



# Conference Program

This conference program is how you navigate the conference. It is organized as follows:

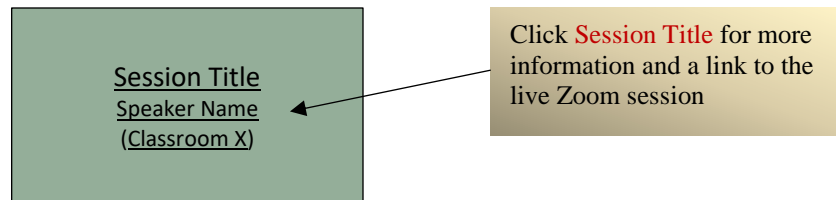
- [Program at a Glance](#) chart, **page 2**, includes Session Title, Speaker Name, Classroom ID, linking to (pages 8-57) session description and speaker bio for each session, with link to live Zoom Classroom
- [Session Index](#), **page 5**, with links to session details and Zoom room numbers for phone connections
- [Speaker Index](#), **page 7**

## How to join a conference session:

1. View [Program at a Glance](#), click on session desired (see boxes below for example)
2. On the session description page, click “**Zoom in Classroom X**” button in the upper left of the page

The conference sessions are listed in the program as shown in the box on the left below.

Click on the session to see that session’s description and speaker bios, with a link to the Zoom classroom for that session.



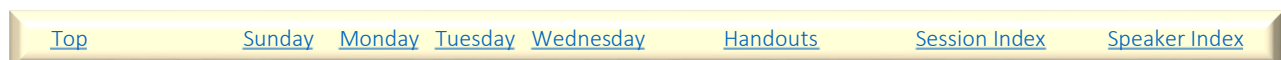
**Note:** Clicking on **button links** in the program will load those pages in the current browser tab or window. **Right-Click on the link to open the page in a new tab or window.**



For help, or information during the conference, call any of these numbers. If you don’t get an answer, don’t leave a message, try the next number:

510-908-2097, 831-685-9382, 505-412-3976, 410-733-3700

Each program page has the following short-cut navigation menu at the bottom of the page:



# Program at a Glance

June 7-10, 2020

Sunday	Taharah	Chevrah Kadisha	Legacy	Community
12:00 – 12:30 EDT 9:00 – 9:30 PDT	<b>Welcome and Conference Opening</b> <u>Jean Berman, David Zinner</u> (Classroom A1)			
12:30 – 1:00 EDT 9:30 – 10:00 PDT	<b>Conference Overview</b> <u>Rick Light, David Zinner, Program Committee Members</u> (Classroom A1)			
1:00 – 2:00 EDT 10:00 – 11:00 PDT	<b>The Lasting Impact of the Coronavirus on the Chevrah Kadisha</b> <u>David Zinner</u> (Classroom A1)			
2:00 – 2:15 EDT 11:00 – 11:15 PDT	15-minute Break			
2:15 – 3:15 EDT 11:15 – 12:15 PDT	<b>Taharah Overview</b> <u>Susan Barnes</u> (Classroom B1)	<b>Ma'avor Yabbok I</b> <u>Rabbi Steven Moss</u> (Classroom C1)	<b>Legacy Giving</b> <u>Dan Brandeis</u> (Classroom D1)	<b>Care and Feeding of Volunteers</b> <u>Nina Rubin</u> (Classroom E1)
3:15 – 3:45 EDT 12:15 – 12:45 PDT	<b>30-minute Break with Networking Online</b> (Classroom A3)			
3:45 – 4:45 EDT 12:45 – 1:45 PDT	<b>Nechamah (Comfort) – Chevrah Kadisha's Role in the Coronavirus Age</b> <u>Nicky Silver</u> (Classroom A2)			
4:45 – 6:00 EDT 1:45 – 3:00 PDT	<b>Poster Session Presentations and Networking Breakouts</b> (Classroom A3)			
6:00 – 7:00 EDT 3:00 – 4:00 PDT	<b>Story Telling</b> <u>Charlie Varon</u> (Classroom B2)	<b>What We Leave Behind: Our Treasures, Our Stories</b> <u>Laura Turbow</u> (Classroom C2)	<b>Stringing Along</b> (Teaching Tying Tachrichim Knots) <u>Rick Light</u> (Classroom D2)	<b>Death Is Inevitable, Be Prepared</b> <u>Dr Carol Goldbaum,</u> <u>Rabbi Suzanne Griffel</u> (Classroom E2)

EDT = Eastern Daylight Time  
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Monday	Taharah	Chevrah Kadisha	Mourning & Grief	Community
12:50 – 1:00 EDT 9:50 – 10:00 PDT	<u>Kavanah and Announcements</u> Jean Berman (Classroom A4)			
1:00 – 2:00 EDT 10:00 – 11:00 PDT	<u>The Chevrah's Unique Role:</u> <u>Understanding the Spiritual Aspects of Life in Coronavirus Age</u> Rabbi Richard Address and Rabbi Stuart Kelman (Classroom A4)			
2:00 – 2:15 EDT 11:00 – 11:15 PDT	15-minute Break			
2:15 – 3:15 EDT 11:15 – 12:15 PDT	<u>Traditional Taharah Liturgy I</u> Rabbi Stuart Kelman, Dan Fendel (Classroom B3)	<u>Toward a Gender-Inclusive Chevrah Kadisha</u> James Cohen (Classroom C3)	<u>At the Deathbed: Creating Holiness and Wholeness</u> Rabbi Judith R. Beiner (Classroom D3)	<u>Engaging Youth</u> Rachel Butler, Jordana Rosenfeld (Classroom E3)
3:15 – 3:45 EDT 12:15 – 12:45 PDT	30-minute Break with Networking Online (Classroom A3)			
3:45 – 4:45 EDT 12:45 – 1:45 PDT	<u>Traditional Taharah Liturgy II</u> Rabbi Stuart Kelman, Dan Fendel (Classroom B3)	<u>Why/How Policies and Manuals</u> Malke Frank, Rick Light, Barbara Neustadt, Michelle Siegel (Classroom C4)	<u>History and Mystery of Yizkor</u> Reb Simcha Raphael (Classroom D4)	<u>Best Children's Books about Death</u> Marjorie Ingall (Classroom E4)
4:45 – 6:00 EDT 1:45 – 3:00 PDT	<u>Poster Session Presentations and Networking Breakouts</u> (Classroom A3)			
Tuesday	Taharah	Chevrah Kadisha	Mourning & Grief	Cemetery
12:50 – 1:00 EDT 9:50 – 10:00 PDT	<u>Kavanah and Announcements</u> Jean Berman (Classroom A5)			
1:00 – 2:00 EDT 10:00 – 11:00 PDT	<u>What Do We Do Now? Honoring and Sanctifying in the Midst of a Pandemic</u> Panel: Malke Frank, Rabbi Lynn Greenhough, Rick Light, Rabbi Shifrah Tobacman (Classroom A5)			
2:00 – 2:15 EDT 11:00 – 11:15 PDT	15-minute Break			
2:15 – 3:15 EDT 11:15 – 12:15 PDT	<u>The Holiness of Adaptation: It's a Question of How</u> Sharon Fendrich, Rabbi Shifrah Tobacman (Classroom B5)	<u>An Intergenerational Conversation in this Moment</u> Kohenet Keshira haLev Fife, Rabbi Eva Sax-Bolder (Classroom C5)	<u>Bioethics During a Pandemic</u> Dr Carol Roberts Gerson, Rabbi Gary S. Gerson (Classroom D5)	<u>Cemetery Management Curriculum</u> Holly Blue Hawkins (Classroom E5)
3:15 – 3:45 EDT 12:15 – 12:45 PDT	30-minute Break with Networking Online (Classroom A3)			
3:45 – 4:45 EDT 12:45 – 1:45 PDT	<u>Lessons from Taharah Records</u> Eric Lidji (Classroom B6)	<u>Ma'avov Yabbok II</u> Rabbi Steven Moss (Classroom C6)	<u>Unrecognized Loss</u> Rabbi Janet Madden (Classroom D6)	<u>Human Composting</u> Holly Blue Hawkins, David Zinner (Classroom E6)
4:45 – 6:00 EDT 1:45 – 3:00 PDT	<u>Poster Session Presentations and Networking Breakouts</u> (Classroom A3)			

