

WELCOME BACK, WELCOME HOME!

BCC REOPENS ON JULY 30

Rabbi Jillian Cameron and Cantor Juval Porat



The time has finally arrived! After 16 months of joining together remotely, we are overjoyed to invite you to come back home! Our first of many in-person services will be on **July 30th at 8:00 pm**. Join us for a very special **Ruach Chayim Shabbat** filled with soulful and moving music and spoken word to celebrate our return to our beloved space!

For the past 16 months, our community has eagerly and patiently waited for the pandemic to settle down, public health restrictions to be lifted, and the “new normal” to reveal itself. The many Zoom services, gatherings, socially distant hangouts, and phone check-ins have strengthened our resolve and our spirit: BCC is more than a physical space. We enter this new phase of staged reopening feeling more connected than ever.



Beginning on Friday, July 9th, we, Cantor Juval and Rabbi Jillian, will be leading Shabbat services together at BCC. Members of our lay leadership will be in attendance, honoring their guidance and support as well as allowing us to garner feedback on our hybrid system before we invite you, our members, to return on July 30th. Rest assured, you will still be able to join us on Zoom or Facebook.

Our Reopening Committee (President Jay Jacobs, Rabbi Jillian Cameron, Cantor Juval Porat, Richard Lesse, and Executive Vice President Jessica Donath) has been very thoughtful about planning our return to 6090 W. Pico and has created several parameters to ensure all of our safety.

Please read the following parameters carefully. As we move through the summer into the fall, our guidelines will shift as circumstances change and we will certainly let you know as they do. An update on the High Holiday schedule and parameters will be shared separately as we get closer to the holiday season.



Here are our current Shabbat Service parameters:

- Please only join us in person if you have been fully vaccinated.
- We are welcoming only BCC members and those in their households in person for now.
- We require everyone who joins us in person to register using this form (<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeFx-8k8gXH30bBOSbB0-oicmj4o-VA5WkHrE7cTH767U22BpA/viewform>) by Wednesday evening preceding each Friday night service. For safety reasons, we are not able to welcome walk-ins at this time.
- Please note: Each attendee needs to fill out this

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registration form independently.

- We are limiting the number of attendees to 54. The opportunity to attend a service in person will be on a first-come, first-served basis using the above registration form.
- We are not requiring masks, but please feel free to wear one if you would be more comfortable doing so.
- We will not be serving any food, so the oneg will be chat-based, not food-based.

We know you are excited to come back and we are equally excited to see you! An email with the registration form will be sent each Monday for that week's Shabbat. Please keep in mind that many of our members are looking forward to joining us in person, so once you have had a chance to join us at BCC, be mindful of that before registering for another service.

We are also grateful to be able to offer a meaningful and joyful Shabbat experience for all those who join us remotely, as we have even before the pandemic began.

Here are some ways you can continue to join Shabbat services remotely:



- Join us on our BCC Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/templeb-cc>), where we will continue to live stream our Shabbat services as we have done throughout the pandemic.
- Join us on our BCC website (<https://www.bcc-la.org>), where we will also live stream our services.
- Join our "Zoom Havurah" for a weekly Shabbat Watch Party, where we will live stream our services and you will be able to chat with fellow zoom-ers, building community together. Click here to register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYoduuvpj0pGtKmDkXRJwI4tpjOv5ojBDI>

To ensure a continued inclusion of our virtual visitors as part of our programming, we're investing in new wireless mics, new cameras, new iPads, a new computer for the sanctuary, optimization of our network and employing videographers and audio engineers to help us streamline the broadcasting of our services paired with interactive features. Our estimated budget for these short-term changes is \$25,000. If you can help us fund these essential upgrades, please click here: (<https://bethchayim-chadashim.shulcloud.com/form/donation.html>)

As we begin to reopen BCC, we are so excited to welcome you back! Let us enter this new "new normal" with joy, gratitude and awe for all of our incredible leaders, including the Reopening Committee and the COVID-19 Task Force, miraculous technology and each of you, who make BCC the home it is.

We hope to see you very soon.

G'vanim "Hues (of the rainbow)" is the bimonthly newsletter of BETH CHAYIM CHADASHIM
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Friday: 10:00 - 4:30 pm
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Rabbi Jillian Cameron and Cantor Juval are happy to hear from you.
Please reach out to schedule an appointment.

