



## Upcoming Events

*Masks are  
Encouraged  
at all Events*

See **High Holidays flyer** for specific details: **9/25 & 9/26 - Rosh HaShanah Services and 10/4 & 10/5 - Yom Kippur Services with Rabbi Julie on the Patio of the Chavurah House**

**9/2 7:00 Kabbalat Shabbat Services with Rabbi Julie on the Patio of the Chavurah House**

**9/3 10:00 AM Torah Study with Rabbi Julie on the patio at our Chavurah House**

**9/3 Saturday Night 6:00 PM Havdala and a Distanced Potluck Dinner followed at 7:00 PM with Adult Ed with Rabbi Julie on the patio at our Chavurah House**

**9/4 10:00 AM Kids Club with Rabbi Julie at our Chavurah House**

**9/12 6:15 PM Board Meeting at Cathy Hofmann's house**

# The Maggid

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## Notes From Student Rabbi Julie

It's such an honor to join the Etz Chaim community this year, and so nice to be back in California after many years away. I grew up in the Bay Area and went to UC San Diego, and it feels good to finally plant myself back in my home state for a job and calling that brings me meaning and joy.

Prior to starting at Hebrew Union College, I pursued simultaneous careers in comedy, education, and social justice. My competing interests carried me across the state and country. As a teenager, I was the Social Action Vice President of my youth group and the captain of my school's improv team. In college, I helped expand the comedy scene in San Diego, and traveled to Washington DC to intern with the Children's Defense Fund. I spent summer breaks as a counselor and program director at Camp Tawonga in Yosemite, and often advised my childhood synagogue on their own youth programming. I laughed when my childhood rabbis asked me to consider rabbinical school; though I worked across multiple fields, I knew I wanted to be a comedian. In 2015 I packed up everything, and moved to Chicago to perform and write for The Second City.

My time in Chicago was incredibly fun and also exhausting. Comedy careers are late night commitments that require a day job, and I wanted one that built connection with others. I started running after school programs and eventually switched to teaching at a middle school, which I loved, but made my days even longer. On a whim one fall, I attended High Holy Day services at Mishkan Chicago, a post-denominational congregation where Judaism is a tool for inspiration and positive social change. I was deeply moved by the warmth, connection, and humor in the community. Mishkan kept me grounded and supported in my busy life, and reconnected me to social action projects and refugee rights organizations that I had initially stepped back from while focusing on comedy. I grew more and more involved at Mishkan, leading services as a member of their lay-led "Davening Team," working with their clergy to create retreats and programs, and nannying for my rabbi's young children. This all gave me a window into a life in the rabbinate, and expanded my perspective on what meaningful work could look like.

Though I loved the careers I was building in comedy and education, I felt most connected to the work that I had the least amount of time for. Jewish community, ritual, and prayer held far more meaning for me than anything else, so I applied to rabbinical school in the hopes that I could lead a life in service of others.

As we approach High Holidays, we enter a time of transition into a new year and season, giving us the opportunity to pause and ground ourselves amidst the chaos of the world. I can't wait to join you on this journey and get to know you all in the coming weeks and months.

L'shalom,  
Julie

## NOTES FROM OUR PRESIDENT

by Greg Friedman

Happy New Year Everyone!

While the Jewish New Year is quickly approaching and it is a time for reflection, the school year has already started for so many of us in the Education field. This is a hectic time of rushing to prepare, only to wait as we discover administration is not as prepared as we are.

I am happy to say that is not how things are in our small Congregation. Your new Board has been hard at work planning activities that we hope you will find engaging. I hope you joined us for our movie night a few weeks ago, and/or our pool party over the summer. We have more movies, and dinner outings planned, so stay tuned and read through the Maggid that so many of us contribute to, to learn more about the exciting things we have planned now and in the future.

The Board is so happy to welcome our new Student Rabbi, Julie Fishbach to Merced. She will be joining us for the first time Friday night, September 2<sup>nd</sup>. I hope you will join us for services at the Chavurah house at 7pm and continue to return for the entire weekend Julie is here, as we get to know her and welcome her into our Merced family. The complete schedule of Julie's first weekend is included on the 1st page of the Maggid, and a calendar list of her subsequent visits can be found on Page 3.

Julie will return for the High Holidays, which start on Sunday September 25<sup>th</sup>. All High Holiday events will be held at the Chavurah House. Please see the enclosed High Holiday schedule and please print out the Yizkor card and bring it with you to services. Although we will continue to do our best to make the house as safe as reasonably possible for everyone, you should always feel free to wear a mask both inside and out during our time together.

Finally, I invite all members of the Congregation to attend our Board meetings. Our next Board Meeting will be Monday, September 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:15pm at Cathy Hofmann's house. Please reach out if you would like to attend and need directions.

If you are not currently a Congregation Etz Chaim member and would like to help support all the religious and social activities we do, including having a Student Rabbi come every month and the High Holidays, I ask you to consider becoming a dues paying member. Please speak to any board member or our Treasurer Rachel Hadley for more information.

I look forward to seeing you Friday night September 2nd at 7pm for Shabbat services!

