# Lifelong Learning 2025-2026





### Welcome to the 2025-2026 Lifelong Learning Program!

As in past years, Lifelong Learning is a collaboration between Temple Emanu-El (TEE) and Congregation Neve Shalom (Neve). Together we provide a rich and diverse curriculum which aims to meet the educational and social needs of the community.

This robust educational program offers classes, lectures, trips, concerts, a book club, special events, and more, presented by an assemblage of rabbis, cantors, educators, authors, and other experts in a wide variety of topics.

Lifelong Learning programs and classes meet in person or virtually, held on various days and times designed to accommodate the schedules of all participants. When you register, you will receive dates, times, course locations and/or remote access links, as well as names of presenters.

#### LIFELONG LEARNING FEES FOR ATTENDANCE AT ANY OR ALL CLASSES

- \$72.00 for members of TEE or Neve to be paid to your home congregation.
- \$90.00 for individuals who do not belong to either congregation to be paid to the synagogue of your choice.
- \$180 Scholar-in-Residence Benefactor
- Selected courses or events will have an additional fee to cover expenses.

<u>REGISTRATION FORM</u> is found in the back of this brochure. You can either print it out or use the electronic link and submit it to your congregation.

Information for remote access to classes will be provided upon registration.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Dana Shectman - TEE (732) 549-4442 x104 executive director@edisontemple.org

Judy Slutzky - Neve (732) 423-3784 judyrslu@aol.com

Class dates may be changed if the clergy or the presenter has a conflict. In such cases we will notify registered participants in advance.

Babysitting available upon request

## Meet Our Clergy

Rabbi Dr. Vicki L. Axe, Senior Rabbi and Cantor of Temple Emanu-El

Rabbi Dr. Vicki L. Axe serves Temple Emanu-El as both rabbi and cantor. She holds a Bachelor of Music Education from Temple University, an MA in Music Education from The Ohio State University, and Cantorial Ordination from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. In 2008 she was awarded Doctor of Music, honoris causa from HUC-JIR, and Rabbinic Ordination from the Rabbinical Academy of America. In 2016 she earned her Doctor of Ministry in Pastoral Counseling from HUC-JIR.



With teaching at the very core of everything she does, her stated goal is to bring the world of Jewish culture, history, language, and practice to learners of all ages, to open the hearts of our people to Jewish life and experience so that they can make informed choices about their Jewish identity.

#### Rabbi Stefanie Gedan, Rabbi of Neve Shalom

Rabbi Stefanie Gedan was ordained in 2023 from the Jewish Theological Seminary, where she also earned an MA in Hebrew Letters and a Certificate in Pastoral Care. She holds a BA in Jewish Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and completed advanced training in pastoral care through a residency program at NewYork-Presbyterian-Brooklyn Methodist Hospital.



Rabbi Gedan's philosophy of teaching embraces the dynamic relationship between tradition and modernity. She views the authors, readers, and texts as three integral voices in an ongoing spiritual conversation. Her favorite questions to ask are, "So what?" and "Why does this matter?" She believes that to make meaning in the present, we must first understand the past and how it has developed into the now.

#### Lifelong Learning Classes September 2025 - May 2026

#### **Sunday Classes**

Forgiving and Forgiven: The Pathway to True Forgiveness, Rabbi Gedan

- Sundays: September 7, 14, 21 at 10 am in person
- Thursdays: September 4, 11, 18 at 10 am virtual

As we approach the Days of Awe, themes of repentance and forgiveness rise to the forefront of our liturgy—and are called forth in our daily actions. Yet the pathway to being forgiven and to granting forgiveness is often fraught with tension: between justice and mercy, between what is deserved and what is possible.

This three-part course explores the complex and layered concept of forgiveness through the lens of Jewish tradition, philosophy, and lived experience. Drawing on classical texts, contemporary commentary, and real-world application, participants will engage deeply with the theological, ethical, and emotional dimensions of teshuvah (repentance) and mechilah (forgiveness).

Together, we will examine how Jewish wisdom can guide us through the challenges of apology, accountability, healing, and reconciliation—in preparation for a more honest and meaningful High Holiday season.

