



HEBREW HIGH

Class Descriptions

First TRIMESTER

Traditional Jewish Cooking and Baking

Melanie Mason

Join our Traditional Jewish Cooking and Baking Class! In this course, you'll explore the rich culinary heritage of Jewish cuisine, learn to prepare, and bake classic dishes that have been passed down through generations. Discover the significance of various ingredients, techniques, and the cultural importance of food in Jewish traditions. Get ready to embark on a delicious journey that celebrates the flavors and stories behind these iconic dishes. Join us to connect with history and savor the authentic tastes of Jewish cooking!

***This course is open to 8th graders**

The Amazing Jewish Journey

Jennifer Sawyer

Come and join us for a whirlwind epic journey through almost 4,000 years of Jewish history. Learn the answers to basic questions about the Jewish experience. Why is Israel called the Jewish homeland? What caused us to leave? How and why did we return? How do Jews today fit into Israel's diverse population? What are the current challenges we face as Jews and how are they different from or the same as those we have faced throughout our history? Like the quintessential "Hero's Journey" in literature, the Jewish people were forced to leave our homeland and wander for 2,000 years facing great challenges. Forged in the fire of adversity, we developed resilience and compassion. This odyssey united and sustained us as a people and eventually led us back to the land of Israel. We will use fun, interactive activities, discussion, and debate to explore how we came to this point in our history, our challenges in both Israel and the Diaspora today, and where do we go from here.

***This course is open to 8th and 9th graders**

Blood, Sex, and Gore in the Bible

Rabbi Asher Knight

Ready to uncover the Bible's most intense and jaw-dropping stories? "Blood, Sex, and Gore in the Bible" is a no-holds-barred exploration of our ancient scripture's darkest, grittiest, and most shocking events. Forget the gentle, sanitized tales from Religious School—this class dives into the raw and often bloody narratives that shaped the ancient world. Are you ready to explore the darker side of our sacred scriptures? Join Rabbi Knight for a thrilling journey through the blood, sex, and gore that the TaNaKh has to offer—if you dare

***This course is open to 8th and 9th graders**

Hot Topics

Alan Johnathan

Have you ever gone on social media and seen something, but aren't sure if it's antisemitic? Has something happened in the world, and are unsure how to react? Have you ever had questions about Judaism that you want to ask but never got the chance to? Welcome to our class on hot topics, where we will discuss different questions and topics you have along with current events hot off the press.

***This course is open to 9th and 10th graders**

Theology 101: I Don't Believe in THAT God

Rabbi Beth Nichols

Beyond the shared belief that there is only one God, Jewish ideas about God are incredibly diverse. One person might picture a God with emotions and opinions who is actively engaged in our daily lives, while another might imagine a God that propels the forces of the universe but does not interact with humanity. Both ideas are compatible with (and even a part of) Jewish tradition. In this class we will consider the major questions we have about God's existence, explore traditional Jewish answers and wrestle with our own opinions. All beliefs are welcome, and skepticism is expected!

***This course is open to 9th and 10th graders and is required of all Temple Beth El Confirmation Students**

Is Zionism a Dirty Word?

Rabbi Michael Wolk

In this class we'll explore different types of Zionism to understand its rich history and how it's shaped modern Israel. We'll challenge stereotypes and show that Zionism isn't a bad word—it's a diverse movement with different ideas about Jewish identity and Israel's future. By discussing these ideas, you'll have the chance to develop your own understanding of what it means to be a Zionist.

***This course is open to 10th, 11th and 12th graders**

Service Projects and Tzedek: Justice, Justice You Shall Pursue

Rachel Glazer

It is one thing to talk the talk about social justice; it is another to walk the walk and pray with our feet! First, we will understand what is Jewish about social justice and explore various ways that we can put our Jewish values into action at home, at school, and in the broader community. Then, we will identify service projects that are close to our hearts and apply our learning by planning, preparing, and leading a service event from start to finish: Mitzvah Night for all of Hebrew High! All projects will be performed on site.

***This course is open to 11th and 12th graders**

Second TRIMESTER

Judaism and Reproductive Rights

Rabbi Lexi Erdheim

Debate and controversy around reproductive rights has been prevalent in new coverage over the past few years. The overturning of Roe v. Wade, debates about medication abortion, and access to contraception are deeply important issues in today's world. What does Judaism have to say about these issues? How can Jewish text, tradition and contemporary voices inform our own understanding and perspectives on bodily autonomy and reproductive justice? Join Rabbi Erdheim in exploring the complex and ever-changing landscape of reproductive rights through a Jewish lens.

