striking models of leadership, but this year I am focused also on the role the other Jews play in this story of Jewish survival. For the saving of the people is not done by Esther and/or Mordecai alone or together. They start the ball rolling, Mordecai pushes her (inspires her), and Esther conceives and carries out the plan that wins the day, but the Jews aren't allowed to be the passive recipients of survival. In order for their lives to be saved, they first have to fast for three days, and far

more challenging, they have to gather themselves together, and "to stand for their life, to destroy, and to slay and to cause to perish, all of the forces of the people and province that would assault them, their little ones and women" [Esther 8:11] — in other words, they are given permission to kill those who are under instruction to kill them. Maybe it's to forget this part of the plot that we are instructed to get drunk on Purim, for it's a painful part of the story, to be sure. Every time I read it I fantasize that the story will end differently — that they'll find a way out without having to kill. And while that doesn't happen, the book does end on a hopeful note — once Mordecai comes into power, he spends his days seeking good and speaking peace [Esther 10:3].

I am not writing about this part of the Purim story to draw particular parallels to the challenges we face today. But I am this year reflecting on the role that the rest of the Jews play in the story of Esther, as well as other stories in the Bible when the leaders can't do all the work themselves. When the Israelites are gathered at the Egyptian side of the Red Sea before it parts, for example, and the Egyptians are chasing them, Moses tells the Israelites to wait and see what God will do for them. God, however, says to Moses, "Why are you crying out to Me? Tell the Israelites to go forward." [Exodus 14:15]

The change doesn't happen; the actual survival doesn't occur except when everyone moves forward together, doing things they may not be inclined to do, may even be afraid to do.

One of the explanations for the topsy-turvy nature of Purim, what with its gender bending costumes and rowdy fun, is that it reflects a key word in the Book of Esther: *v'na-ha-fokh* [turn about]. On the day x was supposed to happen, *it turned around (upside down)* and the opposite happened. Sometimes the opposite just happens — things change when you least expect it — but this year, as Purim approaches, we might do well to recall that what turned it all around in the Purim story was not only the vision and wisdom of Mordecai and the bravery and cleverness of Esther, but also the coming together of all of the people in a common purpose. And the way Purim is celebrated today — with rejoicing and merriment, gift giving, and generously remembering the poor — might remind us too that a scary story can turn upside down and eventually lead to the pursuit of goodness and of peace for us all.

Happy Purim, everyone!



# BCC Celebrates Paying off Mortgage on our New Home!

Larry Nathenson

For the second time in its 45-year history, BCC has paid off the mortgage on our temple home. We did this with 6000 W. Pico Blvd. in 1984, and now, as of January 2017, we own our current home at 6090 W. Pico free and clear!

We celebrated this milestone during our Shabbat service on Friday, January 27.



PHOTO: TRACY MOORE

*BCC president Lauren Schlau honors former president Brett Trueman with architectural drawings from our new building.*

The evening opened with a scrumptious and beautifully presented vegan Shabbat dinner catered by chef Molly Basler, followed by our monthly special musical service known as Ruach Chayim (spirit of life). Along with Rabbi Edwards and Cantor Porat, guest musicians Janice Markham on violin and TJ Troy on percussion helped make this a joyous and spiritual celebration. Cantor Porat also delivered a heartfelt and inspiring drash that evening (more on that below).

After the opening Kabbalat Shabbat songs, Rabbi Edwards introduced a short film entitled "The Miracle of the House of New Life," produced by Kenna Love and narrated by Denis Hiebsch. The film chronicles our journey from 2005, when newly elected BCC president Brett Trueman began to implement the dream of a new building for our congregation, to the dedication of our new home in April 2011. The closing sequence of the procession with our sacred Torah scrolls down Pico Blvd. from 6000 to 6090 and into our new sanctuary brought tears to the eyes of many of us who were there that day.

Brett then spoke and thanked all of those who made this possible over the past decade, especially the members of the Capital Campaign Committee – Brett's co-chair Bill Resnick, Allison Diamant, Ray Eelsing, Rabbi Lisa Edwards, Jay Jacobs, Bruce Maxwell, Tracy Moore, former executive director Felicia Park-Rogers, Steve Sass, Lauren Schlau, Eldon Teper, Hannah Theile, and Les Zendle. Thanks to their efforts and the generosity of our members and friends, BCC raised \$3.6 million for the purchase and renovation of the building, far exceeding the expectations of our fundraising consultant. Brett also

chronicled the many obstacles we faced during this process, including the drop in real estate values during the 2008-09 recession (the previous owner Max Webb generously lowered the price), the difficulties of qualifying for a mortgage, and the struggle to obtain the necessary parking variance.