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Communications Coordinator /Administrative Assistant..... Maggie Boyles
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Shabbat Morning Minyan..... Steve Sass, Jim Potter
Social Action Open
Tzedakah Council Jim Potter, Angela Brown
Vegan Havurah Brett Trueman

Editor: Larry Nathenson. Graphic Design: Maggie Boyles. Articles should be typed and emailed or attached as Word documents to Larrynath@aol.com by the 20th of the month before publication. To subscribe, send name and address and a check or money order for \$18 per year, attention: Newsletter Subscriptions. Free to BCC members.

LOOKING BACK ON MY PRESIDENTIAL TERM

Jay Jacobs



As my term as BCC's President comes to a close, I have reflected on synagogue life since I stepped onto our bimah to accept this office in 2019. These past two years have seen many changes at BCC – the retirement of Rabbi Lisa Edwards after an

amazing 25 years as our spiritual leader, our year with Interim Rabbi Alyson Solomon, welcoming Rabbi Jillian Cameron as our new settled rabbi, a global pandemic that required us to go virtual for over a year, and the beginning of our 50th anniversary celebrations. It was a joy to represent our synagogue at the URJ Biennial (Dec. 2019), the Scheidt Seminar for new synagogue presidents (Feb. 2020), and other URJ seminars and groups. It has been a great honor to work with our very talented and devoted clergy and lay leadership during these challenging times. In addition to our rabbis, I have many people to acknowledge for their work on behalf of our congregation: Cantor Juval Porat for his steady spiritual leadership and his music that keeps us both grounded and uplifted; Elizabeth Savage and Ginger Jacobs for keeping the BCC office humming and for leading us through the searches for our interim and settled rabbis; Michael King for his management and financial guidance; Marsha Epstein for her medical experience during the pandemic and her attention to detail as secretary; Brett Trueman for his indispensable institutional knowledge and financial expertise; and my predecessor Richard Lesse for his advice and his leadership on governance and updating our technology.

Looking to BCC's future, I invite you to join us virtually on July 11th at 3:00 pm on Zoom for our annual Congregational Meeting, where we will discuss plans for the coming year at BCC. By the time you read this, members will already have received an informational email with the meeting agenda, the ballot and the proposed budget. Along with BCC's Executive Committee and Board of Directors, I am pleased to announce this year's slate of candidates for the Executive Committee: Brett Trueman (President), Jessica Donath (Executive Vice President), Michael King (Vice President), Jim Potter (Treasurer), and James Sutherland (Secretary). In addition to our current Board members who have offered to continue to serve (Hannah Theile, Kenna Love, and Marsha Epstein), four new Board members have been nominated: Laurie Newman, Nicolasa Nevarez, Steve Sass, and Richard Lesse. I am very excited about our 50th year and the many celebrations we are planning under the skillful leadership of our clergy and anniversary committee.

On a more personal note, I offer my gratitude to all of you for your gracious support during my term as President. I've missed seeing everyone in person during the pandemic and am looking forward to seeing you and reconnecting as BCC reopens its doors.



AN OPEN LETTER TO THE CONGREGATION

Ginger Jacobs



On May 2, I was honored by BCC with the Presidents Award! It was a great thrill for me and my family, both my family of origin and my family of choice at BCC. While preparing for what turned out to be a wonderful virtual event,

I did a great deal of thinking about my place at BCC. That thinking has led me to publish this letter, which I hope will amplify a conversation for which I believe the time has come.

I've been a member since 1988 and was an honorary member before that. Yes, at first, there were some questions about why I chose BCC from all the other Reform congregations in Los Angeles -- was I 'coming out', was I making a statement? The answer was simple. While I am not LGBT, this LGBT synagogue was the most welcoming congregation I'd ever visited! As a recent divorcee, I appreciated being accepted and respected as a person, an individual, and celebrated for the unique contributions I might have to offer this new family.

Over the years at BCC, I have developed my family of choice, those people who have supported me, laughed with me and celebrated all sorts of events and holidays with me. I have learned from all of them; they have guided me. From what they tell me, happily I have done the same for and with them.

I've always appreciated that BCC is a leader in challenging and changing norms to create more inclusive experiences. BCC was one of the first congregations to have a gender-neutral prayerbook. That made a difference for many of us, not referring to God as a

masculine ruler and acknowledging the contributions of our foremothers. The past several years have taught us even more about the importance of language. The newer awareness also revolves around gender. As transgender individuals have increasingly come out, we have become more aware of pronouns and their importance. It is a recognition of each person as unique and special. We talk about nonbinary, cisgender, nonconforming, and genderqueer. The alphabet for what we are has grown and changed, from a simple gay and lesbian to LGBTQIA+, and I'm sure there will be more initials in the future as we ever expand our welcoming tent.

