

Havurat Torah 5778 / 2017-2018

Va'adot/Seminars for Grades 8-12

LOL: Jews & Our Hysterical History with Humor

Think about the last time you laughed out loud. What was so funny? Did you share the laugh with others? Have you ever wondered how and why laughter (like crying) is a universal expression of emotion? If laughter connects all of humankind universally, it also binds us as a Jewish people. There is a long and deep history of Jews and humor, dating back to the Bible itself. When God told Sarah that she was going to give birth, Sarah laughed out loud thinking “yeah, right!”

Humor has helped Jews get through some of the darkest moments of our history, it has given us a common language, and has even influenced some of our customs and traditions. Together, let’s uncover the history of laughter and humor, and explore comedy’s role in Judaism. What do Jewish jokes tell us about how we see ourselves, our families, and our attitudes toward life’s biggest issues. Then, we will decide how best to use humor and comedy in our community. Maybe we’ll visit the sick and cheer them up, maybe we’ll write and create this year’s TIC Purim Shpiel. The possibilities are numerous. Join Rabbi Ari on this hysterical journey.

Educator: Rabbi Ari Isenberg-Grzeda

Kehillah: A Community is Built by Studying, Praying, Sacrificing, and Creating Together

This Va’adah will take seriously the needs of a diverse *kehillah* like TIC to bring disparate parts of the community together in a common language and for common goals. Our underlying activity will be learning about synagogue practices through a week-by-week study of the *Luah*, the comprehensive guide to worship and other religious practices in Conservative synagogues. This group study will have lifelong usefulness in its own right. But a much larger goal will hover over this academic activity, namely an understanding of how much compromise and sacrifice goes into the forging of a sacred community that can study and pray together. And we will look towards an ultimate project of creating a sort of appendix to the traditional *Luah* that will document shared practices of our community that we hold dear, and consider new ones we may want to propose.

Educator: Rabbi Gordon Tucker

Leadership & JusTICe Va'adah/Seminar ***Leading our Future and Making our World a Better Place***

This seminar aims to empower and enrich our TIC learners as they become leaders and change agents in the TIC community and beyond. In this seminar, we will explore leadership styles through real life experiences. We will look at what makes someone a “good” leader and discuss models of leadership in today’s world. We will consider biblical leaders, such as Moses and Deborah, and more contemporary leaders, including Ruby Bridges, Golda Meir, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Bill Gates. We will explore the way these leaders represent their commitments to their community and their world through meaningful social change initiatives. We will also work together in creating and leading experiences for our TIC teen community throughout the year.

In various settings such as youth groups, summer camps, and here at TIC, our teens are Jewish leaders and serve as role models. Meeting weekly, this cohort will build community through shared learning experiences, address the challenges teens face in various roles, and have the opportunity to put leadership skills to action. By exploring how our own beliefs and Jewish lives affect our leadership roles and social change efforts, we will think critically about our impact as Jewish leaders and agents for social change.

Educator: Susan Ticker

עברית Hebrew Language and Literature Seminar

The Hebrew Language and Literature Seminar will be open to Hebrew learners of all ability levels. The only pre-requisite is that you must be able to read Hebrew. Each session we will explore fundamentals of the Hebrew language, learn new vocabulary, read (short) stories for understanding, and speak to each other. If you are someone who loves language and is interested in either continuing your Hebrew education or learning more Hebrew in Hebrew, this is the seminar for you!

Educator: Lisa Schwartz