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1:00 – 2:00 EDT 10:00 – 11:00 PDT	<u>Gamliel Institute: Reflections on the First Decade</u> <a href="#">Rabbi Stuart Kelman</a> (Classroom A6)			
2:00 – 2:15 EDT 11:00 – 11:15 PDT	Gamliel Institute Graduation 15-minute Break			
2:15 – 3:15 EDT 11:15 – 12:15 PDT	<u>Tahor and Tamei and the Journey Between</u> <a href="#">Nina Rubin</a> (Classroom B7)	<u>Chevrah Kadisha Funding Models</u> <a href="#">Pat Cluss</a> (Classroom C7)	<u>Hebrew Priestessing for this Moment</u> <a href="#">Kohenet Keshira haLev Fife</a> (Classroom D7)	<u>Jewish Response to Plagues</u> <a href="#">Rabbi Jonathan Seidel</a> (Classroom E7)
3:15 – 3:45 EDT 12:15 – 12:45 PDT	<u>30-minute Break with Networking Online</u> (Classroom A3)			
3:45 – 4:45 EDT 12:45 – 1:45 PDT	<u>Death at the Intersection: Multicultural Jewish Perspectives</u> <a href="#">Kohenet Keshira haLev Fife</a> , <a href="#">Analucia Lopezrevoredo</a> , <a href="#">Kimberly Novod</a> , <a href="#">Yoshi Silverstein</a> (Classroom B8)	<u>Blankets of Love</u> <a href="#">Cantor Marc Bachrach</a> (Classroom C8)	<u>Living with the Angel of Death</u> <a href="#">Rabbi Me'irah Iliinsky</a> (Classroom D8)	<u>New Rituals for New Life Stages</u> <a href="#">Rabbi Richard Address</a> (Classroom E8)
4:45 – 5:30 EDT 1:45 – 2:30 PDT	<u>Closing Circle and Conference Feedback</u> <a href="#">Jean Berman, David Zinner</a> (Classroom A3)			

EDT = Eastern Daylight Time  
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<a href="#">Bioethics During a Pandemic.....</a> 38	Tuesday 02:15 PM EDT	D5	810 5900 8870
<a href="#">Blankets of Love: Helping People Say Goodbye - Creating Online Celebrations of Life for Hospice Patients</a> ..... 53	Wednesday 03:45 PM EDT	C8	815 9076 8277
<a href="#">Care and Feeding of Volunteers.....</a> 14	Sunday 02:15 PM EDT	E1	830 2158 5518
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<a href="#">Conference Feedback and Closing Circle</a> ..... 56	Wednesday 04:45 PM EDT	A3	426 976 5142
<a href="#">Conference Overview.....</a> 9	Sunday 12:30 PM EDT	A1	892 0346 0724
<a href="#">Death at the Intersection: Multicultural Jewish Perspectives on Mourning, Grief and Burial.....</a> 51	Wednesday 03:45 PM EDT	B8	863 3898 2301
<a href="#">Death Is Inevitable, Be Prepared:.....</a> 20	Sunday 06:00 PM EDT	E2	856 1907 6172
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<a href="#">Tahor and Tamei and the Journey Between</a> ..... 47	Wednesday 02:15 PM EDT	B7	899 9945 8730
<a href="#">The Best Children's Books About Death and Dying</a> ..... 31	Monday 03:45 PM EDT	E4	846 8175 0842
<a href="#">The Chevrah's Unique Role: Understanding the Spiritual Aspects of Life in Coronavirus Age</a> ..... 22	Monday 01:00 PM EDT	A4	857 3307 8174
<a href="#">The Holiness of Adaptation: It's a Question of How</a> ..... 36	Tuesday 02:15 PM EDT	B5	839 7958 4813
<a href="#">The Lasting Impact of the Coronavirus on the Chevrah Kadisha</a> ..... 10	Sunday 01:00 PM EDT	A1	892 0346 0724
<a href="#">Toward a Gender-Inclusive Chevrah Kadisha - Taharah for Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Jews</a> ..... 24	Monday 02:15 PM EDT	C3	865 4610 2727
<a href="#">Traditional Taharah Liturgy Part I</a> ..... 23	Monday 02:15 PM EDT	B3	859 1178 1391
<a href="#">Traditional Taharah Liturgy Part II</a> ..... 27	Monday 03:45 PM EDT	B3	859 1178 1391
<a href="#">Unrecognized Loss</a> ..... 42	Tuesday 03:45 PM EDT	D6	828 6644 1846
<a href="#">Welcome and Conference Opening</a> ..... 8	Sunday 12:00 PM EDT	A1	892 0346 0724
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<a href="#">What We Leave Behind: Our Treasures, Our Stories</a> ..... 18	Sunday 06:00 PM EDT	C2	890 8406 6371
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## Welcome and Conference Opening

Informal welcome back schmoozing starting at noon Eastern time, followed by the conference opening and setting the tone for the day through kavanah.



Jean Berman

### Jean Berman

Jean Berman is an Interfaith Minister ordained by the Chaplaincy Institute of Maine, her ministry anchored in Judaism. She has her Chevrah Kadisha Certificate from the Gamliel Institute and is a board member of Kavod v'Nichum. Initially trained as part of the Fort Collins, Colorado Chevrah Kadisha, Jean is an active member of the Portland, ME Chevrah Kadisha. She currently coordinates volunteers for a young hospice in parts of Maine, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Jean leads Jewish elders and unaffiliated Jews in ceremony, is learning Zimbabwean marimba, plays with the Peaks Island, Maine Ukulele Ensemble, and has buttons on her backpack.



David Zinner

### David Zinner

David Zinner is the founder and Executive Director of Kavod v'Nichum and the co-founder and Executive Director of the Gamliel Institute. David is the Gamliel Institute's lead author for its first three courses – Chevrah Kadisha, the Holy Society; Taharah and Shmirah; and Education Strategies. David researches and writes the course material, including extensive historical, text, and political analysis. He has written numerous articles on Jewish traditions around death and mourning. David has coordinated the Chevrah Kadisha conferences for 18 years. He edited and managed the web site "Jewish Funerals, Burial, and Mourning," for 20 years. David teaches workshops on Jewish traditions and practices that relate to death and dying both in his own synagogue, as well as throughout the United States.



## Conference Overview



Rick Light

An overview and introduction to this year's online conference - the 18th annual! This fabulous collection of great speakers will be introduced by the conference organizers and specific members of the Program Committee.

### Rick Light

Rick Light is a senior instructor and Staff for the Gamliel Institute, on the Board of Directors for Kavod v'Nichum, and has published seven widely respected books. Rick started a Chevrah Kadisha in 1996 and led it for 18 years. He has been meditating and teaching spiritual development for five decades. He teaches about conscious living and dying as well as active aging. His newest book is an intriguing fable that is particularly salient for today. See <https://richardalight.com>.



David Zinner

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## The Lasting Impact of the Coronavirus on the Chevrah Kadisha



David Zinner

Most of our Chevrah Kadisha groups have followed Kavod v'Nichum's recommendation to stop doing "in person" taharot. Shutting this door has been demoralizing for many Taharah teams. But it has opened us up to a new burst of creativity, with "permission" to expand our practice, enhance our liturgy, find new depth in spirituality, and form amazing new connections with Chevrah Kadisha groups in other communities. Looking forward, our challenge is to keep what we've gained when we return to a new "normal."

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### David Zinner

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## Taharah Overview



Susan Barnes

In this session, Susan will give an overview of taharah (the Jewish practice of ritually washing, dressing, and placing a dead person in their casket). This session is designed for beginners, rather than those who are experienced Chevrah Kadisha members. Topics will include the kavanah (intention) of this ritual, the purpose of the taharah liturgy, and the emotional impact of doing this work, in addition to an overview of the physical procedure itself.

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### Susan Barnes

Susan is the rosha and a founding member of her synagogue's Chevrah Kadisha. She is a graduate of the Gamliel Institute, and has taught about Jewish practices around death and dying through the Gamliel Institute and at Limmud Bay Area, Kavod's annual Chevrah Kadisha conference, the Bay Area Jewish Healing Center, synagogues, and Vacaville State Prison.



Rabbi Steven Moss

## Ma'avor Yabbok: The Foundational Text of Our Work, Caring for the Dying and the Dead Part I

The two sessions for this course will begin with a brief introduction to Kabbalah and the system of the Sefirot and how they operate in our lives. There will then be a study of selected chapters from Ma'avor Yabbok that speak to the rituals of Taharah and vidui. Other selections will look at the kabbalistic view of the neshamah and afterlife, particularly reincarnation.

[This session includes handouts.](#)

### Rabbi Steven Moss

Rabbi Dr. Steven Moss recently retired from his congregation on Long Island where he served for 47 years. He has been a student of Kabbalah and spirituality for much of his life. He has been working on a translation of the classic Jewish text on death and dying, Ma'avor Yabok, since his rabbinic thesis, *The Attitude Toward Sickness, Dying and Death As Expressed in the Liturgical Works Ma'avor Yabok and Sefer Hahayiim*.

## Legacy Giving



Dan Brandeis

Financial resources are an important part of an organization's ability to thrive. Building an endowment through "Legacy Giving" enables organizations to transform their operations and achieve their mission by ensuring that resources can be counted on and allowing its members to focus on their important work. This session will review how to start or build on an endowment campaign—including the importance of a case statement, determining which donors to approach and who should approach them, and establishing policies for gift acceptance and investing. We will also review the difference between annual giving and legacy giving and we will review some of the planned giving strategies that allow donors to give more by maximizing tax efficiencies and providing security for them and their families.

