

Havurat Torah Spring Course Catalogue - 5779

Dinner: 6:30-7pm

First Period: 7-7:40 pm

7th Grade Special Seminar:

This year, the focus of 7th grade learning will be building "Jewish literacy" through exploration of some of Judaism's essential teachings, texts, ideas, and practices. The topics the class study include Birkat Hamazon (Grace after Meals), Shmirat Halashon (watching our words), Jewish theology, Jewish teachings about the afterlife, and Jewish holidays from an adult perspective. The 7th grade will also identify defining moments and milestones in their own Jewish and secular lives.

During the year, we will explore a variety of topics, among them: finding meaning in the B'nai Mitzvah process, Jewish identity, friendship, peer pressure, and other challenges of navigating early adolescence—from a Jewish perspective.

Educators: Hazzan Shoshi Levin-Goldberg and Community Educator Rachel Glickenstein

Grades 8-10:

NEW!: My So Called Life As teenagers, we are getting ready to take our place as young Jewish adults in a global society. Peer pressure, gossip, and societal norms can sometimes make it a challenge to see ourselves, and others, in the best light. So how do we view ourselves? How do we handle peer pressure and social media? How do we interact with others?

This Spring we will explore what Judaism has to say about friendships, rehilut (gossip), Lo Ta'amod al Dam Rayeha (not standing idly by), body image, building healthy relationships, and more.

Educator: Community Educator Arielle Richman

Personal Jewish Mystical Exploration – *Geared Toward New and Continuing Learners*

The course will trace the evolution of authentic Jewish mystical practices from the biblical period through modern times. The visions of Ezekiel and Isaiah, Talmudic teachings, Sefer Yetzirah, Zohar, Lurianic Kabbalah and 20th century Jewish Renewal will be explored. The class will also include several guided meditations to help center and concretize the teachings. Come discover your inner mystic!

Educator: Rabbinic Intern Mitchell Blank

The Jewish Justice League – *Geared Toward New and Continuing learners:*

Our world is plagued with injustice, and the Torah has something to say about it. From oppression of minorities and immigrants to environmental damage, from caring for those who are poor or disabled to freeing the enslaved, from fairness to animals to fairness in business and in war, the Torah has much to teach us on these matters and many others. In this course we will explore contemporary issues of injustice and study Jewish ethical texts that inform our thinking about them. We will discuss what we ourselves could do to help resolve these issues and learn about the work of organizations currently addressing them. After each month we will have a speaker on the issue we've studied. You will have a chance to help pick topics and will be supported in organizing your own justice projects around issues you're passionate about. Join us to find your voice and do justice Jewishly.

Educator: Rabbinic Fellow Ariana Capptauber

11th & 12th Grade Special Israel and Pre-College Seminar

During our first weeks together in January and early February, we will take a deep dive into the upcoming Israel trip itinerary and better prepare ourselves for what to expect and what we hope to encounter while in Israel.

Upon our return, we'll use the months of March through May to explore some of the big issues facing Jewish students - and all students - on college campuses: BDS, Intersectionality, #MeToo, and how to navigate life on campus - all while maintaining your Jewish identity.

Educators: Rabbi Ari Isenberg, Rabbi Matt Futterman, and Cantor Melissa Berman, with guest appearances from our *Shinshinim*.

Second Period: 7:45-8:25

NEW!: Pray Like A Rockstar

Each week, we'll examine one contemporary song (from Drake and Rihanna to Leonard Cohen and Aretha Franklin) and decide whether the musical artist was praying it or just singing it. We'll then compare it to one of the prayers in our Siddur. We'll discuss the connections between music and Tefilah, and we'll ask the question what counts as prayer and why do it at all?

Educator: Hazzan Shoshi Levin-Goldberg

NEW!: DEEP Dive into Torah!

The subject of each class is the *parasha* - the weekly Torah reading. This is a text-based class as we will take a deep dive into 1 or 2 issues in the text, especially ones that are directly related to psychological dynamics specifically relevant to teens. No specific experience in Bible study is needed to benefit from this course.

Educator: Rabbinic Intern Mitchell Blank

"I am a Leader" – Geared toward Continuing Learners

Our world is in need of more great young leaders. This year's US midterm elections in November will showcase some of these young rising stars hoping to impact our society in positive ways. Our teenage years are a great time to begin thinking about leadership and what qualities make for a good leader. What is Judaism's perspective on leadership as a virtue, and how does our tradition define good leadership?

Together, we will answer these questions, and many more. We will also explore leadership styles through real life experiences and team building exercises, thus developing leadership skills to be put to good use as you embark on a path to assume greater roles in your communities, from USY, school, camp, Havurat Torah, and other areas of your life.

Educator: Community Educator Rachel Glickenstein

But why do we use it? – *for new learners only.*

What's the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the words, "Jewish ritual objects"? Whether it be a beautiful mezuzah, Kiddush cup, or other ritual object we've all used one at some point in our lives. But have you ever wondered WHY? We will explore Jewish texts as we discover the reasoning behind the use of the Jewish ritual objects and where the custom originated from. What we learn will be used as the foundation to design and produce pieces to be incorporated into our TIC community holiday events as well as for our own personal use! No prior knowledge or experience is necessary, just be ready to learn and create together!

Educator: Community Educator Arielle Richman

Relationship Torah – *Geared Toward New and Continuing Learners.*

When encountering problems in relationships with our families, siblings, friends or romantic partners we often seek advice from people we trust, or sometimes from magazines and advice books. Jewish sources also have a lot wisdom to share about our experiences with family, friends, and with our sexuality. They're full of advice gathered by people encountering some of the same situations over hundreds and even thousands of years. We'll look at stories and laws from the Torah, rabbinic literature and contemporary Jewish voices weighing in on how we should love and interact with one another: what to do about jealousy with a sibling, or anger at a parent, or romantic interest in a stranger, or a broken heart. Conversations will encourage us to think deeply about our own lives and relationships, while remaining respectful. Join us to learn some Jewish wisdom in the area we often need it most: when figuring out to navigate our relationships.

Educator: Rabbinic Fellow Ariana Capptauber

* For 10th-12th graders only