## Hebrew Reading , *Michele Rosenfield*Sundays at 11:15 am virtual

Beginners and not-so-beginners welcome. Practice reading prayers and texts. Learn how to recognize some vocabulary and basic grammatical structures to ease understanding of the Hebrew you do read. Each verse, or line of a prayer, is read in English first so that if it is not your turn to read out loud you can try to identify words or roots to make a stab at translating the Hebrew. Before you know it, you will be experiencing the joy of text study as well as building confidence in your reading skills. Individual online study materials with personal support are available for those who want to learn or brush up on the Hebrew letters and vowels.

#### **Jewish Treasures**

#### Sundays, locations and dates will be announced prior to each class

After eleven years of Worldly Jewish Dining, we have decided to replace it with educational visits to local organizations. Participants will arrange their own transportation, and we will meet at the venue. We will dine post visit.

- Hillel-Take a tour of Hillel at Rutgers and then eat at Hillel's Crunch Cafe.
- February 8, 2026, Virtual tour of the Catskills: Tour of the Borscht Belt Museum with Peter Chester..
- Other trips to be announced. Watch for future events.

#### Practical Halacha: A Text-Based Study of Jewish Daily Living, Rabbi Gedan

- Sundays at 10 am in person at Neve
- Tuesday/Wednesday at 7:30 pm in person at Neve
- Thursdays at 10:00 am virtual

The weeknight section primarily meets on Tuesdays but has an occasional Wednesday class due to the needs of the calendar.

In this course, we'll explore how Jewish practice developed across time into our lived tradition. Over the course of the year, we will study a new aspect of practical halacha in the following four topics: kashrut, obligation, prayer, and Passover. By exploring texts that show the halachic process in action, we will gain new insights and wrestle with the old age question, what does it mean to live a meaningful Jewish life.

Open to all levels and knowledge backgrounds, sources will be provided in both Hebrew and English, with guided support to ensure everyone can engage meaningfully. Whether you're new to texts or more experienced, this course is for you.

Come for the full series or just the topics you're interested in! In order for a particular day to run, at least 5 people need to register.

October/November: Laws of the Kitchen: Do We Really Need Two of Everything?

Sunday 10/26, 11/2, 11/23

Weeknight 10/28 (Tuesday), 11/4 (Tuesday), 11/19 (Wednesday)

Thursday (virtual) 10/30, 11/6, 11/20

December: Choice vs. Obligation: Do We Really Have to Wear A Kippah and Tallit?

Sunday 11/30, 12/14, 12/21

Weeknight 12/2 (Tuesday), 12/17 (Wednesday), 12/23 (Tuesday)

Thursday (virtual): 12/4, 12/11, 12/18

January: Fixed or Fluid: Do We Really Have to Say Every Word of Every Prayer?

Sunday 1/4, 1/11, 1/25

Weeknight 1/6, (Tuesday), 1/20 (Tuesday), 1/27 (Tuesday)

Thursday (virtual): 1/8, 1/15, 1/29

February: Passover: Do We Really Have to Use All That Tinfoil?

Sunday 2/1, 2/8, 2/22

Weeknight 2/3 (Tuesday), 2/17 (Tuesday), 2/24 (Tuesday)

Thursday (virtual): 2/5, 2/12, 2/26

#### **Monday Classes**

## Forgiveness in An Unforgiving World, *Rabbi Axe* Monday, September 15 at 10 am virtual

Repentance or t'shuvah is central to Jewish thought and practice, especially during the High Holy Days. Through self-reflection along with communal prayers of confession or viddui, we seek forgiveness from those we have wronged and from God with the goal of repairing relationships. Rabbi Axe will explore ways that seeking forgiveness and granting forgiveness can be liberating during the Days of Awe and throughout the year.

## Jewish Humor Through the Ages, *Rabbi Axe*Monday, November 3, 10, 17 and 24 at 10 am in person at TEE and virtual

Humor has always been part of Jewish lore going back to ancient times, poking fun at ourselves and the world around us as a way to deflect challenging times and offer social commentary. We will explore the history of Jewish humor and share our favorite Jewish jokes.

