



# The Maggid

C O N G R E G A T I O N   E T Z   C H A I M

P O B O X 3752 MERCED CA 95344

D E C E M B E R   2 0 2 5

## Notes from our President

Greetings.

### Upcoming Events

**12/5 7:00 PM Kabbalat  
Shabbat Services at  
our Chavurah House**

**12/12 Friday night  
6:30 PM Potluck  
Dinner followed by  
7:30 PM Kabbalat  
Shabbat Services at  
our Chavurah House**

**12/20 6:00 PM  
Chanukah Party at  
our Chavurah House**

**12/26 Kosher Comedy  
5:30 Bring your own  
Chinese food dinner  
to our Chavurah  
House**

When I was a college student in Southern California and very active in the college Jewish organization Hillel, we undergrads were asked to approach anyone showing up alone at an event and help them feel welcome. A decade later, having moved back to that same city and too old for Hillel, I visited the local temple for Friday night services. I was very disappointed that nobody greeted me, talked to me, or even turned to me to say "Shabbat Shalom" as the rabbi invited us to do at the end of the service. I did not visit that congregation again.

Fast forward to Merced years later and my first interactions at an Etz Chaim Passover seder. The members of this congregation greeted me, asked me questions, and made me feel welcome... even though I couldn't remember a single person's name or who was related to whom! The next event I showed up at was a farewell potluck for a much-loved, guitar-playing student rabbi. The members were kind to me, and everyone seemed so sad to see him go. That's when I felt like I had been missing out on something special, so I became more active.

We all have different journeys in Judaism. No matter where you are on your journey, I hope you'll join me at some of our congregation's events. If Etz Chaim does not currently offer something you want or need, let us know ([president@jewishmerced.org](mailto:president@jewishmerced.org))! Calendars can be changed, events added, and occasional Herculean efforts made. In the meantime, on the docket for December, we have formal services the first Friday, a fun and likely crowded Hannukah party on the 20th and, for the second year in a row, an evening of BYO Chinese food and Kung Pao Kosher Comedy on the 26th. Details are on the following pages.

B'shalom,  
Belinda Braunstein

## Tributes

*Anytime you are celebrating a special event, let us share in your joy.  
We welcome tributes in honor or in memory of loved ones, births,  
weddings, Bar and Bat Mitzvahs, and honoring special events.  
Send your Tributes to PO Box 3752 Merced CA 95344*

Judith Dake - In loving memory of William Spangler  
Judith Dake - In loving memory of Martha Dake  
Ardene Shaeffer - In loving memory of Honora Helene Falk

*May their memories be a blessing*

*זכרונם לברכה*

## Other Planned Community Events

December 20 - Chanukah Party  
December 26 - Bring your own (Chinese food) dinner and view  
Kung Pao Kosher Comedy at our Chavurah House  
January 19 - Martin Luther King Day Community March  
January 31 - Tu B'Shvat Potluck  
March 7 - Purim Party  
April 4 - Community Passover Seder  
May 3 - Annual Membership Meeting and 2026/ 2027 Board Elections

**November - April**

**1st Fridays:** 7:00 Formal Lay Led Services with Torah Reading  
**3rd Fridays:** 6:30 Potluck and 7:30 Lay Led Kabbalat Shabbat Services  
at our Chavurah House on Parsons Ave

### Weekly Shabbat Challah Deliveries

**Contact Rachel Hadley (rhadleyfam@gmail.com) for more information,  
or to be added to or removed from the deliveries list**

(Merced area deliveries only)

# Temple Beth Israel and the Fresno Folklore Society

Present:

## A Night of Klezmer Music

Michael Winograd and Ira Temple are staples of New York City's vibrant Klezmer and Yiddish music community and cultural tapestry. Together they have played concerts, festivals, weddings and coming of age celebrations, and are both current members of the cast and orchestra of Cabaret at the Kit Kat Club on Broadway. They are delighted to tour the West Coast this December as a duo, playing music from their new albums and more.

### **Where:**

Temple Beth Israel  
6622 N Maroa Ave  
Fresno CA 93704

### **When:**

December 10, 2025  
Doors open at 6:15 p.m.  
Concert starts at 7:00 p.m.

