



Shelter us, and may we be a shelter.

God of Abraham and Sarah,
Divine Spirit, Who blows open
the walls of our tents,
the doors of our homes,
and the fabric of our lives:

Open us to the world around us, as a blessing and not as a curse.
Let us encounter those who are strangers, as a blessing and not as a curse.
Take us in to Your presence, and may we make Your presence felt.
Shelter us, and may we be a shelter.

God of mercy!
You sustain all life with love,
You give life to those who are dead to the world.
Your compassion surrounds us like the womb.
You support those who stumble,
You heal those wounded whose shelter has become a prison.
You cover us when we sleep in the dust.
You wake us when our slumber threatens.

God of justice!
Wipe the dust from our eyes,
Shake the plugs from our ears,
Rip the gags from our mouths,
Break the armor from around our hearts.

Give our spines the strength to stand,
Give our legs the courage to lead,
Give our hands the power to create new and enduring shelters of peace.

And may every bone in our body cry out:
God, can we be anything like You? You rescue the poor from those who abuse power, from those who steal what is theirs. You hear the plea of the humble, the agony of the poor; You listen, and You grant them the power of redemption.

Hear us, and may we learn to listen.
Guide us, and may we learn to be guided.
Speak to us, and may we speak truth.
Shelter us, and may we be a shelter.

--Guy Austrian, Cooperberg-Rittmaster Rabbinial Intern
Congregation Beit Simchat Torah
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Shelter of Peace is a multi-faith initiative advocating safe shelter for LGBTQ homeless youth, organized by Congregation Beit Simchat Torah's Koleinu LGBT Rights Action Team. Visit www.cbst.org/shelterofpeace.