#### **Tuesday Classes**

## The Soul of Music, *Cantor Anna Ott*Tuesday, November 18, 25 December 2, 9 at 11:15 am in person at TEE

The Jewish voice has always been expressed through music, its heart, its soul, its history. Cantor Ott will explore history and current trends as Jewish music continues to evolve. These sessions will look at more of the songs that are sung at services, in summer camps, and at song sessions throughout the Jewish world. Bring your singing voices! If you play guitar, please bring yours.

November 18 The Current Music Landscape

November 25 Songs for Worship December 2 Impact for Occasions

December 9 Songs for Chanukah

## Cooking with Carole, *Carole Semel*Tuesday at 5:30 pm, December 9 and May 5 in person at TEE

Join Carole Semel as she demonstrates the preparation of her recipes. She will share her passion for cooking with two demonstrations: Chanukah and Shavuot. All ingredients will be hechsher kosher. Snack/refreshment will be served. This class is open to LLL members only.,

## Three Rabbis and the Torah: Comparative Judaism Rabbi Vicki Axe, Rabbi Stefanie Gedan, Rabbi Susan Hornstein Tuesday, February 3, 10, 17, 24 at 10 am in person at TEE and livestream

Rabbi Axe (Reform), Rabbi Gedan (Conservative) and Rabbi Hornstein (Orthodox) will share their perspective on Jewish life and practice with attention to how we approach our sacred texts, Jewish law, life cycle events and the of our holiday celebrations.

Practical Halacha: A Text-Based Study of Jewish Daily Living, *Rabbi Gedan* In-person on various dates (Tuesday/Wedesday). See class description on page 4.

#### **Wednesday Classes**

Lunch and Learn, *Rabbi Axe and Rabbi Gedan*Wednesdays at 12:30 pm in person beginning October 22
TEE - October to January
Neve - February to May

Whether you're a "regular" or new to this group, it's an ideal opportunity to get together with your community and explore Jewish texts in relation to the lives we lead today. All texts are read in English and serve as jumping off points to explore our own voices and stories, and how Jewish wisdom can play a vital part.

#### **NEVE SHALOM SISTERHOOD**

#### THE LOOM ROOM IS WAITING FOR YOU!!

Create a fabulous Judaic heirloom and weave a tallit or challah cover. Take advantage of the Neve Shalom Sisterhood "Loom Room".

Check out the new webpage with lots of pictures and information. www.NeveShalom.net/loomroom

#### Contact:

Cory Schneider (717-574-1807; <a href="mailto:corstan65@gmail.com">corstan65@gmail.com</a> Jennifer Bullock (908-510-4005; <a href="mailto:RNJbullock@aol.com">RNJbullock@aol.com</a>) to create your own unique heirloom.



#### **OPEN TO ALL**

#### Book Club 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7:30 pm in person at TEE or virtual.

If you love a good book, this is the club for you. Each session the group reads and discuss a book with Jewish interest. Join for one session or all. You are guaranteed to enjoy.

September 17 Be Ready When Luck Happens by Ina Garten

November 19 Sister's Under the Rising Sun by Heather Morris

**December 17** Over There by Jane Loeb Rubin

January 21 The Keeper of Happy Ending by Barbara Davis

March 18 Love You a Latke by Amanda Elliot

April 15 A Place to Hide by Ronald Balson

May 20 We Were The Lucky Ones by Georgia Hunt

## Donald and Ruth Kahn Book and Author Event March 8 at 11 am in person at Neve Shalom



**Ellen Feldman** is the author of many books. Her most recent book, The Living and the Lost was published in 2024. She is a 2009 Guggenheim fellow. She holds a B.A. and M.A in modern history from Bryn Mawr College. She lives in New York City and East Hampton with her husband and a terrier named Charlie. This program will feature an enjoyable back-and-forth interview with a special guest of the author.









#### **Thursday Classes**

Forgiving and Forgiven: The Pathway to True Forgiveness, *Rabbi Gedan* September 4, 11, 18 at 10 am virtual See Page 3 for class description

Practical Halacha: A Text-Based Study of Jewish Daily Living, *Rabbi Gedan* Virtual class on various dates. See Page 4 for class description.

Yoga, *Wendy Kushner* Thursdays, 7:30, October 30, November 6, 13 in person at TEE Spring dates TBA

Feeling stressed? Come unwind with yoga! Through a variety of postures and breathing exercises, you will learn strategies to relax and to melt away tension. Bring a yoga mat (or thick towel).

