



Emily Helen Cohen

Emily calls the San Francisco Bay Area home but has lived most of her life in the diaspora, with a childhood on the East Coast, and formative young-adult years in the Midwest and East Asia.

At Macalester College, Emily studied history, music and Mandarin. At RRC, she loved being a teacher in many Jewish communities. Some of her favorite internships were as student rabbi at Woodstock Jewish Congregation and as Hillel intern at Bryn Mawr College. She has delighted in crafting her podcast (www.jewtoopodcast.com) and engaging in musical endeavors.

Emily thanks, first and foremost, her family: the people whose love and support never flicker (this includes Pico the cat). She is deeply grateful to Rabbi Barry Cytron, whose mentorship since college is immeasurable; Rabbi Nancy Epstein, for six nourishing years of spiritual direction; Rabbi Jonathan Kligler, for embodying what joy a congregational rabbinate can bring; her teachers at RRC, for nurturing her love of Torah; and, of course, her friends and colleagues.



וַהֲנִיחַ הַסִּבְיָה בְּעֵר בָּאֵשׁ וְהַסִּבְיָה אֵינָנוּ אֲכָל:

“And behold the bush was aflame with fire, and the bush was not consumed.” Exodus 3:2

“God is the creative flame
That transfigures lifeless substance,
Leaping into ever higher realms of being,
Brightening into the radiant glow of feeling,
Till it runs into the white fire of thought.”
– Rabbi Mordecai M. Kaplan

וַיִּפַּח בְּאַפָּיו נְשָׁמַת חַיִּים וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה:

“God blew into the human’s mouth the breath of life, and the human became a living soul.”
Genesis 2:7

God formed our souls of air, which feeds flame. Our task is to control our breath such that we stoke the creative fire within without consuming ourselves. The human endeavor is to become a burning bush, each of us offering unique, sustainable light and warmth to the world.