

Gan HaLev

Is a Marin County Jewish community congregation located in the San Geronimo Valley for people who wish to be connected to Jewish life through celebration, cultural events and a commitment to social justice.

Children's and Family Education Programs

Kindergarten through B'nai Mitzvah

Special new B'nai Mitzvah Preparation Program for 11 and 12 year-old beginning students



What is a Bar or Bat Mitzvah?

Throughout our history, Jewish tradition has marked life cycle events with ritual, prayer and celebration. With the Bar and Bat Mitzvah, we welcome our children into the Jewish community.

Originally, for boys, the Bat Mitzvah ceremonies for girls –came into being in the 20th Century. These celebrations acknowledge our children's growth and development and their capacity to join the community as responsible young adults. B'nai Mitzvah ceremonies and the process leading up to them are the uniquely Jewish way of guiding our youth from childhood to adulthood. It is an unforgettable rite of passage that will change their lives -- and yours as parents, as well.

Gan HaLev offers the opportunity to teach, guide, and celebrate your child's entrance into Jewish community life in ways that are consistent with your family's lifestyle tailored to your child's unique personality and interests.

Is a Bar or Bat Mitzvah Right for My Child?

Some young people and their families may be concerned that B'nai Mitzvah preparation may require more of a commitment than they might wish to take on, especially when it involves many years of Hebrew language mastery. **With Gan HaLev there are other choices.**

Too much Hebrew? Too many years of religious school?

Gan HaLev will teach and guide your child as she or he comes to understand Jewish traditions and values, and prayers. Preparation levels and Hebrew reading are tailored to your child's desires and needs - we know about sports and hobbies! Most students are ready to begin at age 11 or 12, with a one year to 6 month preparation and planning time.

Gan HaLev believes all young adults should be honored and welcomed as decision makers within their community. We offer meaningful, personalized, accessible, egalitarian, beautiful Bnai Mitzvot.

Interfaith families always welcome. Modest financial commitment, sliding fees for those in need.

All B'nai Mitzvah Celebrations will include:

- Blessings from family and friends
- Teaching to the gathering
- Working to change the world
- Taking on new responsibility
- Receiving privilege
- Connection to the past and hope for the future

Celebrations MAY also include:

- Leading prayers in English or Hebrew
- Musical tributes
- Reading from the Torah in English or Hebrew
- Personalized liturgy
- Anything else that is meaningful to you!

To find out more about this amazing program, please come to a gathering on Sunday, September 14 at 9:30 am at the San Geronimo Valley Community Center. or contact Rabbi Elisheva Salamo directly at (650) 353-8686.



About Gan HaLev

We are a Jewish community congregation for people of all ages—adults, and families with children who want to be connected to Jewish life through celebration, cultural events and a commitment to social justice. Shabbat Services are held monthly at the San Geronimo Valley Community Center or in members' homes. Please call us for times and dates of upcoming services and events.

High Holiday Services 2014

at the San Geronimo Valley Community Center

Rosh Hashanah Wednesday September 24, 7pm

Thursday, September 25, 10 am

Tashlich Friday, September 26, 4pm at Taylor Park

Kol Nidre Friday, October 3, 7pm

Yom Kippur Saturday, October 4 10am

Yizkor, 12 Noon

Ne'ilah, 6pm followed by Break-the-Fast

Our Leadership Team Rabbi Elisheva Salamo

Board of Directors

Laurie Chorna

Sarah Dal Porto

Mike Lerner

Suzanne Sadowsky

Al Weiler

Children's Education Program Staff

Rabbi Elisheva Salamo

Heather Richardson

Susan Tacherra

Call 415-488-4524

For More Information about Gan HaLev

Coming of Age Jewish Style

Gan HaLev's innovative, personalized B'nai Mitzvah program for children 11-14 years

Give your Child the Gift of Welcome



Our Torah scroll dates back to the early 19th-century, and is one of more than 1500 scrolls that were rescued from a warehouse in Prague in 1963, twenty-five years after Kristallnacht and the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia at the beginning of World War II. The scroll had suffered damage over time and was repaired by the Czech Memorial Scrolls Trust at Westminster Synagogue in London. It came to our community in August 1993 on "permanent loan".