May Their Memories Be For a Blessing: From the Holocaust to Rwanda-A Jewish Lens on Genocide and Resistance
Wendy Kushner and Debra Maller
Thursday, February 19, 26, March 5, 12 at 7:30 pm virtual

Making the Lessons of the Holocaust Meaningful for the Next Generation L'Dor v Dor. Adults/Students often ask "How could this have happened? Why didn't Jews fight back? Didn't anyone else help? Could it happen again?" In this course we will explore stories of resistance, survival, and ways to preserve memories of those who perished. We will also examine lessons on reconciliation by learning about the genocide in Rwanda fifty years after the Holocaust.

Jewish Liturgical Music Reimagined, *Dave Schlossberg*Thursdays, March 5, 12, 19, and 26 at 1 pm in person at TEE

Jewish Liturgical Music Reimagined offers new ways to enjoy the synagogue music you've been singing for years. Talented pianist Dave Schlossberg will breathe life into these timeless melodies as he provides listeners with different musical perspectives and philosophies on liturgical classics.

#### Neve Shalom Gilbert and Claudie Hayat Speaker Series Sundays at 11 am in-person at Neve Shalom



**Crypto Jews of Portugal, September 7, 2025 at 11 am** *In person only at Neve Shalom* 

**Rabbi Elliot Salo Schoenberg** shares stories about the Crypto or hidden Jews of Portugal. Rabbi Schoenberg recently visited Portugal and visited the town that was home to the hidden Jews of Portugal.



#### Israeli Politics, October 19, 2025 at 11 am

In person only at Neve Shalom,

**Aviv Ayash** is the Director for Humantarian Affairs and Senior Advisor to the Ambassador of Israel to the UN, where he oversees a broad range of initiatives aimed at advancing Israel's diplomatic and humanitarian goals. In this capacity, Aviv provides strategic counsel on policy development and international relations, and collaborates with key stakeholders within the UN system and across member states.

Presented by Neve Shalom Programming and Adult Education Committees



### The Mickey Marcus Story: A Hero for Our Times, January 11, 2025 at 11 am In person at Neve Shalom and virtual

**Steve Ossad**, a Metuchen native and award-winning military historian and biographer, discusses his latest book, *Chasing the Shadow: Mickey Marcus's 200 Days of Destiny*. A story about an American WWII hero and founder of the IDF, who became the subject of a mid-sixties movie, it draws a direct line from the critical days of Israel's founding in 1948 amidst war to todays's headlines.



#### Geneology, May 3, 2025, 10:30 am - 2:30 pm

In person at Neve Shalom and virtual, multi session speaker with light refreshment between sessions

*Steve Stein*, President of the Jewish Genealogical Society of New York, will show us the basic ins and outs of tracing your family heritage in this two session speaker event. He has been researching his own and his wife's genealogies for more than 45 years, whose origins include Lithuania, Belarus, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Ukraine, and Romania. He has volunteered for JewishGen's Hungary Research Division and the JewishGen Online Worldwide Burial Registry, and manages the KehilaLinks site for Nyasvizh, Belarus. He has spoken at Jewish Genealogy conferences as well as to several groups in the New York area.

#### Temple Emanu-El Speaker



Jewish Identity and Political Power, from the Holocaust to Today November 23, 2025 at 11 am

in person at TEE

*Elie Honig*, CNN's Senior Legal Analyst and a member of TEE, will share the incredible story of an 82 year old Holocaust survivor who happens to share his name as well as much of the heartbreak and horrors of the Nazi regime. He will also talk about attempts over the

years to keep power in check as described in his new book, "When You Come at the King:Inside DOJ's Pursuit of the President, from Nixon to Trump," which is being published in September 2025. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and personal signings at the event.