### Dan Brandeis

Daniel O. Brandeis has served as the Director of the Jewish Community Foundation of the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh for 18 years. In that time, the Foundation has grown from \$87 million to \$270 million in assets under management. Prior to joining the Foundation, Dan served as an in-house attorney at Legacy Advisors, LLC, a Philadelphia firm specializing in estate and business succession planning. Previously, he worked as an attorney for the Pittsburgh firm of Klett, Rooney, Lieber & Schorling, P.C. specializing estate planning and planned giving. Dan also worked in financial management and planning for Metropolitan Life Insurance Company and Bear Stearns & Co., Inc., both in New York. As Director of the Jewish Community Foundation, Dan oversees management of the 9<sup>th</sup> largest foundation in Pittsburgh, according to the *Pittsburgh Business Times*, with distributions in 2019 of more than \$20 million in support of educational, cultural and human service programs. Dan received B.A. from Colby College, a J.D. from the University of Pittsburgh and an LL.M in taxation from Villanova University.

## Care and Feeding of Volunteers



Nina Rubin

Understanding the motivation of volunteers and meeting the needs of those who support your Chevrah is essential to a successful Chevrah. Join me to learn about how to create a welcoming group where people feel important, appreciated and competent, insuring an increased and enthusiastic volunteer pool.

[This session includes handouts.](#)

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### Nina Rubin

Nina Rubin, LCSW, was a founder of the Chevra Kadisha of Northern Colorado. She taught for many years in the Melton program, and continues to teach classes related to the work of Chevrah Kadisha, and on “Women’s Torah, a New Understanding of Tahor and Tamei,” and Jewish traditions around death, care for the dead, and mourning, throughout the country. She has just retired after many years as a clinical social worker, and medical social worker in a regional hospital, and serves as half of the spiritual leadership team for Congregation B’nai Butte in Crested Butte, Colorado.

## Nechamah (Comfort) – Chevrah Kadisha's Role in the Coronavirus Age



Nicky Silver

In this unprecedented time, it seems both appropriate and imperative for us to reclaim our original scope of practice that requires us to comfort the mourners. This is being brave in an entirely different way from the courage it takes to do a taharah. Again we are dealing with vulnerability but this time it is around grief and mourning instead of around death. As with the taharah, we are not required to fix anyone but rather to be present, in this case like being a Shomer for a living person. No agenda. No expectation. Rather soul to soul holding another being in our hearts to accompany them on their journey. This is important work. In this presentation we will talk about these issues, our roles and how to self-care to meet these new challenges presented to us.

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### Nicky Silver

Nicky Silver has been a member of a Chevrah Kadisha since 1990. Yet way before that, in 1977 she attended a 7-day residential retreat with Dr. Elisabeth Kubler Ross. Working with end-of-life issues has been a life long passion and calling. For a period of 13 years she was the head of the Chevrah Kadisha as well as the Cemetery Chair in Amherst, Massachusetts. During that time she also participated in hospice care. Moving to California, Nicky was instrumental in creating a Chevrah Kadisha at Chochmat HaLev in Berkeley, California. She now resides in Oakland, California and is a member of the Chevrah Kadisha at Kehilla Community Synagogue. She has been involved with this work for well over 40 years.

Session

Sunday 04:45 PM EDT

Zoom in Classroom A3



## Poster Session Presentations and Networking Breakouts

During this time each Poster Presenter will have a breakout room in which to present and discuss their topics. In addition, conference attendees can request breakout rooms for personal discussions and socializing.

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## Storytelling



Charlie Varon

"Everyone has a story to tell." How often have we heard these words? They seem so simple. But how we write stories is far from simple. Write from your full being guided by prompts and principles for live storytelling. This workshop is for everyone who wants to stretch and surprise themselves. Take the non-obvious path. Drop into moments. Solo theatre artist Charlie Varon welcomes conference attendees of all writing levels.

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### Charlie Varon

Charlie Varon is an artist-in-residence at The Marsh in San Francisco, where he has been writing, performing, directing, and teaching since 1991. His award-winning shows, all created in collaboration with David Ford, enjoyed extended runs at The Marsh and traveled around the country. His productions include "Rush Limbaugh in Night School" (1994), "The People's Violin" (2000), and "Rabbi Sam" (2009), which Rabbi Dan Goldblatt has called "the most important Jewish play of our time." As director, Charlie has collaborated with Dan Hoyle since 2004 on his many hit solo shows including "Tings Dey Happen," "The Real Americans," and "Border People" which were produced in San Francisco and Off Broadway. Charlie's writing has appeared in The New Yorker and The Atlantic, and he recently completed a novel about old Jews living at a retirement home in San Francisco, titled "Feisty Old Jews."

## What We Leave Behind: Our Treasures, Our Stories



Laura Turbow

People who have passed live on in the objects they've left behind. Whether a ticket stub, a favorite coffee cup, or tattered talit, these items beckon us to remember those we've loved and lost. We hold onto these things because they ignite memories and reveal the passages of our lives. Laura Turbow of Still-Life Stories ([www.slstories.net](http://www.slstories.net)) invites you to bring a personal object of meaning to a program of storytelling. Whether it was passed down or left behind, be prepared to share why it matters. What does it reveal about the person you've lost? Is it something you adore or abhor? What memories or emotions does it embody? As on the popular storytelling series, The Moth, guests will be randomly chosen to recite their "object story". Unlike The Moth, notes are encouraged, so prepare a four-minute story to share along with your object. Otherwise, zoom in to listen and delight in the unexpected tales of the things from our loved ones that we hold onto long after the people who gave them meaning have gone.

[This session includes handouts.](#)

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### Laura Turbow

Laura Turbow has been a professional photographer ([www.ltpphoto.com](http://www.ltpphoto.com)) for more than 25 years, including positions at the Oakland Tribune and Des Moines Register. The same ethos that drove her work as a photojournalist -- stopping time with her photos -- still drives her studio work, where she's run Laura Turbow Photography since last century. Laura is also the founder of Still-Life Stories ([www.slstories.net](http://www.slstories.net)), in which she tells people's stories through the objects that they hold dear. Her new business, Shiva Scribe ([www.shivascribe.com](http://www.shivascribe.com)) creates personal books of stories collected from mourners during shiva.

## Stringing Along: Teaching Tying Tachrichim Knots



Rick Light

A fun class on how to teach tying the various knots that are part of the traditional dressing of the deceased during taharah. Attendees should have a section of cord approximately 18-24 inches in length to use during class.

[This session includes handouts.](#)

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### Rick Light

Rick Light is a senior instructor and Staff for the Gamliel Institute, on the Board of Directors for Kavod v'Nichum, and has published seven widely respected books. Rick started a Chevrah Kadisha in 1996 and led it for 18 years. He has been meditating and teaching spiritual development for five decades. He teaches about conscious living and dying as well as active aging. His newest book is an intriguing fable that is particularly salient for today. See <https://richardalight.com>.

## Death Is Inevitable, Be Prepared: How To Make Your Wishes Known



Dr Carol Goldbaum



Rabbi Suzanne Griffel

End of life planning is critical for adults and their families. How do we begin this process when the 2 or 3 generation family has not had the necessary discussions? We will break into small groups to role-play as an opportunity to help you become comfortable having the challenging conversations that empower you and your loved ones to respect each other's wishes. This session will introduce participants to tools for assisting in this process, including the newly developed document "Wishes for the End of My Life," which is intended for Jews across the spectrum of religious practice and gender identity. We will also include more common documents such as Powers of Attorney, Living Wills, and Five Wishes. Having these discussions and completing the documents will prepare you to share the decisions with other family members, rabbi, and/or funeral director.

[This session includes handouts.](#)

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### **Carol S. Goldbaum, PhD, LCSW**

Carol S. Goldbaum, PhD, LCSW is a Clinical Social Worker, who has worked in a variety of administrative and clinical positions including hospitals, mental health services and a senior residence. She has been on the Steering and Liturgy committees of the Progressive Chevra Kadisha. She has also led workshops and support groups.

### **Rabbi Suzanne Griffel**

Rabbi Suzanne Griffel is a rabbi and Board-Certified chaplain who has worked in Hillel, congregational, hospice, and community chaplaincy settings. She has been a member of the Progressive Chevra Kadisha since its founding and has served on the Steering and Liturgy Committees.

## Monday Kavanah and Announcements

Setting the tone for the day through kavanah, followed by daily announcements.



Jean Berman

### Jean Berman

Jean Berman is an Interfaith Minister ordained by the Chaplaincy Institute of Maine, her ministry anchored in Judaism. She has her Chevrah Kadisha Certificate from the Gamliel Institute and is a board member of Kavod v'Nichum. Initially trained as part of the Fort Collins, Colorado Chevrah Kadisha, Jean is an active member of the Portland, ME Chevrah Kadisha. She currently coordinates volunteers for a young hospice in parts of Maine, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Jean leads Jewish elders and unaffiliated Jews in ceremony, is learning Zimbabwean marimba, plays with the Peaks Island, Maine Ukulele Ensemble, and has buttons on her backpack.