Unfortunately, I do not fit into any of these initials. I am a heterosexual woman. I am not alone as a heterosexual person at BCC; there are several of us. On our website, BCC is described as a "welcoming Reform Jewish space for the LGBTQIA+ community, our friends, and our families." In this description, I would fall under the category of "friends and family." And to be clear, I am your friend, and I am your family. I am your ally. But why must my presence at BCC be only in relation to anyone else? I consider myself a member of BCC, a part of the community, not an outside supporter.

I love the power of BCC's history as the first safe haven for LG(BTQIA+) Jews, and I am not suggesting we water down that mission moving forward. But I do think an important part of our future success as a community must include a discussion of those (present and future) who are here to support the LGBTQIA+ community AND ALSO to be fully supported members in our own right.

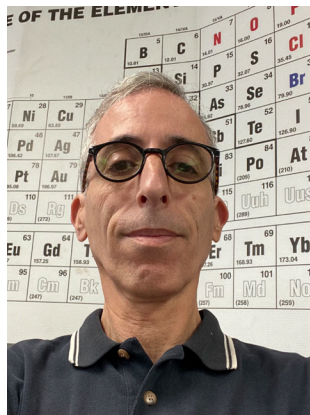
It was suggested to me that a heterosexual havurah might be an answer. But that, in my opinion, would only serve to separate when I'm looking to unite. And I don't think adding a letter to LGBTQIA+ representing heterosexual members would be appropriate. To be clear, I'm not proposing a solution but rather inviting a discussion.

In my speech at the Vision Awards, I mentioned that all people are created *b'tzelem Elohim*, created in the image of God. We are unique, each and every one of us. We are learning to be comfortable and proud of our differences, yet we want to be a part of the whole. I have chosen to be part of BCC for decades now, because of its warm and inclusive culture. But I think we have work to do as a community to ensure that inclusivity covers the entire community.

I hope this will be the beginning of a conversation and I look forward to hearing the thoughts of others.

REFLECTIONS ON 35 YEARS OF TEACHING CHEMISTRY

Jonathan Falk



I am hanging up my lab coat and safety goggles and taking that big step into retirement.

I have been teaching science for 35 years, 32 of them at Mayfair High School in the Bellflower Unified School District. I've taught chemistry and AP chemistry, along with a few other science classes over the years.

I've served as

Science Department chair, Faculty Follies co-chair, Environmental Science Club advisor, paper recycling coordinator, and faculty Book Club chair. I've made goofy music videos (you can find them on YouTube), I've taken students on outings to the theater and to Caltech and weekend field trips to Catalina Island, and I've given out Academy Awards for best chromatography. Overall, it's been a fun career, and I figured if I kept myself amused, maybe some of the students would enjoy learning chemistry at the same time.

I've appreciated being recognized by colleagues, including the teacher association WHO Award (We Honor Ours, 2004), the yearbook dedication (2012) and the homecoming grand marshal (2016). But it's the positive feedback from students and former students that I appreciate the most -- students who go into careers in science and engineering, or who remember the

career reports they had to write for me, or how they identified their unknown ionic compound in the final lab experiment we used to do.

Here are some humorous memories: The most unusual place I taught chemistry was in the weightlifting room during the science wing renovations around 2000. That was challenging, with weights clanging on concrete outside the room all day long. Then there was a slightly dyslexic (or stoned) student who thought it would be fun to tag the brick wall outside my classroom with a pot-related message. The school painted over the brick part, but you could still see the outline of the green spray paint for years, outlining the words "somke bud." There were students who were poor at chemistry and even poorer at cheating. They would copy odd answers from a neighbor onto an even version of a test, never imagining there might be two versions! There was a fire in the chemistry lab when an AP student gave a final seminar on saponification (soap making) and had students heat some oil on hotplates around the lab while he lectured at the front of the class. We extinguished the fire. The building was scheduled for demolition, but this might have been too dramatic a way to close down the old science wing.

There is a new STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) building taking shape on our campus but I won't get to teach there. As we read in the Torah portion, Chukat, as I write this, Moses never got to enter the Promised Land either. But that's okay. I can look back on a worthwhile career, inspiring a generation of students and teaching an evidence-based way of looking at the world.

PLAYGROUND SUNDAYS RETURN TO BCC

Donna Q. Groman

The BCC playground is open! Playground Sundays resume on the fourth Sunday of each month. On July 25, the playground will be open from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm for all BCC members and their families. Come and be outdoors with your BCC buddies, whom you may not have seen for over a year. Share stories and smiles, laugh and be gay!