Brett called past and current BCC treasurers Bruce Maxwell, Ray Eelsing and Mike King to assist him in ripping up the mortgage on the bimah, along with current president Lauren Schlau. Lauren thanked Brett and his husband Mark Miller for their vision and all of

their hard work and perseverance, and presented them with a gift of some original architectural drawings of the new building.

Cantor Porat's drash skillfully wove together the week's Torah portion Va'era (which includes the ten plagues and the hardening of Pharaoh's heart) with his recent visit as a volunteer at the Elephant Nature Sanctuary in Thailand. The sanctuary project was entitled "Journey to Freedom," which is also the theme of the Exodus story. As he described it, the purpose of the sanctuary is both to rescue the elephants from the abuse to which

they were subjected as work animals in the logging and other industries, and to provide the local inhabitants with a source of income from tourism to replace the rental income that elephants previously earned them. Cantor Porat tied these themes together with a midrashic story about a man who complains repeatedly to God about all the hardships and evils in the world and asks why God doesn't do something about them, to which God replies "I did do something about it, I created you to help me repair the world." The full text of Cantor Porat's drash can be found on the BCC website.

The evening concluded with a delicious and extravagant oneg, including a cake shaped like the new BCC building! If you were not present for this unique celebration, you should definitely watch the archived video on the BCC U-stream channel.



PHOTO: JAY JACOBS

*Delectable delights at the oneg on January 27*



PHOTO: AVIYAH FARKAS

*Delicious cake in the shape of our building, baked by Leigh Grode and Joan Spittler*

# Shimon Ben Pazi's Choice

Cantor Juval Porat



PHOTO: KENNA LOVE

What constitutes the essence of the Torah? What verse truly represents what Judaism is all about?

One of the best known answers is given by Rabbi Akiva in the Jerusalem Talmud, citing: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Another answer, given by Ben Azai, suggests: "This is the book of the generations of Adam – on the day that God created humankind, God made humankind in God's Image" (Genesis 5:1).

The Great Maharal of Prague (1525-1609) in his book *Netivot Olam* offers an additional answer by Rabbi Shimon Ben Pazi, who in a midrashic debate among the sages claims to have found an even more essential verse: "The first lamb you shall sacrifice in the morning and the second lamb you shall sacrifice in the evening." (Exodus 29:39 and Numbers 28:4) [referring to the daily perpetual offering brought every morning and evening].

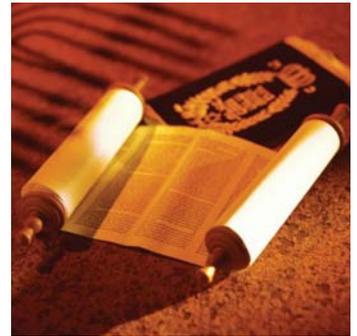
The Maharal goes on to tell that an anonymous rabbi who witnessed the debate among the sages stood up and said that the law is in accordance with Ben Pazi, and we're perplexingly left to wonder why the initial verses offered by Rabbi Akiva and Ben Azai - the ones about loving kindness and being made in God's image - are overshadowed by what seems to be a peculiar instruction to offer animal sacrifices twice on a daily basis.

I was recently re-introduced to Shimon Ben Pazi's choice for the essential verse of Torah while attending the Clergy Leadership Program at the Institute for Jewish Spirituality, and it has been providing me with comfort and inspiration on difficult days. Thank God (or whoever is in charge, as I sometimes like to think) for moments of comfort and inspiration, right? I know that many in our community and elsewhere have been steering their hearts and minds through a sea of challenges over these past few months and coming together in community. Being in dialogue with each other has been such an important part of a solid spiritual foundation for quite a few, including myself. My foundation has been my co-clergy, chosen family and close friends (groups that aren't necessarily exclusive to each other), meditation and music, and the insight, compassion, wisdom and empathy they all inspire.