## The Chevrah's Unique Role: Understanding the Spiritual Aspects of Life in Coronavirus Age

You are invited to join a conversation between Rabbi Stuart Kelman and Rabbi Richard Address as they discuss some of the major themes that have emerged from the recent *Mining Our Tradition* program, as well as those issues that are present in our lives as a result of the pandemic. We will look at such concerns as: the presence or absence of God, isolation and loneliness, legacy and the reality of mortality.



Rabbi Richard Address



Rabbi Stuart Kelman

### Rabbi Richard Address

Rabbi Richard Address is the Dean of the Gamliel Institute and the Founder and Director of [jewishsacredaging.com](http://jewishsacredaging.com). Rabbi Address served for over three decades on staff of the Union for Reform Judaism; first as a Regional Director and then, beginning in 1997, as Founder and Director of the URJ's Department of Jewish Family Concerns and served as a specialist and consultant for the North American Reform Movement in the areas of family related programming. Rabbi Address was ordained from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 1972 and began his rabbinic career in Los Angeles congregations. He also served as a part-time rabbi for Beth Hillel in Carmel, NJ while regional director and, after his URJ tenure, served as senior rabbi of Congregation M'kor Shalom in Cherry Hill, NJ from 2011-2014.

### Rabbi Stuart Kelman

Rabbi Stuart Kelman, Dean Emeritus of the Gamliel Institute, is a graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary and taught at the Hebrew Union College. He has extensive experience in all parts of the Jewish community, from working at Jewish camps to helping develop CAJE (the Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education). As founding rabbi of Congregation Netivot Shalom in Berkeley, CA, he was involved in the creation of the synagogue's Chevrah Kadisha. His PhD is in the Sociology of Education, and he has published five Chevrah Kadisha-related books, including the 2016 publication, *Nichum Aveilim*, on how to be a comforter to a mourner, and *Chesed Shel Emet*, delving into an extensive analysis of the taharah liturgy.

## Traditional Taharah Liturgy Part I



Rabbi Stuart Kelman



Dan Fendel

As a taharah team goes through the steps of preparation of the body for burial, they recite a complex liturgy. This session will explore how this liturgy reflects the interactions among the various participants – especially, the deceased, the team, and the Holy One – and how it achieves the goals of the ritual. This is the first session of a two-session workshop.

[This session includes handouts.](#)

### Rabbi Stuart Kelman

Rabbi Stuart Kelman, Dean Emeritus of the Gamliel Institute, is a graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary and taught at the Hebrew Union College. He has extensive experience in all parts of the Jewish community, from working at Jewish camps to helping develop CAJE (the Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education). As founding rabbi of Congregation Netivot Shalom in Berkeley, CA, he was involved in the creation of the synagogue's Chevrah Kadisha. His PhD is in the Sociology of Education, and he has published five Chevrah Kadisha-related books, including the 2016 publication, *Nichum Aveilim*, on how to be a comforter to a mourner, and *Chesed Shel Emet*, delving into an extensive analysis of the taharah liturgy.

### Dan Fendel

Dan Fendel is the men's chair and co-founder of the Chevrah Kadisha in his own congregation, Temple Sinai (Reform; Oakland), and has been a member of the Chevrah Kadisha of Beth Jacob Congregation (Orthodox; Oakland) for nearly 20 years. He was in the first cohort of the Gamliel Institute, and is now Dean of Students for Gamliel. He is co-author, with Rabbi Stuart Kelman, of *Chesed Shel Emet: The Truest Act of Kindness -- Exploring the Meaning of Taharah* (Expanded Third Edition), and *Nichum Aveilim: A Guide for the Comforter*. He has done nechamah work since the early 1980's, including volunteer grief support work for the Shanti Project and Namaste in the San Francisco area. He is now a Spiritual Care Volunteer at Kaiser Hospital in Oakland.



## Toward a Gender-Inclusive Chevrah Kadisha - Taharah for Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Jews



James Cohen

This Spring, the Boston Community Hevra Kadisha released what it believes to be the first comprehensive guide to including transgender and gender nonconforming Jews in the rituals of traditional Jewish death and burial. This booklet is intended to bridge the gap between chevrah members intentions to serve Jews of any gender and their knowledge of what has traditionally been a two-gender practice. The booklet contains new liturgy written by Rabbi Emily Aviva Kapor Mater, specifically for taharah rituals for nonbinary people, for whom neither the traditional male nor female liturgy applies. Rabbi Kapor Mater includes a discussion of the relevant Jewish texts related to taharah and transgender and nonbinary bodies. This workshop will review how the Boston chevrah embarked on this work and surveyed over 100 transgender and nonbinary Jews, and will discuss the trainings that were prepared for the local chevrah members and funeral home personnel as a result of this inquiry.

[This session includes handouts.](#)

### James Cohen

A long-time LGBTQ rights activist, James serves as the Chief Development and Communications Officer for Keshet, the leading national organization working for LGBTQ equality in Jewish life. A member of Keshet's Executive team, James oversees Keshet's institutional support and individual donor programs while also managing the organization's communications department. Outside of work, James volunteers at the Jewish Community Day School of Boston and Temple Beth Zion (TBZ), and serves on the Board of Directors of the Boston Community Hevra Kadisha and Second Nurture, an organization that builds families through foster care and adoption. James was honored as a 2017 Combined Jewish Philanthropies "Chai in the Hub" Award and is a Senior Fellow of the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation.



## At the Deathbed: Creating Holiness and Wholeness



Rabbi Judith Beiner

Being with a family at the moment of death is a holy and tender time. Often, loved ones don't know how to be or what to say, in spite of knowing that there is "some ritual or prayer" that is to be done. For the chaplain/pastor, sharing these sacred moments with families can be challenging. In this session, we'll share our experiences, hesitations, discomforts etc, and review viddui variations, readings etc for these moments. In light of COVID-19, we'll also include a discussion of how to "virtually" be with families.

[This session includes handouts.](#)

### Rabbi Judith Beiner

Rabbi Judith Beiner currently serves as the Community Chaplain at Jewish Family and Career Service of Atlanta, GA. Ordained at the Hebrew Union College in 1993 she has loved being a pastor and teacher for 25 years. Her rabbinate has taken her across the country, serving congregations in Colorado, Kansas and Georgia. She has taught in both formal and informal educational settings for both youth and adults. As a chaplain, Rabbi Beiner provides those encountering illness or crisis support and comfort. She is particularly gratified by the trust placed in her by congregants, patients, colleagues, volunteers and students. In every community where she has lived, Rabbi Beiner has been an active member of the local Rabbinic Association, and a supporter and participant in activities of the Jewish community.

## Engaging Youth



Rachel Butler



Jordana Rosenfeld

What is the generational make-up of your *Chevrah Kadisha*? How does your *Chevrah Kadisha* attract and engage younger members? Please join us for a lively discussion led by the next generation of *Chevrah Kadisha* leaders, highlighting the importance of engaging younger members in the reclaiming of ritual deathcare in modern society. Please come ready to discuss your experiences, questions, and concerns about building an intergenerational *Chevrah Kadisha*.

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### Rachel Butler

Rachel is a researcher and PhD student at the University of Pittsburgh who studies health care decision-making and service use during serious illness and at the end of life. A member of the New Community Chevra Kadisha, Rachel is also a founding member of Pittsburgh Community Deathcare, a co-organizer and facilitator for Death Cafe Pittsburgh, a member of the Coalition for Quality at the End of Life (CQEL), and a former hospice and grief support volunteer. She has training as an advance care planning facilitator and was a 2017 fellow of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation's Fellowship on Death and Dying. Rachel lives and loves in Pittsburgh, PA with her wife Lauren, their dog Moe, cats Eliza and Simon, and a restored cedar trunk full of yarn. She looks forward to welcoming you to Pittsburgh sometime in the future!

### Jordana Rosenfeld

Jordana Rosenfeld is a writer and community organizer in Pittsburgh, PA. She has been a member of the New Community Chevra Kadisha since 2019.

## Traditional Taharah Liturgy Part II



Rabbi Stuart Kelman



Dan Fendel

As a taharah team goes through the steps of preparation of the body for burial, they recite a complex liturgy. This session will explore how this liturgy reflects the interactions among the various participants – especially, the deceased, the team, and the Holy One – and how it achieves the goals of the ritual. This is the second session of a two-session workshop.

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### Rabbi Stuart Kelman

Rabbi Stuart Kelman, Dean Emeritus of the Gamliel Institute, is a graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary and taught at the Hebrew Union College. He has extensive experience in all parts of the Jewish community, from working at Jewish camps to helping develop CAJE (the Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education). As founding rabbi of Congregation Netivot Shalom in Berkeley, CA, he was involved in the creation of the synagogue's Chevrah Kadisha. His PhD is in the Sociology of Education, and he has published five Chevrah Kadisha-related books, including the 2016 publication, *Nichum Aveilim*, on how to be a comforter to a mourner, and *Chesed Shel Emet*, delving into an extensive analysis of the taharah liturgy.