Frequently Asked Questions:

Where is the playground? It's right in the parking lot at BCC. BCC has a basketball hoop and also a net that can be adjusted to play different net games.

What activities are available? Basketball, pickleball, badminton,

and volleyball. Also, jump rope, hopscotch and other playground games.

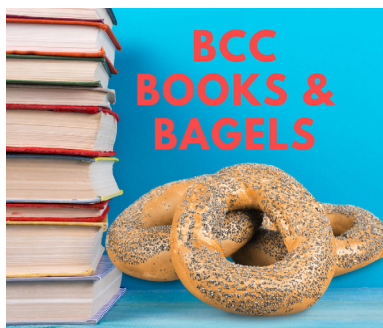
What is the level of play? It's totally non-competitive. We are there to have fun.

Must I be vaccinated to join in? Yes, people who have not yet been vaccinated are welcome to attend future Playground Sundays after they are vaccinated.

Do I need to have previous experience playing sports? No, no prior experience or skills are required. We appreciate you as you are and we are happy to teach technique to anyone who wants to learn.

Do I need to RSVP? Yes, please RSVP to Donna Quigley Groman (dlgroman@hotmail.com or 310-487-0777). I will be driving from the Central Coast to host this event and I just want to be sure that folks will be in attendance.

When are the next Playground Sundays? July 25, 2021 and August 29, 2021.



BCC BOOKS AND BAGELS

Larry Nathenson

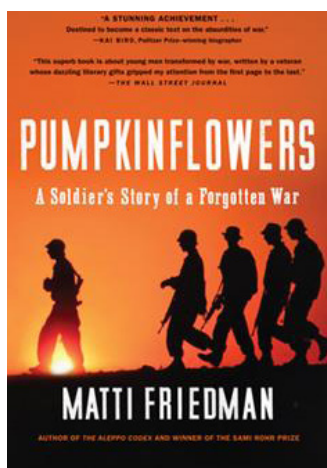
BCC's Book Group (Books and Bagels) has been meeting continuously since January

1995. The group usually meets monthly in members' homes for a bagel brunch and discussion of a book selected by the group (although now we are meeting by Zoom until further notice). 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, July 25, 10:00 am on Zoom

***Pumpkinflowers: A Soldier's Story of a Forgotten War*, by Matti Friedman**

This is a memoir about Israeli soldiers in the 1990s, fighting against the militia Hezbollah in Southern Lebanon.



and you are welcome to join us for a particular book that may interest you. RSVP is required. For more information or to register for the Zoom link, contact Larry Nathenson at larrynath@aol.com.

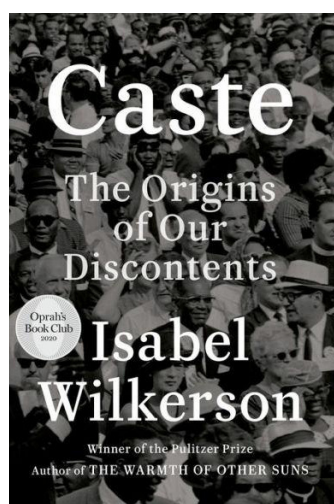


Please join us in welcoming the following individuals and couples who have joined or rejoined BCC during the past year.

Dawna Sirard
Madison Felman-Panagotacos
Lee Wygand
Pablo Betancourt
Chana Bryson
Mara Silverberg
Maxine Johnston
Jason Velick
Jack Elliott
Ellie Pierce
Steven Schmitt and Paul Bellaff
Ilene Cohen
Darice Clark
Richard and Kathleen Cameron

We're happy to have all of them as part of the BCC family!

-Jonathan Falk, chair of the Membership Committee



Sunday, August 29, 10:00 am on Zoom

***Caste: The Origins of our Discontents*, by Isabel Wilkerson**

This is an analysis of the concept of caste as expressed in three different regimes -- traditional India, Nazi Germany, and the racial hierarchy of the United States -- tracing their similarities and differences and

their impact on history. This book is quite popular, so we recommend requesting it early if you wish to borrow it from a public library.



The Life Transitions Group is for those who are dealing with losses, changes in relationships, or career, social, family, or health issues. It helps to build emotional strength by sharing your feelings with others in a supportive and confidential atmosphere.

The group is led by social worker Shirley Hirschberg and now meets on Zoom, the first and third Wednesday evenings of each month. Please contact Shirley to see if this group is right for you and to register for the meeting at shirschberg1@gmail.com.