And Ben Pazi's choice of essential verse of Torah provided me with comfort too. I'd like to think that it recognizes that loving your neighbor as yourself, and walking in this world with constant consciousness of the divinity within each of us, are most important aspirations, yet they are built upon a foundation of consistency and persistence. Our commitment to stay on track, regardless

of reluctance, hindrance or whatever comes our way, must always be present, as without a daily commitment as the anchor of our (Jewish) life, spiritual beliefs and proclamations often are lost in abstractions. Just like the daily offerings of sacrifices, so are we reminded and encouraged to commit to growth, evolution and persistence.

And in the context of facing challenging times and moments, Ben Pazi's chosen verse reminds me of the virtue of persistence. Norman Fisher, a Jewish American Soto Zen roshi, poet and Buddhist author, describes it as "the ability to hang in there with something difficult without turning away, to be willing to simply wait when waiting is what's called for." He goes on to say that "[persistence] is not a throwaway virtue, and it is



not simply a form of passivity. Persistence is a powerful and positive virtue that can be cultivated and developed. It's a key practice for nurturing all the qualities of maturity that we value: stability, responsibility, self-acceptance, a loving heart—all require that we persist with what we are up to, that we stick with steadfastly, without glancing off or running away.... Stubbornness and persistence are not the same thing. Stubbornness has a meanness to it, like a pit bull hanging on to a pants leg. It's reactive and often self-destructive.... Persistence, on the other hand, is not reactive or mean. It has a quality of faith and determination to continue, whether results are apparent or not. Persistence bears you up and helps you to move forward against the odds. In fact, with the practice of persistence, odds don't matter much one way or the other. Persistence doesn't wear you out by forcing you into a tight corner, as stubbornness does."

Wherever you find yourself, I hope BCC can be a strong part of your foundation with all it has to offer. I hope you come celebrate with us on March 26th at BCC's annual Awards Brunch and Concert. It will be memorable for me personally, not only because I find myself amongst the sweetest and most talented honorees one could ask for, but also because it will be my last proper appearance at BCC before I embark on my Sabbatical. I originally planned on visiting congregations throughout the country, watching their communal life from the pews or in collaboration with their clergy from the bimah. Plans might change now

*Continued on Page 7*

## President's Message

# Big Changes Underway for BCC's Future

Lauren Schlau



In previous columns I have discussed the strategic planning process in which the Board has been engaged. The purpose is for BCC to have a collaborative, wide ranging plan to guide our next three years. Progress has been slow, challenged by the usual interplay between planning for our future and attending to current business. We took a major leap

forward at our Board retreat held at BCC at the end of January when we were blessed with the services of an outside facilitator, Karen Sim, to help guide us through the process. She came to us at no charge through the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ), our umbrella organization. Our URJ financial commitment provides many benefits including new resources to help congregations like BCC improve what we do and how we do it.

We spent the morning of the retreat revisiting and redrafting new mission and vision statements and a list of our values that will be conveyed to current and prospective members and visitors. The afternoon was devoted to our focus areas and goals. Up to this point we had identified five focus areas, Organization/Finance, Membership, Ritual/Worship, Social Justice and Education/Learning. With Karen's help, we saw that we needed another area – Governance. This refers to developing members' leadership skills and

guiding them into and through our leadership pipeline, typically from committee member to chair, then to the Board of Directors and ultimately to the Executive Committee. Discussing governance was just what we needed to see how we can be more effective as BCC leaders and to better develop our members' talents.

We are also considering a reorganization – with a new organization chart – of Board positions and duties to help us be more efficient and effective going forward. The Board members present were excited and committed to make this happen. We have set a goal of having this ready for approval at our annual Congregational Meeting in July.

This process is intended to be collaborative, engaging our members along the way. Our mission, vision, values and the plan itself, including the new structure (which requires a by-laws amendment), will be developed on a draft basis. Then we plan to hold a series of town halls to discuss this with members. With member input we will finalize and ask for your approval in July. This will be a big but definitely progressive and exciting change for BCC.

Speaking of exciting, by now you should have received your invitation to the big event of the year, our BCC Annual Awards Brunch (and Concert, this year). Based on what our event co-chairs Tracy Moore and Marc Breindel are telling us, will be a not-to miss event. Please make sure to keep March 26 on your datebook for this year's unique and entertaining gala to celebrate our 45 years as a congregation.