#### 2025/2026 Special Community Events

• October 16-November 2	Jewish International Film Festival at Cranford Movie Theatre Link for more information https://www.jccnj.org/jccinternationaljewishfilmfestival/
• October 19-November 9	Hannah Senesh- a play in English Theater Row 410 W. 42 <sup>nd</sup> St. NYC
November 6-16	Rutgers Jewish Film Festival
November 12	Veteran's Day Event at JCC
November 15	Hadassah MENCH chapter event – Dinner and "Oldies but
	Goodies" show @ TEE, Registration required.
• December 7	TEE Dedication of New Building/Sanctuary at 3 pm
• December 16	Edison Community Menorah Lighting at JCC
• December 17	Metuchen Community Menorah Lighting
March 1	Purim Carnival at JCC at 11 am
April 13	MEAICA Interfaith Yom Hashoah Remembrance Program at
	JCC at 7 pm
April 18	Temple Emanu-El Spring Concert, featuring TEE cantors, past and present at TEE
April 21	Yom Haatzmaut at JCC at 7 pm

#### Rabbi Gerald L. Zelizer Neve Shalom Scholar-in-Residence Dr. Rachel Slutky

Sunday, March 22, 2025, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm in person at Neve and virtual

There will be two sessions with lunch offered in between.

#### Hard Conversations About Israel

From Zionism's early days to its contemporary manifestations, Jews fundamentally do not and have not agreed about what Zionism is. With a better understanding of the multiple *Zionisms* in circulation, then, we can ask what support for Israel looks like at this moment, and whether this is how support must look or should look. Drawing on religious, political, and philosopical thinkers of the last two centuries. "Hard Conversations About Israel" seeks to face hard questions and explore new ways of approaching the Jewish homeland in a time of fear and uncertainty.



Rachel Slutsky, Ph.D., is the Monsignor John Oesterreicher Assistant Professor of Jewish Studies and Jewish-Christian Relations in Antiquity at Seton Hall University. She completed her doctorate in ancient Judaism at Harvard University in May 2022, where she held the Isadore Twersky Fellowship (2021-2022) and served as the assistant director of undergraduate studies in the Committee on the Study of Religion (2020-2021). Dr. Slutsky's work explores the ways in which ancient and modern discourses employ Jewish law to cultivate communal self-

understanding in juxtaposition to other Jews and the non-Jewish world more broadly. She is currently working on her first monograph, tentatively titled The Gentile Enigma: Divine Law and Identity in Early Judaism, based on her dissertation.

Dr. Slutsky has held numerous fellowships, including a Summer Fellowship at the University of Pennsylvania's Katz Center, a FLAS Fellowship in Yiddish at the University of Chicago, a Pedagogy Fellowship from the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, and numerous Center for Jewish Studies fellowships from Harvard University.

10:30 am <u>SESSION 1</u> Zionism, Zionisms: What is Zionism

12 pm <u>LUNCH</u> Registration for lunch required

1 pm SESSION 2 What Does it Mean to Support Israel Right Now?

Registration is required for lunch
Lunch is Complimentary for Life Long Learning Members
\$15 for non-members

#### Temple Emanu-El Scholar-in-Residence Rabbi Josh Weinberg

Sunday, April 26, 10 am - 2 pm in person at TEE and Livestream There will be two sessions with lunch offered in between.

## ONE HEART TWO HOMES AMERICAN JUDAISM AND ZIONISM

In today's world can we say Liberal and Zionist in the same sentence? How do we align with liberal ideals and maintain our love and support of Israel?



Rabbi Josh Weinberg, is the Vice President of the URJ for Israel and Reform Zionism and is the Executive Director of ARZA, the Association of Reform Zionists of America. He was ordained from the HUC-JIR Israeli Rabbinic Program in Jerusalem and is currently living in New York. Rabbi Weinberg holds a B.A. from University of Wisconsin in Hebrew Literature, Political Science and International Relations, and an M.A. from the Hebrew University in Jewish Education. Passionate about anything connected to Israel, Rabbi Weinberg is a reserve officer in the IDF Spokesperson's Unit, has hiked the Israel-trail, and made

Aliyah to Israel in 2003. He previously served as the Director of the Israel program for the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and as a faculty member of NFTY-EIE High School in Israel teaching Jewish History. He has taught and lectured widely throughout Israel, the U.S. and Europe, led numerous tours, and trained tour educators for Israel experiences. In his dual role at the URJ, Rabbi Weinberg is devoted to strengthening the connection between American Judaism and the Jewish State.