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## Why/How Policies and Manuals

How does one create policy for a Chevrah Kadisha? How important is it to have a policy manual? What works, what doesn't? How should we handle the many special cases such as taharah before cremation, taharah for a non-binary or trans person, and taharah for the non-Jewish spouse of a Jew? Who decides? Join us for an in-depth conversation about our experience in facing these questions and the associated challenges in today's world.

[This session includes handouts.](#)



Malke Frank



Rick Light



Barbara Neustadt

### Malke Frank

Malke Frank co-founded the New Community Chevrah Kadisha of Greater Pittsburgh in 2004. Presently, she is the Co-Chair of J Street Pittsburgh and serves on the Board of the Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle, the weekly newspaper of the Jewish community. In 1992, Malke co-created The Jewish Women's Center of Pittsburgh, Inc., which introduced to the Jewish community Rosh Hodesh celebrations, feminist Pesach seders, and new rituals for women. She is a retired educator of Judaica and Hebrew, working for the past 30 years in Pittsburgh, Oklahoma City, and Israel. She was the principal and teacher in several Hebrew/Sunday schools and the Judaica specialist at the Jewish Community Center, where she developed a pre-school curriculum for teaching Hebrew, holidays, and values using movement, story, and song. Malke has lead workshops about Jewish holidays, life cycle, Israel, and teaching prayer through movement. For several years, she was the facilitator for a national monthly program for teenage girls, "Rosh Hodesh: It's a Girl Thing." Malke and her family lived in Israel for 11 years where she studied creative movement and dance therapy.

### Rick Light

Rick Light is a senior instructor and Staff for the Gamliel Institute, on the Board of Directors for Kavod v'Nichum, and has published seven widely respected books. Rick started a Chevrah Kadisha in 1996 and led it for 18 years. He has been meditating and teaching spiritual development for five decades. He teaches about conscious living and dying as well as active aging. His newest book is an intriguing fable that is particularly salient for today. See <https://richardalight.com>.

### Barbara Neustadt

Barbara Neustadt has been a member of the Community Hevra Kadisha of Greater Boston since its inception in 2013. She was the Volunteer Liaison for several years and is currently the President of the Board of the Community Hevra Kadisha of Greater Boston. In 2016, Barbara, along with Rabbi David Lerner of Temple Emunah in Lexington, MA, founded Emunat HaLev, a meditation institute. She leads meditation groups at the Temple and has organized afternoon and weekend meditation retreats at the Temple. Prior to her retirement in 2016, Barbara worked as a nurse for 44 years.



Michelle Siegel

## Michelle Siegel

Michelle Siegel is a member of the Temple Sinai (Oakland, California) Caring Community, Ritual Committee, and is roshah of their Chevrah Kadisha. She's a graduate of the Gamliel Institute's Chevrah Kadisha Certification program.

## History and Mystery of Yizkor - Memorializing Ancient Ancestors



Dr Simcha Raphael

The ritual practice of saying Yizkor four times a year has become an efficacious bereavement ritual within contemporary Jewish culture. It gives loved ones a chance to remember and honor deceased relatives through prayer done four times at communal Yizkor services on Yom Kippur, Shmini Atzeret, Pesach, and Shavuot. But in its original historical context, Hazkarat Neshamot, or Yizkor, is a prayer ritual that allows mourners to align with the soul of the deceased. In its original historical essence, Yizkor is a soul-guiding ritual of connecting with deceased ancestors, a way of reaching through the thin veil between this world and the world beyond. This presentation shall explore the history of Yizkor and the spiritual soul-guiding wisdom inherent in this practice. We shall discover a new way of thinking about and practicing our traditions surrounding Yizkor and the memorializing of deceased ancestors.

[This session includes handouts.](#)

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### Reb Simcha Raphael

Simcha Raphael, Ph.D. is Founding Director of the DA'AT Institute for Death Awareness, Advocacy and Training. He is Adjunct Professor in the Department of Religion and Theology at LaSalle University, and works as a psychotherapist and bereavement counselor, affiliated with Mount Airy Counseling Center, in Philadelphia. Ordained by Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, as a Rabbinic Pastor, he is a member of the Rabbis Without Borders Network, and author of numerous publications on death and afterlife including the groundbreaking *Jewish Views of the Afterlife*, recently published in a 25th anniversary edition. His website is <https://www.daatinstitute.net>.

## The Best Children's Books About Death and Dying



Marjorie Ingall

How can books help kids understand death, loss, and grief? We'll discuss some of the best and worst out there, and talk about why they succeed or fail. You'll get an up-to-the-minute bibliography of helpful children's literature compiled by Marjorie Ingall, current judge for the Sydney Taylor Awards which select the best Jewish children's books every year.

[This session includes handouts.](#)

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### Marjorie Ingall

Marjorie Ingall is the author of *Mamaleh Knows Best* and a columnist for Tablet magazine. She often writes about children's books for the New York Times Book Review, and has written for many other magazines and newspapers, including New York, Ms. Town & Country, Self, Glamour, The Forward (where was "The East Village Mamele"), Health, Food & Wine, and the late, lamented Sassy (where she was senior writer and books editor). She's also a ghostwriter. For a short while she was a writer/producer at the Oxygen TV network, where she learned that her perkiness levels were not up to a job in daytime television.



Session

Monday 04:45 PM EDT

**Zoom in Classroom A3**



## Poster Session Presentations and Networking Breakouts

During this time each Poster Presenter will have a breakout room in which to present and discuss their topics. In addition, conference attendees can request breakout rooms for personal discussions and socializing.

[Click here to see Poster Session materials.](#)

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## Tuesday Kavanah and Announcements



Jean Berman

Setting the tone for the day through kavanah, followed by daily announcements.

### Jean Berman

Jean Berman is an Interfaith Minister ordained by the Chaplaincy Institute of Maine, her ministry anchored in Judaism. She has her Chevrah Kadisha Certificate from the Gamliel Institute and is a board member of Kavod v'Nichum. Initially trained as part of the Fort Collins, Colorado Chevrah Kadisha, Jean is an active member of the Portland, ME Chevrah Kadisha. She currently coordinates volunteers for a young hospice in parts of Maine, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Jean leads Jewish elders and unaffiliated Jews in ceremony, is learning Zimbabwean marimba, plays with the Peaks Island, Maine Ukulele Ensemble, and has buttons on her backpack.

## What Do We Do Now? Honoring and Sanctifying in the Midst of a Pandemic



Malke Frank



Rabbi Lynn Greenhough



Rick Light

In times of change, challenge, and uncertainty, it has been our history for the past three millennia to create new liturgies, new rituals, and new ways of honoring our traditions. Our current time during this pandemic is another example of this rich heritage, with many people suffering and because of the danger of infection, Jews today cannot be near the ill, the dying, or the dead. So how do we perform bikkur cholim (visiting the sick), vidui (deathbed confession), taharah (preparing the dead for burial), shmira (guarding and accompanying the dead), and our burial practices when we cannot be near to those affected? Furthermore, we cannot even be near our team members for fear of infection. This situation has shaken Judaism to its core because death practices have supported the health and stability of our culture for centuries. However, true to our history, Jews are coming up with new rituals and liturgies to meet the needs of these times. This panel discussion will explore some of the approaches that are happening today, and why these are important.

[This session includes handouts.](#)

### Malke Frank

Malke Frank co-created The Jewish Women's Center of Pittsburgh, Inc., which introduced to the Jewish community Rosh Hodesh celebrations, feminist Pesach seders, and new rituals for women. She is a retired educator of Judaica and Hebrew, working for the past 30 years in Pittsburgh, Oklahoma City, and Israel. She was the principal and teacher in several Hebrew /Sunday schools and the Judaica specialist at the Jewish Community Center where she developed a pre-school curriculum for teaching Hebrew, holidays, and values using movement, story, and song. Malke has lead workshops about Jewish holidays, life cycle, Israel, and teaching prayer through movement. For several years, she was the facilitator for a national monthly program for teenage girls, Rosh Hodesh: It's a Girl Thing. Malke and her family lived in Israel for 11 years where she studied creative movement and dance therapy.

### Rabbi Lynn Greenhough

Rabbi Lynn Greenhough lives in Victoria, British Columbia, and is rabbi with a small Reform kehillah, Kolot Mayim. Lynn has been involved with her Chevrach Kadisha since the mid 90's, and lives by the adage that informed her research into CK practices, "We do the best we can."

### Rick Light

Rick Light is a senior instructor and Staff for the Gamliel Institute, on the Board of Directors for Kavod v'Nichum, and has published seven widely respected books. Rick started a Chevrach Kadisha in 1996 and led it for 18 years. He has been meditating and teaching spiritual development for five decades. He teaches about conscious living and dying as well as active aging. His newest book is an intriguing fable that is particularly salient for today. See <https://richardalight.com>.