B'Shalom,  
Greg Friedman,  
Congregation President

## *Annual Dues are DUE*

*\$500.00 per Year per Family Unit*

*Please mail your Dues payment to:*

*Congregation Etz Chaim*

*P O Box 3752*

*Merced CA 95344*

## Other Planned Community Events

**October 9** - Sunday in the Sukkah, Potluck Social

**December 31** - New Years Eve Social

*TBA Friday Nights: 6:30 Potluck and 7:30 Lay Led Services  
at our Chavurah House on Parsons Ave*

# Rabbi Visits for the Year

Month	Dates	Holiday (if any)	Friday Night Dinner Host	Friday Night Oneg Host	Saturday Night Dinner Host
September	2 - 4	Rabbi's First Visit	Greg Friedman	Belinda Braunstein	Potluck
September	25 - 26	Rosh Hashana	Judith Salzberg	The Board	
October	4 - 5	Yom Kippur	Carol Friedman	No Oneg	Potluck
October	14 - 16	Simchat Torah	Belinda Braunstein		
November	11 - 13	No Holiday			
December	16 - 18	Hannukah			
January	6 - 8	Tu B'Shvat			Tu B'Shvat Seder
February	3 - 5	No Holiday			
March	3 - 5	Purim		Hamentaschen Sh'lach Manot	
April	7 - 9	Passover			Passover Seder
April	28 - 30	No Holiday			

*Contact John Kirihara if you would like to share a meal with the Rabbi  
or sponsor an Oneg Shabbat*

*Remembering is  
a message from  
the heart*



## IN MEMORIAM



PLEASE INCLUDE THE NAME(S) OF MY  
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IN LOVING MEMORY OF  
(please print phonetically)

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A YIZKOR/MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTION TO CONGREGATION ETZ CHAIM IS ENCLOSED

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ADDRESS

PHONE

## SCHMOOZING WITH OUR MAVEN

by Carol Madruga

Hello my friends,

As a new feature of our Maggid, I will be sharing congregation news with you. I hope you will share your good news and travel experiences with me so I can pass the information along.

The summer travel season started with a bang. John and Judith Kiriara joined friends for a European Vacation. Their travels included a cruise on the Rhine River, a visit to many European cities in that region and finished with a long awaited 3 week visit to the East coast where Judith's brother Jeff and his family live. I am so happy you were able to travel after such so many travel restrictions.

Sheryl Wight has had a great summer of travel fun. She spent some time exploring the Alaskan wilderness, hiking and sightseeing, and she just returned from visiting the Seattle area with some friends.

After 2 years of scheduling and rescheduling, my cruise from Paris to Normandy was a success. We saw the sights of Paris and visited the beaches of Normandy which was very emotional.

July brought us to wish Rebecca Friedman a very happy 21st birthday to and congratulations to Jacob Friedman, who was invited to a week long leadership camp in San Diego. We are so proud of both of you.

The Friedman family was able to enjoy some family summer fun together and Greg (our Etz Chaim president) took a 5 day - 500 mile bike ride from Grants Pass Oregon to San Francisco California. Amazing, Greg!

Way to go, High School graduate Aiden Mook! We know you will continue to accomplish great things.

Glad our friends Ann De Ayora, Belinda Braunstein and Laurie Kaufman have recovered from Covid this summer.

Our new members Sebastian and Rina took a 3000 mile road trip this summer. They love to explore and hike and we love hearing about it.

Linda Anne was able to go back to see family and friends in Massachusetts. She always has such a wonderful visit, I hope she does not decide to stay there.

The Hofmann family enjoyed Hawaii and other get-aways this summer. They always find such interesting places to visit!

Belinda was able to go see her parents in Arizona. Unfortunately she got Covid while she was there but luckily they have a "casita" where she was able to quarantine and recover.

If you have information to share, please contact me at [Cookie52@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Cookie52@sbcglobal.net)

# High Holy Days Services 2022/5783

Congregation Etz Chaim

Chavurah House

on Parsons Ave, Merced

Services will also be transmitted via ZOOM

LED BY STUDENT RABBI JULIE FISHBACH

## ROSH HASHANAH

SUNDAY  
SEPTEMBER 25

7:00 p.m.

Evening Service

MONDAY,  
SEPTEMBER 26

10:00 a.m.

Morning Torah Service  
followed by a Tashlich service  
on the Bridge at Rahilly Park

## YOM KIPPUR

TUESDAY  
OCTOBER 4

7:00 p.m.

Kol Nidre Service

WEDNESDAY  
OCTOBER 5

10:00 a.m.

Morning Torah Service

1:00 p.m.

Learning

4:30 p.m.

Minha (Afternoon Service)

5:30 p.m.

Yizkor (Memorial Service)

6:30 p.m.

Neila (Closing Service)

7:30 p.m.

Havdalah, Kiddush and

Break-the-Fast Potluck

- It is traditional at this time of year to make donations in memory of loved ones. Please fill out a **Yizkor Card**. You may mail your card and donation to P.O. Box 3752, Merced 95344-3752 or give to Rachel Hadley or Greg Friedman no later than Kol Nidre. Other donations will also be gratefully accepted throughout the High Holy Days.
  - \*\* Please contact Greg Friedman for ZOOM link information
  - \*\*\* For our **Break-the-Fast**, please bring a main dish, and either a side dish or dessert - enough to feed your group heartily (these people will be hungry!)
- Tzedakah (food or clothing) for the less privileged in our community is welcome at any service



## September Yahrtzeits

Norman Ambrosini  
Henry Bernstein  
Harry Friedberg  
Leon Ginsberg  
Barbara Goldman  
Lee Kamson  
Gerald Kaplan  
Judith Goodstein Kleitman  
Mel Kramer  
Alexander Labbok  
Fred Moore  
Morton N. Rosenbaum  
Ann Rotbart  
Samuel Salzberg  
Marty Victor  
Steve Wight

*זכרונום לברכה*

*May their memories be a blessing*

## September Birthdays

Judith Salzberg Kirihara	9/1
Alicia Ambrosini	9/5
Peggy Shainberg	9/6
Simon Hofmann	9/13
David Gross	9/14
Belinda Braunstein	9/16
Carol Madruga	9/17



## Campership!

**Amazon.com** donates to our Campership Fund when you make purchases by accessing them through their link on our webpage  
([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.