#### 10:15 am CHECK IN

10:30 am SESSION 1 Making sense of the Middle East Conflict: How did we get to where we are today?

12 pm <u>LUNCH</u> Continue the conversation over lunch with prompts from Rabbi Weinberg

1 pm SESSION 2 The Great Divide: What are we talking about when we talk about Israel?

## Registration is required Lunch is Complimentary for Life Long Learning Members \$15 for non-members

To register go to: https://www.edisontemple.org/event/scholar-in-residence-2.html

#### Classes at a Glance

#### **Sunday Classes**

- Forgiving and Forgiven: The Pathway to True Forgivenes, Rabbi Gedan
   September 7, 14, 21 at 10 am in person at Neve
- Hebrew Reading, Michele Rosenfield, Sundays at 11:15 am virtual, dates to be emailed to participants
- Jewish Treasures, Trips on Sunday afternoons, trips and dates to be announced
- Practical Halacha, Rabbi Gedan, Sundays at 10 am in person at Neve

#### **Monday Classes**

- Forgiveness in an Unforgiving World, Rabbi Axe, Monday, September 15 at 10 am in person at TEE
- Jewish Humor Through the Ages, *Rabbi Axe*, November 3, 10, 17, 24 at 10 am in person at TEE

#### **Tuesday Classes**

- Practical Halacha, Rabbi Gedan, 10 am in person at Neve
- Three Rabbis and the Torah: Comparative Judaism Rabbi Axe, Rabbi Gedan, Rabbi Hornstein, February 3, 10, 17, 24 at 11 am in person at TEE and livestream
- The Soul of Music with *Cantor Ott,* November 18, 25 December 2, 9 at 11:15 am in person at TEE
- Cooking, Carole Semel December 9 and May 5 at 5:30 pm in person at TEE

#### **Wednesday Classes**

- Lunch and Learn, Rabbi Axe and Rabbi Gedan, beginning October 22 at 12:30 pm in person
- Book Club 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 7:30 pm in person at TEE or virtual

#### <u>Thursday Classes</u>

- Practical Halacha, Rabbi Gedan, at 10 am virtual
- Forgiving and Forgiven: The Pathway to True Forgiveness, *Rabbi Gedan* September 4, 11, 18 at 10 am virtual
- May Their Memories Be For a Blessing, Wendy Kushner and Debra Maller Thursday at 7:30 pm, virtual
- Yoga, Wendy Kushner, October 30 November 6, 13 at 7:30 pm at TEE
- Jewish Liturgical Music Reimagined, *Dave Schlossberg,* March 5, 12, 19 and 26 at 1 pm, in person at TEE

## Be a Star!!

We invite you to become a benefactor of our Lifelong Learning program. With a tax-deductible contribution of \$180 per person, your name will be listed, and one person will receive complimentary access to all Adult Education classes for the year. LLL registration is required.

### **Registration Form**

Name, Person #1	-
Phone Email	
Address	-
Please choose one:	
I am a member of Neve Shalom  Non-Member	
Name, Person #2	-
Phone Email	-
Address	-
Please choose one:  I am a member of Neve Shalom  Non-Member  BABYSITTING WILL BE AV	VAII ARI F
Classes UPON REQUEST	
Person Person 1 2	
Book Club Lunch and Learn	
Cooking with Carole- Session 1  May Their Memories E Blessing	Be For A
Cooking with Carole- Session 2 Jewish Treasures	
*Forgiving and Forgiven-Sunday in-person *Practical Halacha- Sun	nday in persoi
*Forgiving and Forgiven-Virtual in person	s/Wed night
*Forgiveness in An Unforgiving World *Practical Halacha - vi	rtual
Hebrew Reading The Soul of Music	
*Jewish Humor Through the Ages Three Rabbis and the	Torah
Jewish Liturgical Music Reimagined Yoga	
Neve/TEE members annual fee per person \$72  Non-Member annual fee per person \$90  Benefactor \$180	

Total Amount Due \$\_\_\_\_\_ Circle one: check included Bill me

Make checks payable to synagogue you are signing up with

<sup>\*</sup>These classes, which are taught by Rabbi Axe or Rabbi Gedan require registration, but are free for members of Neve or TEE. Non-members of either synagogue pay \$90 and can register for all LLL courses.