Rabbi Shifrah Tobacman

## Rabbi Shifrah Tobacman

Rabbi Shifrah Tobacman is an interfaith chaplain, teacher, poet and end-of-life doula in the San Francisco Bay Area. She's been an active member of the Chevrah Kadisha of Kehilla Community SynagoGue for nearly twenty years, and led the team that revised and updated Kehilla's taharah liturgy to better reflect the gender diversity of the congregation. Rabbi Shifrah was ordained in 2015 by the Rabbinic Ordination Program of the Aleph Alliance for Jewish Renewal, and did her chaplaincy training at Summit Alta Bates Medical Center, and the San Francisco Theological Seminary. She holds an MA in Religious Studies from the Graduate Theological Union, and an MPA in health care and organizational change from California Sate University/East Bay. Prior to ordination, she had a twenty-year career as a health educator and public health professional. She's also a poet, and has published a book titled *Omer Teshuvah: 49 Poetic Meditations for Counting the Omer or Turning Toward a New Year*.

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## The Holiness of Adaptation: It's a Question of How

In any ritual in Jewish tradition, it is the liturgy that accompanies it that gives the ritual power, while the format of the ritual creates a vessel through which that liturgy can become an agent for change. To meet the demands of our changing times, as we create new liturgies that transform existing Jewish rituals associated with death practice, what should we take into account? How can we be sure we preserve the power foundation and efficacy of the ritual as we transform it into a new ritual that meets the needs of our unprecedented times? Whether we're considering the need to be gender-expansive in our taharat, or developing new rituals for when we can't perform this sacred act in the usual way, our times are always changing, and we need to respond. We'll look at how one synagogue's Chevrah Kadisha has met these needs. We'll discuss approaches others have taken, or are considering. And we'll hold a kavanah, a sacred intention, of holding both the historic depth, and the remarkable flexibility, that have informed Jewish practice throughout the generations.



Sharon Fendrich



Rabbi Shifrah Tobacman

### Sharon Fendrich

Sharon Fendrich has been a member of the community Chevrah Kadisha in Portland, Oregon, Chevrah Kavod haMet, since 2014. As the technology/design member of the group's Steering Committee she is responsible for website design and maintenance, manual and recruitment flyer design, newsletters, and record upkeep. Sharon came to be part of this holy work after a powerful experience with the Chevrah Kadisha of Eugene, Oregon, which prepared her beloved grandmother for burial in 2011. When COVID-19 began hitting the US, Sharon coordinated the urgent revision her group's existing manual in order to create a modified ritual called Taharah l'Nefesh which is performed over video with a team. Sharon is a neo-classical New Age music composer and proud mom to Talia, age 15, and Max, age 8.

### Rabbi Shifrah Tobacman

Rabbi Shifrah Tobacman is an interfaith chaplain, teacher, poet and end-of-life doula in the San Francisco Bay Area. She's been an active member of the Chevrah Kadisha of Kehilla Community SynagoGue for nearly twenty years, and led the team that revised and updated Kehilla's taharah liturgy to better reflect the gender diversity of the congregation. Rabbi Shifrah was ordained in 2015 by the Rabbinic Ordination Program of the Aleph Alliance for Jewish Renewal, and did her chaplaincy training at Summit Alta Bates Medical Center, and the San Francisco Theological Seminary. She holds an MA in Religious Studies from the Graduate Theological Union, and an MPA in health care and organizational change from California State University/East Bay. Prior to ordination, she had a twenty-year career as a health educator and public health professional. She's also a poet, and has published a book titled *Omer Teshuvah: 49 Poetic Meditations for Counting the Omer or Turning Toward a New Year*.

## An Intergenerational Conversation in this Moment: "The World Is Changing . . . We are Changing, too"

Join us for an intergenerational conversation in this era of Physical Distancing. We will explore some of the big questions that have arisen during this time and create space to share responses from voices across the generations. This session is for anyone who is drawn to the alchemy of elders and younger together - addressing the here and now - with all of its beauty and grief. In facilitated break out groups, we will tap into relevant topics including loneliness and being alone; isolation and separation; and guilt-free spaciousness to explore and develop aspects of ourselves. How can we learn from each other's perspectives as we adjust to a new "normal"? How has living in these times influenced our thoughts about death and dying?



Kohenet Keshira haLev Fife



Rabbi Eva Sax-Bolder

### Kohenet Keshira haLev Fife

Kohenet Keshira haLev Fife sprinkles sparkles, disrupts expectations, and offers blessings wherever she goes. As Executive Director of the Kohenet Hebrew Priestess Institute, she delights in supporting organizational growth and serving as part of the faculty. She also pours love and intention into her work as founder and leader of Keshet Pittsburgh, Program Director of the ALEPH Keshet Fellowship, and more broadly as a shlichat tzibbur, life spiral ceremony/ritual creatrix, liturgist, songstress, teacher and public speaker. Her work in these realms is informed by her lived experience as a Jewish Woman of Color and the quandaries she encounters as a scholar of the Orphan Wisdom School. Keshira received Kohenet smicha in 2017 and earned her BS 2000 and MS 2001 at Carnegie Mellon University. Dual-citizens of the USA and Australia and avid travelers, these days, she and her beloved are leaning into stillness and sheltering-in-peace at home in Pittsburgh, PA.

### Rabbi Eva Sax-Bolder

Rabbi Eva Sax-Bolder is the rabbi of The Shul of New York in Manhattan. As a spiritual leader and artist, she designs transformative learning and ritual opportunities to provide seekers with joyful and creative approaches to Judaism. R' Eva received rabbinic ordination in the ALEPH Ordination Program and graduated from Lev Shomea where she trained to be a mashpiah, a Jewish Spiritual Director. An alumna of CLAL's Rabbis Without Borders and the Institute for Jewish Spirituality Clergy Leadership Program, she has also been trained as a teacher of Jewish Mindfulness Meditation, Wise Eldering and Jewish Yoga. Drawing on her skills as an artist, musician and dancer, she enjoys integrating the expressive arts into her rabbinic, teaching and chaplaincy work. Rabbi Eva also serves as 'Rosh Hashpa'ah, the head of Spiritual Direction for the ALEPH Ordination Program, serving to support the spiritual development of the seminary students and faculty. She is honored to serve as co-chair of two congregational chevrei kaddish on the UWS of Manhattan.



## Bioethics During a Pandemic



Dr Carol Roberts Gerson



Rabbi Gary S. Gerson

We are reading daily about the shortage of PPE (personal protective equipment), ventilators, dialysis equipment and hospital beds. When we run out of vital supplies, space or equipment, what criteria may we ethically use to distribute scarce resources. What do our texts tell us about such decisions? Do we assign higher value to some lives? Do we use an algorithm based on medical criteria alone? Do we use a simple lottery? We will review some of the approaches we might use to guide us when faced with crisis decisions. We will debate which of these criteria we think are ethical, and look at how some Jewish sources would have us address ethically difficult decisions.

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### Carol Roberts Gerson, MD

Carol Gerson, M.D., D.Be., F.A.C.S, F.A.A.P., is a retired pediatric otolaryngologist and an active mohelet with a doctorate in bioethics. She is a faculty member of the medical schools of Northwestern and Tulane universities.

### Rabbi Gary S. Gerson

Rabbi Gary Gerson served as Senior Rabbi of Oak Park Temple B'nai Abraham Zion in the Chicago suburbs from 1979 to 2009. As Rabbi Emeritus, he teaches courses in Jewish text, Kabbalah, Jewish thought, and comparative religion. A Fulbright scholar, Rabbi Gerson holds master's degrees in religion and psychology, rabbinic ordination, a doctorate in ministry, and certification as a family therapist from the Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic.

## Cemetery Management Curriculum: You Shall Surely Bury



Holly Blue Hawkins

It sounds simple enough: purchase a plot, dig a hole, lower a casket... But either creating a new burial site or taking over management of an existing—perhaps historic—cemetery, is a complicated endeavor. In addition to grappling with health and safety issues stemming from the COVID19 crisis, we'll explore subjects including cemetery ownership and plot sales; conforming to local and regional laws and affiliates' policies and procedures; supporting clergy and mourners during a burial; site-specific questions like soil stability, landscaping or wild-scaping, and appropriate monumentation; deciphering and digitizing burial records, on-site mapping, use of hand-drawn or sophisticated technologies such as GIS (Geographic Information Systems). This session is intended to evolve into a Gamliel core curriculum course in managing a Jewish and/or Green Cemetery.

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### Holly Blue Hawkins

Holly Blue Hawkins is a Natural Deathcare advocate, speaker, author, musician and poet, Rosha of The Santa Cruz Community Chevrah Kadisha (California), faculty member with Gamliel Institute and member of the Green Burial Council Speakers Bureau. Holly Blue provides training in a wide variety of end-of-life subjects in both Jewish and secular settings.

## Lessons from Taharah Records: Examining the Folk Art of Jewish Memory in Western Pennsylvania



Eric Lidji

The work of a Chevrah Kadisha is private and time-bound, occurring behind closed doors in the hours between death and burial. The records of a Chevrah Kadisha last much longer, providing an opportunity for members to present their values and sentiments in a public and permanent way. We'll review a century of death and burial records from Western Pennsylvania, looking specifically for instances where the work of an untrained human hand seems to be present. What lessons can these folk embellishments provide for us, in the digital 21st century?

