



HEBREW HIGH

Class Descriptions

First TRIMESTER

Traditional Jewish Cooking and Baking

Melanie Mason

Come learn and make traditional Jewish recipes that have been passed on *L'Dor V' Dor* (from Generation to Generation) from our Jewish ancestors. We will learn the basics of keeping kosher, while learning how to make traditional Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jewish foods such as challah and babka, blintzes and bourekas, shakshuka, and more! We will also explore the history behind the food we make as well as learning essential culinary skills, tips, and tricks. Come with an open mind and empty stomach!

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

Jewish Symbols and Ritual Objects

Betsy Olinger

Explore the why, how, and significance of Jewish items and symbols including: *mezuzah*, *ketubah*, *tallit*, *kippah*, *tefillin*, *hanukkiyah*, the Star of David, different Shabbat items, *Havdalah* sets, and *Pesach* items.

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

Jewish Soul has a Voice

Cantor Shira Lissek

Join your voice with Cantor Shira Lissek to sing your favorite Jewish songs and learn new ones. Each week we'll explore and connect with meaningful texts that inspire us to live our best lives and grow spiritually. The songs may be your favorites from camp, youth group, or temple or they may be new to you. No previous musical experience is necessary. The musical settings we choose will be fun and accessible.

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

Big Jewish Ideas

Alan Johnathan

Ever wonder what it means to be Jewish today? In this class, we will tackle topics from who decides who is Jewish to how the founding of the modern state of Israel changed Jewish culture. We will explore all that and more through short videos, discussions, and activities.

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

Think Globally, Act Locally: Help Plan Our Hebrew High Day of Service

Rob Sisson

Judaism and *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world) are synonymous. The values and teachings of Judaism strengthen the idea we are a community and should always help to make the world a better place for us, our community, and the world. No doubt, as a Jewish teenager you have studied these values in the classroom and at home. Our goal is to turn these values into action. We will work together to plan a Hebrew High day of service on Wednesday, November 16th. You will have the opportunity to discuss which Jewish values we want to focus on and plan out the entire evening from start to finish, including what we are eating for dinner. All projects will be performed on site. If you are ready to make a difference, this class is for you!!!

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

Beyond Koufax: Jews in Sports

Rabbi Lexi Erdheim

Sports have an innate ability to connect people from across the world around a single team, game or athlete. For many, being a part of a sports fanbase is almost like belonging to a religion. So what happens when Judaism interacts with the world of athletics? Why is it that Jews have historically been seen as unathletic? What can sports teach us about Jewish values and priorities? In this class we will study how Jewish perspectives on sports have transformed over time as well as examine how sports can help us strengthen our understanding of and relationship to Jewish values, history, and tradition.

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

Second TRIMESTER

Jews at the Zoo

Rabbi Beth Nichols

Do Jews believe in unicorns? Did animals really talk in the Torah? Are we responsible for the welfare of animals? Is my dog Jewish? In this class we will explore what Judaism has to say about animals. Our sources will range from ancient to modern, and from legends to laws. Our discussions will range from the mythical Leviathan to modern Jewish views on animal rights and ethical eating.

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

Doc Samson to Doja Cat: Jewish Representation in Pop Culture

Amy Fine

From The Chanukah Song to Mrs. Maisel, Judaism has a heavy presence in contemporary TV, music, and movies. Jewish performers and characters pop up on our screens and in our ears every day, sometimes, without us even knowing it. Who are these people and personalities? How are they represented? In this class we'll talk about some of our favorite Jewish celebrities, music, and on-screen moments and explore what Jewish representation in media means to us.

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

Ma La'asot, What Should I Do?

Rabbi Helene Kornsgold

Your friend is drowning in the lake. Do you go save him? What if it might be dangerous for you? In this course we will role play ethical dilemmas and look at the Jewish response to these difficult situations. No acting skills required, just a desire to engage in discussions rooted in Jewish values and ethics.

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

Traditional Jewish Cooking and Baking

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

The US and Us: Jewish History in America

Alan Johnathan

From a small group of Jews fleeing from Europe to being one of the largest Jewish populations in the world, Jews have lived in this land for generations. In this class, we will be exploring the early Jewish communities in the Americas and slowly narrowing to our Jewish community in Charlotte.

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

Comparative Religion

Rabbi Asher Knight

Religion helps us understand the world around us, gives structure to our lives and connects us with community. By studying other religious traditions in Charlotte, we will come to better understand our neighbors as well as have insights into how Judaism shapes our lives. Through discussions with leaders of other faith traditions and each other we will be able to articulate similarities and differences, preparing us to engage more fully with our community.

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

Third TRIMESTER

Challenges and Choices: A Jewish Teen's Guide to a Balanced Life from The Mussar Institute

Betsy Olinger

This course provides you with a solid foundation and practical tools that will prepare you to lead fulfilling, meaningful and valuable lives. In this course, you will be introduced to Mussar through the "Challenges and Choices" program. Mussar is an ancient practice in guidance for wise living, which can help teens thrive in contemporary life both in high school and beyond. Our class will help teens gain balance through the knowledge of *middot* (soul traits), engagement in Mussar practices, development of skills to become more resilient in the face of stressors, and encouragement to act intentionally and ethically. Our intention is to provide our students with the tools they need to become responsible adults with lives filled with joy and love rooted in Jewish tradition.

***This course is open to 8th and 9th graders (if you took this course last year, you are welcome to take it again as there will be different topics covered!)**

Judaism Onscreen: Wait, what did he say?

Rabbi Michael Wolk

Jews and Judaism often appear in movies and on TV, but sometimes it just feels wrong. In this class we will look at different depictions of Jewish practice onscreen and discuss if the scenes are accurate or if the production company could have used a better consultant.

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

Modern Israel: Ideas and Values of our Spiritual Homeland

Alan Johnathan

Ever wonder about what exactly Zionism is, where modern Hebrew came from, or how exactly Jews from all over the diaspora can live in Israel? Join us as we explore these ideas and more to understand what the modern state of Israel is to us as Jews through videos, discussions, and interactive activities.

***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.**

Antisemitism: Historical Origins and Impacts Today

Rabbi Lexi Erdheim

While Judaism brings so much joy and light into our lives, sometimes it is not easy to be Jewish. Sadly, antisemitism is a reality of the world we live in today. In this course, we will examine the history of antisemitism, how it has presented itself over the past few centuries, how it presents today, and what we can do to respond to it.

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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.**