***This course is open to 8th and 9th graders**

Trivia: Jewish History Version

Rob Sisson

We will use trivia to delve into all sorts of Jewish history. We will discuss how each movement in Judaism had its beginnings and see how those traditions have changed over the years. We will also look at the beginnings of Judaism, Ancient Israel, and even Modern Day Israel. The idea of the class is to not only learn about Jewish history, but to have some fun while doing it! And there will be prizes!

***This course is open to 8th and 9th graders**

The Israeli Soundtrack post October 7th

Cantor Shira Lissek

One of the best ways for us to understand the current mood in Israel is by listening to its music and exploring its art. Get ready for engaging lectures, discussions, and multimedia presentations that will help you understand how music and art have played a role in processing collective trauma and fostering resilience in Israeli culture. As we navigate the Israel-Hamas war, we'll explore a collection of impactful songs released since October 7th, covering themes such as hope, despair, responsibility, victory, and unity. Get ready to explore the world of Israeli music and art with us!

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Jewish Communities in the Diaspora: How did they get there?

Alan Johnathan

From the destruction of the first and second temples to today, Jews were scattered throughout the world either by choice or force. With this, new and unique versions of Judaism with different practices and cultures emerged in these places. In this class, we will learn about various Jewish communities in the diaspora, how they got there, their histories, traditions, and their impact on Judaism today. From the Americas to Asia and all the places in between, we will explore what being Jewish looks like from a religious, communal, and historical point of view.

***This course is open to 10th, 11th and 12th Grade**

Finding Resilience (and God?) in Secular Music

Cantor Danielle Rodnizki

When we experience challenging times and when so much feels heavy in the world around us, many of us seek out comfort in music. With Cantor Rodnizki, we'll listen to and discuss secular music – from folk songs to pop songs and beyond – to see what we can learn from these artful lyrics and melodies about struggle, resilience, hope, and spirituality. Bring your curiosity, your questions, and any songs that you think might fit into this category.

***This course is open to 10th, 11th and 12th graders**

Third TRIMESTER

Moving Toward Wholeness

Rachel Glazer

Get out of your head and into your body! Rooted in Embodied Jewish Learning, this experiential course will help you connect your mind, body, and soul through moving meditation, ecstatic dance, grounding practices, singing, deep breathing, and more.

***This course is open to 8th and 9th graders**

Social Media: Weapon of Mass Deception

Naomi Fabes

Teens across the world are struggling to identify news about the Israel-Hamas war, creating a “digital battlefield” that has become impossible to navigate. In this class, we’ll learn tools needed to spot misinformation, which is false or misleading, and disinformation, which is deliberately deceptive and examine real-world examples of how it circulates on social media and fuels antisemitism across the globe.

***This course is open to 8th and 9th graders**

Ready... Set... Grow!

Betsy Olinger

Would a “toolbox” of skills be useful for when life is challenging, and choices are hard? Do you want to learn more about yourself? Do you want to be more confident, motivated & balanced? Have you wished that you could better regulate your emotions? Are you seeking more purpose and meaning in your life?

The Challenges & Choices Program through The Mussar Institute is perfect for you! This special teen program, based on the 1,100-year-old Jewish practice of Mussar, gives you the chance to uncover and identify the character traits that make you unique. Though it sounds serious, our class will be fun, interactive, useful, and chill.

***This course is open to 8th, 9th and 10th graders**

Confirmation Service Preparation

Temple Beth El Clergy

Tenth graders participating in Temple Beth El’s Confirmation Program will meet weekly with Temple Beth El Clergy to plan and practice leading a Shabbat Service in celebration of their Confirmation. During these classes confirmands will also work to articulate in writing what they are personally confirming about their own Jewish identities. Following the end of Hebrew High, the confirmation class will meet for an additional rehearsal before leading Shabbat services on Friday, May 12.

***This course is required of all Temple Beth El Confirmation Students.**

Model Knesset

Alan Johnathan

Are you curious as to how the Israeli government works? Not sure what each of the various political parties are and stand for? What is a faction? Find the answers to all this and more in Model Knesset as we re-enact and explore hot topics the Israeli government has legislated on.

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***Preference goes to the 11th and 12th graders first and then to anyone who has not had the chance to take cooking yet.**