### *(continued from page 6)* **Shimon Ben Pazi's Choice**

that Tikvah, my new puppy (12 weeks old as those lines are written) has entered my life. I definitely will continue to record more new music for an album I hope to release later this year, as well as visiting the conference of the American Conference of Cantors and Hava Nashira. Thank you to the entire congregation for granting me the three months of respite, for the honor of being one of the Brunch honorees and for truly allowing me to be of service to you.

Let us keep meeting each other, persistently willing to show up with whatever arises, determined to continue, whether results are apparent or not

B'shalom,  
Juval

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# L'Chayim Legacy Circle Invites you to a Celebratory Luncheon on May 21



Everyone is invited to a special luncheon on Sunday, May 21st from 12:00 to 2:00 pm to acknowledge and thank members of our L'Chayim Legacy Circle — those who have demonstrated their

commitment to BCC's future by including the temple in their will or trust. This year we're extending the invitation to all those who would like to find out what the L'Chayim Legacy Circle (LLC) is about and why they may wish to join.

The luncheon will feature an entertaining program of music and speakers. Rabbi Edwards will welcome newcomers to the circle, and information will be provided as to how to become an active part of this distinctive group.

Have you been thinking about your legacy and what bequests you will make? Studies have shown that most people don't plan ahead, and as a result their loved ones are left to make difficult decisions as to where to direct someone's final estate. Sadly, sometimes these decisions are not what the deceased would have wanted.

Over the years, BCC has held workshops and seminars to help people get their vital documents in order. The Circle has regularly hosted guest speakers who are familiar with the unique challenges facing the LGBTQ community when drawing up estate plans to benefit their loved ones and support causes that are dear to them.

Now, while you're able, is the best time to plan your legacy. In addition to loved ones, we hope you will choose to designate BCC as one of your beneficiaries. Your legacy gift will help ensure that BCC will be there to nourish and guide future generations. Whether you already have a will and trust or are interested in how they can benefit you, please join us at this informative luncheon.

Please direct any L'Chayim Legacy Circle questions on how to become a member to Ray Eelsing at 310-895-5116 or Hannah Theile at 818-905-7442.

To RSVP for the luncheon, please contact Hannah Theile at 818-905-7442 or by email at [hannahtheil@icloud.com](mailto:hannahtheil@icloud.com). Please RSVP no later than May 17.

## Chizuk Chiyuvi

### BCC's New HIV-Positive Support Group

BCC is excited to be starting a monthly support group for people living with HIV and their friends and loved ones. The group's name, Chizuk Chiyuvi, in Hebrew means "positive reinforcement." Our activities will include guest speakers, movies and other screenings, and discussing relevant issues, including personal stories and support. Chizuk Chiyuvi is designed to be a safe space and a strictly confidential environment.

The new group will meet on the first Saturday of every month from 2:00 to 3:30pm at BCC (6090 Pico Blvd in Los Angeles 90035). Light snacks will be provided. No need to RSVP. For more information, please contact Mark Brown at [mjb310@yahoo.com](mailto:mjb310@yahoo.com).



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# BCC HELPS WITH YOUR FUTURE MORTUARY AND CEMETERY NEEDS

*Aviyah Farkas*

Many of you returned our Executive Director's survey late last year, asking about your cemetery and mortuary plans. I know that this can be a delicate topic for BCC members, but I want to thank everyone who responded to this survey. Preliminary results suggest that for most who responded to the survey, cost was the most important factor, but we also value proximity to BCC, ease of travel, location near family, and how the cemetery looks.

BCC is in the process of finalizing arrangements with **Shalom Chapels Mortuary in Sylmar** to hold 16 spaces for BCC members. Their cost is very low for a pre-need special BCC package, which includes both cemetery costs and mortuary costs for total of \$7,500. This special pre-need package must be purchased within the next year for this discounted price. They will accept 10% down with payments.

Ease of travel to **Shalom Chapels** is great for members who live in the San Fernando Valley, and the cemetery has an amazingly peaceful, spiritual, calm, rural feel.