### Eric Lidji

Eric Lidji is the director of the Rauh Jewish Archives at the Heinz History Center in Pittsburgh, Pa. The archive contains more than 1,000 collections that document Jewish life throughout Western Pennsylvania from the 1850s until the present. Lidji writes extensively about the Jewish history of Western Pennsylvania and hosts the podcast "The Cornerstone," which connects historic sites throughout Western Pennsylvania to materials in the archive.



## Ma'avor Yabbok: The Foundational Text of Our Work, Caring for the Dying and the Dead Part II



Rabbi Steven Moss

The two sessions for this course will begin with a brief introduction to Kabbalah and the system of the Sefirot and how they operate in our lives. There will then be a study of selected chapters from Ma'avor Yabbok that speak to the rituals of Taharah and vidui. Other selections will look at the kabbalistic view of the neshamah and afterlife, particularly reincarnation.

[This session includes handouts.](#)

### Rabbi Steven Moss

Rabbi Dr. Steven Moss recently retired from his congregation on Long Island where he served for 47 years. He has been a student of Kabbalah and spirituality for much of his life. He has been working on a translation of the classic Jewish text on death and dying, Ma'avor Yabok, since his rabbinic thesis, *The Attitude Toward Sickness, Dying and Death As Expressed in the Liturgical Works Ma'avor Yabok and Sefer Hahayim*.

## Unrecognized Loss



Rabbi Janet Madden

The experience of grief is chaotic, disorienting, and oppressive, particularly so when grief is experienced in isolation, when what is being grieved cannot be shared, when those who grieve feel disenfranchised, “not entitled” to their sense of loss and the additional sadness that is engendered in feeling that their loss is less significant because it is unrecognized by Jewish tradition and ritual. This session will address mourning that Jewish tradition does not: abortion, stillbirth and infertility.

[This session includes handouts.](#)

### Rabbi Janet Madden

A writer and ritualist, Rabbi Janet Madden, PhD, was ordained by The Academy for Jewish Religion-CA. A Jewish Spiritual Director, she is also an experienced hospice and hospital rabbi, and certified palliative care chaplain and grief specialist. She is trained in Jewish Sacred Chant, holds a Rabbinic certificate in Gerontology and Palliative Care from Yeshiva University and is completing her studies through the Gamliel Institute. She is the rabbi of Fountainview Gonda Westside (a campus of the Los Angeles Jewish Home), and the rabbi of Providence Saint John’s Medical Center. She also teaches for the Florence Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning at Steven Wise Temple in Los Angeles. Rabbi Madden contributes to the wider Los Angeles Jewish community as a member of the Funeral Practices Committee of the Board of Rabbis of Southern California and as a member of the Board of Governors of the Sandra Caplan Community Bet Din.

## Human Composting: Final Disposition



Holly Blue Hawkins



David Zinner

Jewish burial traditions have evolved from cave burials to lawn cemeteries and now to Israeli parking-garage burial. What happens to our bodies has evolved also, from dry-air decomposition with bone collection, to six-feet-under burial after a possible organ donation. We'll carefully examine the mandate for burial and look at one of the newest methods of body disposition - human composting.

[This session includes handouts.](#)

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### Holly Blue Hawkins

Holly Blue Hawkins is a Natural Deathcare advocate, speaker, author, musician and poet, Rosh of The Santa Cruz Community Chevrah Kadisha (California), faculty member with Gamliel Institute and member of the Green Burial Council Speakers Bureau. Holly Blue provides training in a wide variety of end-of-life subjects in both Jewish and secular settings.

### David Zinner

David Zinner is the founder and Executive Director of Kavod v'Nichum and the co-founder and Executive Director of the Gamliel Institute. David is the Gamliel Institute's lead author for its first three courses – Chevrah Kadisha, the Holy Society; Taharah and Shmirah; and Education Strategies. David researches and writes the course material, including extensive historical, text, and political analysis. He has written numerous articles on Jewish traditions around death and mourning. David has coordinated the Chevrah Kadisha conferences for 18 years. He edited and managed the web site "Jewish Funerals, Burial, and Mourning," for 20 years. David teaches workshops on Jewish traditions and practices that relate to death and dying both in his own synagogue, as well as throughout the United States.

Session

Tuesday 04:45 PM EDT

Zoom in Classroom A3



## Poster Session Presentations and Networking Breakouts

During this time each Poster Presenter will have a breakout room in which to present and discuss their topics. In addition, conference attendees can request breakout rooms for personal discussions and socializing.

[Click here to see Poster Session materials.](#)

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## Wednesday Kavanah and Announcements



Jean Berman

Setting the tone for the day through kavanah, followed by daily announcements.

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### Jean Berman

Jean Berman is an Interfaith Minister ordained by the Chaplaincy Institute of Maine, her ministry anchored in Judaism. She has her Chevrah Kadisha Certificate from the Gamliel Institute and is a board member of Kavod v'Nichum. Initially trained as part of the Fort Collins, Colorado Chevrah Kadisha, Jean is an active member of the Portland, ME Chevrah Kadisha. She currently coordinates volunteers for a young hospice in parts of Maine, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Jean leads Jewish elders and unaffiliated Jews in ceremony, is learning Zimbabwean marimba, plays with the Peaks Island, Maine Ukulele Ensemble, and has buttons on her backpack.

## Gamliel Institute: Reflections on the First Decade



Rabbi Stuart Kelman

The Gamliel Institute is celebrating 10 years since our founding! David and my dream of an educational arm of Kavod v'Nichum has not only become a well-known reality, but far exceeded what we could imagine. And we did this with an amazing staff and faculty and students who have committed to educating the larger Jewish community and ourselves in our unique Jewish ways and customs of death and dying. This is a moment for reflection and dreaming again.

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### Rabbi Stuart Kelman

Rabbi Stuart Kelman, Dean Emeritus of the Gamliel Institute, is a graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary and taught at the Hebrew Union College. He has extensive experience in all parts of the Jewish community, from working at Jewish camps to helping develop CAJE. As founding rabbi of Congregation Netivot Shalom, he was involved in the creation of the synagogue's Chevrah Kadisha. His PhD is in the Sociology of Education, and he has published five Chevrah Kadisha-related books, including the 2016 publication, *Nichum Aveilim*, on how to be a comforter to a mourner, and *Chesed Shel Emet*, delving into an extensive analysis of the taharah liturgy.

## Tahor and Tamei and the Journey Between



Nina Rubin

The biblical terms *tahor* and *tamei* have historically been translated as pure and impure, or clean and unclean. But some of our greatest mitzvot – birth, intimacy, caring for the dead – make us *tamei*, so how can they make us impure or unclean? An examination of the texts reveals a different possibility: that *tahor* refers to spiritual wholeness, and *tamei* to spiritual vulnerability. Being involved in an intense spiritual or intimate experience creates an openness or vulnerability; the Torah provides a period of protective time to process and integrate the experience, and rituals for moving back toward spiritual wholeness.

During the pandemic many have found themselves feeling unusually vulnerable. We will also be discussing ways to “protect and recover” during this unprecedented time.

[This session includes handouts.](#)

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### Nina Rubin

Nina Rubin, LCSW, was a founder of the Chevrah Kadisha of Northern Colorado. She taught for many years in the Melton program, and continues to teach classes related to the work of Chevrah Kadisha, as well as “Women’s Torah, a New Understanding of Tahor and Tamei,” and Jewish traditions around death, care for the dead, and mourning, throughout the country. She has just retired after many years as a clinical social worker, and medical social worker in a regional hospital, and serves as half of the spiritual leadership team for Congregation B’nai Butte in Crested Butte, Colorado.



## Chevrah Kadisha Funding Models



Pat Cluss

Chevrah Kadisha groups and the volunteers who participate in them see their work as an important contribution to and for the community. Most community- and synagogue-based CK groups, however, have a need for some amount of income flow to support the purchase of CK materials, educational efforts in the community or synagogue, continuing education/conference attendance for CK volunteers, and other activities that nurture the stability of CK groups and the growth of CK members. This workshop will address various ways that CK groups can bring in money to support the group activities that are important to them. The Pittsburgh model will be presented and workshop participants will have an opportunity to share their own models, experiences, ideas, frustrations, and plans.

[This session includes handouts.](#)

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### Pat Cluss

Pat was a founding member of the New Community Chevrah Kadisha in Pittsburgh and is a clinical psychologist in private practice and retired University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine faculty member. She is a member of the first Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom chapter in Pittsburgh and an active volunteer in Jewish Family & Community Services' AgeWell Rides, AgeWell Reads, and AgeWell Visits programs.

## It's the End of the World as We Know It: Hebrew Priestessing for this Moment



Kohenet Keshira haLev Fife

Join Keshira for a session which explores the ways in which she and other Hebrew Priestesses serve and support people, families, and communities through grief and mourning, liminality and transition. These practices seek to honor ancient practice, find relevance and resonance in the modern moment and form paths to connection through earth-based ritual and embodied practice.