**Tickets:** \$25 in advance; \$30 at the door

Credit Card Fees may apply

### **How to purchase tickets:**

- In person at the Temple Beth Israel office with cash, check or credit card
- By phone: 559 132-3600 - at the automated message press 5 for the Bookkeeper

# HAPPY HANUKKAH



**Latkes!**



**Desserts!**



**Menorahs!**

Our congregational party will be on  
December 20, 2025  
at our Chavurah House  
Starting at 6:00

Fun  
Games  
Dreidel  
Pirate Gift Exchange



**Dreidels!**

**The Congregation will provide latkes**

Please bring:

1. A wrapped gift if you plan to participate in the "Pirate Gift Exchange." A desirable gift would be ideal for this, something homemade or purchased, valued between \$15.00 - \$20.00.
2. Your Hanukkah Menorahs and candles to light.
3. Finger foods, an appetizer or dessert.



**Desirable Gifts  
for Stealing!**



**Yummy Food!**



# KUNG PAO KOSHER COMEDY NIGHT!

JEWISH COMEDY ON  
CHRISTMAS  
IN A CHINESE  
RESTAURANT



Featuring  
Elayne Booseler



with

ORION LEVINE



AMANDA MARKS



LISA GEDULDIG



**Friday, Dec. 26, 2025**

Arrive at 5:30pm / Streamed show begins at 6pm

BYO Chinese (or other) food!

(This is not a potluck.)

At the Chavurah House



RSVP to Belinda ([bbraunstein@ucmerced.edu](mailto:bbraunstein@ucmerced.edu)) by 12/21.

JEWISH FEDERATION OF CENTRAL CALIFORNIA PRESENTS

# THE JAZZ CRU

TBI SOCIAL  
HALL



SATURDAY

JAN 31

7PM - 10PM

**wine - appetizers - friends**

**RSVP: JFCC (559)432-2162 BY JAN. 16**

Welcome to our Puzzle Page Sudoku  
(Solution is on last page)

5			1	7	9			2
	3						9	
		7				8		
			5		6			
7				2				1
	6			8			4	
		1		4		5		
			7		1			
2				6				9

***Our Fiscal Year is July - June***

***\$500.00 per Year per Family Unit***

***Please mail your 2025/ 2026 Dues payment to:***

***Congregation Etz Chaim***

***P O Box 3752***

***Merced CA 95344***

***For those who prefer, we do accept monthly Dues payments year round***

## December Yahrtzeits

Jeffrey S. Bernstein  
Ilse Brodman  
Max Brodofsky  
Renee Conan  
Martha Dake  
Honora Helene Falk  
Rose Friedberg  
Norman Goldman  
Bernard Goldstein  
David Kirihara  
Milton Kleitman  
Ben Lewis  
John Lewis  
Rose Litowsky  
Aaron Passovoy  
Louis Peletz  
Harold Zimmerman

## Birthdays

Catherine Friedman 12/1  
Harlan Dake 12/2  
Cynthia Giventer 12/5  
Erica Dake 12/9  
Chas Jolly 12/14  
Zadie Williams 12/20  
Jim Madruga 12/29

## Campership

**Amazon.com** donates to our Campership Fund when we make purchases by accessing them through the Amazon link on our webpage  
([www.jewishmerced.org](http://www.jewishmerced.org))

**Please try to use it!**



*Those we remember in the  
year of their passing:*

*Raissa Moore 05/2025*

*זכרונם לברכה*

*May their memories be a blessing*

[www.Jewishmerced.org](http://www.Jewishmerced.org)

John Hofmann and Greg Friedman have donated gallons of blood in the Congregation's name.  
Any Congregant can access blood via the credit accumulated under the Congregation's name.

*Solution to this month's Sudoku*

5	4	8	1	7	9	6	3	2
6	3	2	4	5	8	1	9	7
9	1	7	6	3	2	8	5	4
4	2	9	5	1	6	7	8	3
7	8	5	3	2	4	9	6	1
1	6	3	9	8	7	2	4	5
8	9	1	2	4	3	5	7	6
3	5	6	7	9	1	4	2	8
2	7	4	8	6	5	3	1	9