In addition to this special discount from **Shalom Chapels**, we are working with **Home of Peace Memorial Park**, on Whittier Blvd, in East Los Angeles for a special discounted pre-need package for our members. They have locked in a special BCC member price of under \$8,000 which, as with **Shalom Chapels**, includes both cemetery and mortuary costs. **Home of Peace** is between the 60, 710 and 5 freeways and being a "city" cemetery does not have the same feel as rural Sylmar. But its stained glass and marbled chapel is as calm, peaceful and spiritual as anyone could want.

We can now offer BCC members special discounted prices from two long established Jewish mortuary-cemeteries, for their future and their loved one's future needs. After the Awards Brunch, I'll send out price sheets and more specifics. But if you have any questions, please call me at 805-990-4908.

We'll also plan a workshop with representatives from **Shalom Chapels** and **Home of Peace** for you to ask any questions and help resolve any issues you may have.



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## Ary Katz Presents Music Video STND + DLVR



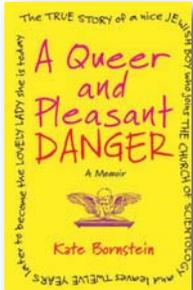
Please check updated calendars for confirmation, but on Friday March 17 at 8:00 pm (after our monthly 6:30 pm early Shabbat service), at Rabbi Lisa's invitation, Ary Katz (who grew up at BCC) will be showing and discussing his powerful and political new music video, STND + DLVR. Ary is the songwriter, as well as director, producer and lead performer in the video. Here is a link if you want to watch in advance:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r79HjnzLX6Y>

# BCC Books and Bagels Group

Larry Nathenson

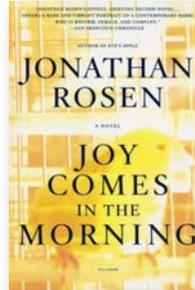
BCC's Book Group (Books and Bagels) has been meeting continuously since January 1995. The group meets monthly in members' homes for a bagel brunch and discussion of a book selected by the group. We read a variety of books: fiction and non-fiction, American and Israeli, historical and contemporary. The only requirement is some Jewish content (LGBT content is a plus, but not required). Our next two meetings are as follows.



**Sunday, April 2, 10:00 am**

***A Queer and Pleasant Danger, by Kate Bornstein***

This memoir is by a performance artist, playwright, and Lambda Literary Award winner, and is subtitled, "The true story of a nice Jewish boy who joins the Church of Scientology and leaves twelve years later to become the lovely lady she is today."



**Sunday, April 30, 10:00 am**

***Joy Comes in the Morning, by Jonathan Rosen***

This novel tells the story of a female rabbi who explores the many contradictions in her spiritual and personal life after visiting an elderly patient in the hospital.

The group is open to BCC members and non-members, and you are welcome to join us for a particular book that may interest you. RSVP is required for location and to ensure enough food. For more information, contact Larry Nathenson at [Larrynath@aol.com](mailto:Larrynath@aol.com).

## Need a Morale Boost?

### Try BCC's Life Transitions Support Group

If you could use some help dealing with the stress of relationships, careers, economics, social life, family life, health or bereavement, you might want to give the BCC Life Transitions Group a try. The goal of the BCC Life Transitions Group is to enhance participants' spiritual and emotional growth.

Participants have the opportunity to share their experiences, give and receive mutual support, and exchange coping skills with one another in a confidential atmosphere. Everyone is welcome - members and non-members. The group meets twice a month on the first and third Wednesdays from 7:00 - 9:00 pm.

This support group is facilitated by Shirley Hirschberg, Social Worker. Shirley is also available for individual sessions. For more information, please call the BCC office at (323) 931-7023, ext. 205.

## Mazel Tov

We wish the following BCC members a hearty "mazel tov" on their recent achievements and good news.



BCC member **Eleanor Herscher** recently celebrated the birth of her granddaughter **Emma Julia Herscher**.

The **Kramer-Pino Family** (**Michelle, Michele, Haiden, and Hallie**) joyfully welcomed the arrival of **Julian Shane Pino**, born January 28, 2017. All are happy, healthy, and excited to have Julian home. We look forward to welcoming Julian at BCC in the coming months.



If you have a recent achievement or other good news to share, please contact the BCC office. We want to celebrate with you!