### Kohenet Keshira haLev Fife

Kohenet Keshira haLev Fife sprinkles sparkles, disrupts expectations, and offers blessings wherever she goes. As Executive Director of the Kohenet Hebrew Priestess Institute, she delights in supporting organizational growth and serving as part of the faculty. She also pours love and intention into her work as founder and leader of Keshet Pittsburgh, Program Director of the ALEPH Keshet Fellowship, and more broadly as a shlichat tzibbur, life spiral ceremony/ritual creatrix, liturgist, songstress, teacher and public speaker. Her work in these realms is informed by her lived experience as a Jewish Woman of Color and the quandaries she encounters as a scholar of the Orphan Wisdom School. Keshira received Kohenet smicha in 2017 and earned her BS 2000 and MS 2001 at Carnegie Mellon University. Dual-citizens of the USA and Australia and avid travelers, these days, she and her beloved are leaning into stillness and sheltering-in-peace at home in Pittsburgh, PA.

## Jewish Response to Plagues, Epidemics, and Contagion in History from Biblical Times to 1918



Rabbi Jonathan Seidel

How has the Jewish community as a whole and Rabbis in particular guided a communal response to plagues and widespread outbreaks of contagion? Join Rabbi Seidel in an exploration of various halakhic responsa, communal legislation and stories of managing health care crises. We will also try to decipher (among meager evidence) Jewish burial and mourning practices during these times, and how the Jewish communal leaders integrated the science of the day, magic, and prayer (e.g. fasting, blowing shofar, amulets) with the outbreak of mass disease.

### Rabbi Jonathan Seidel

Rabbi Dr. Jonathan Seidel has taught Jewish Studies and Religion in universities and adult education settings for almost 40 years, and served a number of congregations on the West Coast and Arizona. He has worked as a Hazzan and Rabbi since 1982 and has been very involved in environmental and racial justice work throughout the last 3 decades as well. Rabbi Seidel received degrees from Oberlin College, the Jewish Theological Seminary and Cambridge University and received his PhD in Near Eastern Studies at UC Berkeley in 1996 and his ordination from ALEPH the Alliance for Jewish Renewal in 2004. Rabbi Seidel is currently a member of his local Chevrah Kadisha and serves as the Spiritual Leader of Or haGan in Eugene Oregon and is also Visiting Rabbi at the Aquarian Minyan in Berkeley.

## Death at the Intersection: Multicultural Jewish Perspectives on Mourning, Grief and Burial



Kohenet Keshira haLev Fife



Analucia Lopezrevoredo



Kimberly Novod

This panel will explore the ways in which our lived experiences, as Jews from a diverse range of racial and cultural backgrounds, influence how we experience and ritualise grief in relationship to our families and communities. This session is for anyone who would like to gain insights into the questions, challenges, and joys which can be found when the intersections of identity meet profound and difficult lifecycle moments.

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### Analucia Lopezrevoredo

Analucia Lopezrevoredo is a sociologist and culture strategist who has dedicated her professional life to the advancement of racial equity in the public and private sector. A values-driven, multicultural community professional she specializes in creating technologies that support immigrants, people of color and women to ascend to and thrive in leadership roles, and in helping organizations develop culturally responsive approaches to management and mentorship.

### Kimberly Novod

Kimberly Novod is an educator, doula, and healthcare advocate. She is the founder and executive director of Saul's Light Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, dedicated to supporting neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) and bereaved families. As a congregational member of Touro Synagogue, Kimberly is a part of the Mental Health Committee and works with mothers experiencing traumatic birth outcomes including infant loss. In 2014, Kimberly's son, Saul, passed away as a result of complications from his premature birth. She relied on Jewish mourning rituals and other communal practices to move through the grief journey to forge a path for healing.



Yoshi Silverstein

## Yoshi Silverstein

Yoshi Silverstein is Founder & Executive Director of Mitsui Collective, a new startup building resilient community through embodied Jewish practice and multiracial justice. Previously, Yoshi was Director of the JOFEE Fellowship at Hazon, through which he catalyzed the growth and leadership of over 60 emerging professionals working across the US and Canada in the realm of Jewish relationship to land, food, culture, climate, and community. As a Chinese-Ashkenazi-American Jew, Yoshi is an active leader, advocate, and educator in the Jews of Color community. He was a member of Bend the Arc's Selah Cohort 14, currently sits on the Jews of Color Field Building Initiative's Grant Advisory Group, and speaks regularly on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Yoshi is also a CrossFit coach and movement teacher, 2nd degree blackbelt, and aficionado of Chinese Roast Duck.

## Blankets of Love: Helping People Say Goodbye - Creating Online Celebrations of Life for Hospice Patients



Cantor Marc Bachrach

Hospice patients frequently don't want to be seen in person... or are sleeping or unavailable when people drop by. The distances involved often prohibit visits from family and old friends who live far away. Many friends and family in the vicinity are reluctant to attend hospice and deathbed settings, for a wide variety of reasons and feelings, well-known to most of us. An online "Celebration of Life" literally bypasses time, space, and personal limitations, enabling a one-directional showering of love, affection, and recognition from the convenience and "safety" of cyberspace. The patient can receive it on their own schedule, and more than once, without risking their privacy. It can transform the loneliness of a hospice patient's room and add powerful support and welcome beauty to a family's vigil.

### Cantor Marc Bachrach

Cantor Marc Bachrach served as Spiritual Leader and Cantor of Makom Ohr Shalom (Encino, CA) from 2015-2016, returning after more than three decades. He continues to serve Congregation B'nai Horin (Los Angeles) since 1982, and did brief stints as Cantor for the Malibu Jewish Center and Synagogue, and Temple Ner Ami in Camarillo. Currently, Cantor Bachrach officiates High Holiday services for Metivta: A Center for Contemplative Judaism with Rabbi Tirzah Firestone and Evelyn Baran. Marc was the first Cantor of Makom Ohr Shalom when it was created by Rabbi Ted Falcon. Marc returned to share his rich voice, guitar playing, and passions for Judaism, spirituality, healing, and meditation. Marc officiates at B'nai Mitzvot, weddings, funerals, Celebrations of Life, baby-namings, and other life cycle events all over the United States.

## Living with the Angel of Death



Rabbi Me'irah Iliinsky

As a unique species, we live in the balance of awareness of death, and the day-to-day denial of that awareness. Sometimes we lean toward the awareness, but most often, we dwell in the helpful denial, that allows us to carry on. In this presentation, we examine the metaphor of the Angel of Death in poetry, prose, TV, and visuals, to see if it might illuminate our personal beliefs about death, or help us in our work with others.

[This session includes handouts.](#)

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### Rabbi Me'irah Iliinsky

A graduate of Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, Me'irah comes to the rabbinate after a career as a clinical social worker. She has worked as a hospital and hospice chaplain, a Jewish educator at the JCC San Francisco, and currently serves as the rabbi for Rhoda Goldman Plaza, a small Assisted Living Community. She brings to her work as a rabbi her artistic illuminations of sacred texts, a way of bringing people close to Torah. She has been a long-time colleague of Kavod v'Nichum, has authored *Mapping the Journey: The Mourner & The Soul*, and edited *Laments & Kavannot for the Journey*.



## New Rituals for New Life Stages



Rabbi Richard Address

With the longevity revolution has come a rapid growth in creative rituals, prayers and meditations to encompass life stages never before seen. In this session, we will explore such new forms that speak to: signing advanced directive, removal of wedding ring after mourning, older adult co-habitation, accepting diagnosis, removal of life support, re-defining adultery in light of Alzheimer's

### Rabbi Richard Address

Rabbi Richard Address is the Dean of the Gamliel Institute and the Founder and Director of [jewishsacredaging.com](https://JewishSacredAging.com). Rabbi Address served for over three decades on staff of the Union for Reform Judaism; first as a Regional Director and then, beginning in 1997, as Founder and Director of the URJ's Department of Jewish Family Concerns and served as a specialist and consultant for the North American Reform Movement in the areas of family related programming. Rabbi Address was ordained from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 1972 and began his rabbinic career in Los Angeles congregations. He also served as a part time rabbi for Beth Hillel in Carmel, NJ while regional director and, after his URJ tenure, served as senior rabbi of Congregation M'kor Shalom in Cherry Hill, NJ from 2011-2014. See <https://JewishSacredAging.com>.

## Closing Circle and Conference Feedback



Jean Berman

Final kavanah to close the conference.

### Jean Berman

Jean Berman is an Interfaith Minister ordained by the Chaplaincy Institute of Maine, her ministry anchored in Judaism. She has her Chevrah Kadisha Certificate from the Gamliel Institute and is a board member of Kavod v'Nichum. Initially trained as part of the Fort Collins, Colorado Chevrah Kadisha, Jean is an active member of the Portland, ME Chevrah Kadisha. She currently coordinates volunteers for a young hospice in parts of Maine, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Jean leads Jewish elders and unaffiliated Jews in ceremony, is learning Zimbabwean marimba, plays with the Peaks Island, Maine Ukulele Ensemble, and has buttons on her backpack.



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