I'm never too busy for your  
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**Sotheby's**  
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>All events at BCC unless otherwise noted</i>			1 7:00 pm <b>Life Transitions Group</b> Shirley Hirschberg	2	3 8:00 pm <b>Shabbat service</b> Rabbi Edwards Elissa Barrett-Gershick Guest Speaker Elizabeth Schwartz, Esq., author of Legal guide to marriage	4 10:00 am <b>Ohr Chayim</b> 2:00 pm <b>Chizuk Chiyuvi (HIV+ Support Group)</b>
5	6 7:00 pm <b>Lay Service Leader Workshop</b> Cantor Porat	7 7:15 pm <b>Torah Study</b> Rabbi Edwards	8 7:00 pm <b>Executive Committee Meeting</b>	9	10 8:00 pm <b>Shabbat Service</b> Rabbi Miller Cantor Porat Purim tzedakah project Operation PB&J (see page 2)	11 10:00 am <b>Ohr Chayim</b> 6:00 pm <b>Purim Celebration</b> (Temple Akiba)
12 <b>PURIM</b>	13	14 7:15 pm <b>Torah Study</b> Rabbi Edwards	15 7:00 pm <b>Life Transitions Group</b> Shirley Hirschberg	16	17 6:30 pm <b>Early Intergenerational Shabbat Service</b> Rabbi Miller Elissa Barrett-Gershick 8:00 pm Ary Katz music video (page 9)	18 10:00 am <b>Shabbat Minyan and Veggie potluck</b>
19	20	21 7:15 pm <b>Torah Study</b> Rabbi Edwards	22	23	24 6:00 pm <b>Shabbat Dinner in the Neighborhood</b> (Fu's Palace) 8:00 pm <b>Shabbat Service</b> Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat	25 10:00 am <b>Ohr Chayim</b>
26 10:30 am (Saban Theater) <b>BCC 45<sup>th</sup> Gala Anniversary Awards Brunch and Concert</b> (see page 1)	27	28 7:15 pm <b>Torah Study</b> Rabbi Edwards	29 7:00 pm <b>Board of Directors meeting</b>	30	31 8:00 pm <b>Shabbat Service Ruach Chayim</b> Rabbi Edwards Cantor Porat Guest musicians	<b>April 1</b> 10:00 am <b>Ohr Chayim</b> 2:00 pm <b>Chizuk Chiyuvi (HIV+ Support Group)</b>

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 10:00 am (private home) <b>BCC Books and Bagels</b> <i>A Queer and Pleasant Danger</i> , by Kate Bornstein	3	4 6:00 pm <b>Seder Leading Workshop</b> Rabbi Edwards 7:15 pm <b>Torah Study</b> Rabbi Edwards	5 7:00 pm <b>Life Transitions Group</b> Shirley Hirschberg	6	7 8:00 pm <b>Shabbat service</b> Rabbi Miller Cantorial Soloist Fran Chalin Drash by Ginger Jacobs	8 10:00 am <b>Ohr Chayim</b>
9	10 <b>EREV PESACH</b> (First Seder at home)	11 <b>PESACH (first day)</b> Second night Seders (private homes – see p. 3) BCC Office Closed	12	13	14 8:00 pm <b>Shabbat Service</b> Rabbi Edwards Davi Cheng	15 10:00 am <b>Shabbat Morning Minyan and Veggie Potluck</b>
16	17 BCC Office Closed	18 <b>PESACH (last day)</b> 7:15 pm <b>Torah Study</b> Rabbi Edwards	19 7:00 pm <b>Life Transitions Group</b> Shirley Hirschberg	20	21 6:30 pm <b>Early Contemplative Shabbat Service</b> Rabbi Edwards Cantorial Soloist Fran Chalin	22 10:00 am <b>Ohr Chayim</b>
23	24 <b>YOM HASHOAH</b> (Holocaust Remembrance Day)	25 7:15 pm <b>Torah Study</b> Rabbi Edwards	26 7:00 pm <b>Board of Directors Meeting</b>	27	28 6:00 pm <b>Shabbat Dinner in the Neighborhood</b> (Fu's Palace) 8:00 pm <b>Shabbat Service</b> Rabbi Miller Guest Songleader	29 10:00 am <b>Ohr Chayim</b>
30 10:00 am (private home) <b>BCC Book Group</b> <i>Joy Comes in the Morning</i> , by Jonathan Rosen	<i>All events at BCC unless otherwise noted</i>					