



*"The study of Torah is equal to all
the rest of the commandments."*

Adult Learning at Congregation Beth El

5772 Catalogue



Rosh Chodesh Group for Women Only

Organized by Andrea Goldman and Sharon Rosen

In Hebrew, Rosh Chodesh literally means, "head of the month" or "first of the month." Rosh Chodesh is the first day of any new month. In ancient times, on Rosh Chodesh, women were supposed to refrain from work, to eat a festive meal, and to light candles, which commemorated the torches which were lit in Biblical times when the new moon was first sighted in the sky.

Over the centuries, Rosh Chodesh evolved into a day less focused on women and more as a holiday marked in the synagogue with special prayers and blessings, such as Shabbat and the other holidays and festivals.

In recent years, women have renewed the spirit of Rosh Hodesh through learning, spiritual celebrations and participating in activities that center around issues important to Jewish women. Please join us for a series of six Rosh Hodesh programs. Come to one, two or a few. Tentative Topics are listed below.

The Rosh Hodesh Group meets at 7:30 pm on these evenings:

- Cheshvan - October 27, 2011 - Jewish Sex
- Kislev - December 1, 2011 - Mikveh tour
- Shevat - January 25, 2012 - Egalitarianism
- Adar - February 23, 2012 - Jewish Rituals
- Nisan - March 24, 2012 - A special Rosh Hodesh Shabbat morning
- Iyyar - April 23, 2012 - Passover/Counting of the Omer

Dear Friends,

We are excited to present Beth El's opportunities for Adult Learning. In your hands is the listing of learning programs we look forward to providing for our members in the 5772 year. These represent the ideas and the work of our newly revitalized Adult Learning Committee chaired by Rick Ross. Your comments are always welcome as we work to expand and improve on these offerings. Of course, your help is also welcome. We hope you will find one or more events of interest to you and we look forward to seeing you throughout the year.

We wish you a Shanah Tovah – a year of growthful learning in 5772.

Rabbi Liz Rolle

Beginners' Adult Hebrew

Sunday mornings at 9:30-10:30

(Evening class available if sufficient interest)

Begins November 6, 2011

Have you thought about learning Hebrew so you can follow along in the prayer book? So you can help your child prepare for Bar/Bat Mitzvah? Because you want to become a Bar/Bat Mitzvah yourself? So you can learn the Hebrew language?

This class, taught by Rabbi Liz, will begin with the Aleph-Bet and will continue through learning how to read prayers in Hebrew. Come one, come all! This course will follow the school calendar.

(If you want an evening class, please contact Rabbi Liz 203-838-2710 or navasky@congbethel.org)

Adult Bar/t Mitzvah, Organized by Rabbi Liz Rolle

Contact Rabbi Liz if you want to join an adult Bar/Bat Mitzvah group now forming.

Haftarah Trop, taught by: Riva Silverman

Sunday mornings at 9:30-10:30

Begins November 13, 2011

Riva Silverman, our resident trop mayven, offers her fabulous class, this time in haftarah trop. Riva guides you through the trop signs and music. Learn to chant haftarah!

Light Learning with Rabbi Fish

Every Friday morning following minyan 8:45am-9:00am.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Congregation Beth El participates in a number of community-wide events. This year, we will be hosting the Taste of Torah organized through the Synagogue Council of the UJA/Federation of Westport, Weston, Wilton and Norwalk.



Tapestry, Community Rabbis and Teachers

Saturday evening, November 19 7:00 pm

Stamford JCC*

A delightful evening of learning sponsored by the Stamford Federation at the Stamford JCC. Rabbi Fish and Rabbi Liz will be among the many teachers with more than 20 offerings across a wide spectrum of interests, topics and views. Watch for information regarding registration and class choices.

Jewish Arts and Film Festival: Saturday, October 29 – Sunday, November 13

Assorted venues*

Enjoy the best in music, literature, visual and performing arts, and award-winning films from Jewish artists and communities around the globe at the 10th annual Jewish Arts and Film Festival of Fairfield County. This year, you can also enjoy a speaker and a comedian as well as some breathtaking do-it-yourself artwork. As a co-sponsor, Beth El has tickets available at the office. A \$100 donation to the Beth El Adult Education Fund gets you 4 individual tickets to an event(s) of your choice and recognition as a synagogue co-sponsor. Individual tickets are also available at \$18/each. Call the office for more information or visit <http://www.jewishartsandfilm.org/>.

Taste of Torah, Community Rabbis and Teachers

Saturday evening, January 21 7:00 pm

Here's your opportunity to study with area rabbis, cantors and educators in a relaxed atmosphere alongside members of the wider Jewish community of Westport, Weston, Wilton and Norwalk. It's all happening right here at Beth El! Of course, Rabbi Fish will be teaching. Sponsored by the Synagogue Council and UJA/Federation of WWWW.

To volunteer to help host this event for the community, please contact Nancy Gold in the office 203-838-2710 or nancy@congbethel.org.

Talmud Study for Women

Tuesday evenings, taught by Leah Bieler

This group studies topics from the Talmud that are of interest to women. No prior experience necessary and no knowledge of Hebrew required. Contact Betsy Stone if interested: Betsy951@gmail.com

Israel Fair

Sunday, May 6 9:30-3:00

Bedford Middle School, Westport*

Show your support for Israel at this community-wide Yom Ha'Atzmaut celebration. Activities for children and adults including Israeli food, Judaic art and books, jewelry. All free! Sponsored by the UJA/Federation –WWW.

Israel Trip!?

Requests are coming in to organize another fabulous Beth El Israel Trip. Please contact Rabbi Fish if you are interested in possible tour dates in June or July of 2012.

Jews and Politics-Beyond Democrats and Republicans

Taught by Rabbi Fish

November 7, 14, 28, December 5

\$18 suggested donation

Jews have had a complex and evolving relationship with politics and law. On one hand the Torah itself is a guide for collective, even political action. Yet in a larger sense, Jews are intended to have only one ruler- the King of Kings- and only one law- God's Torah. How Jews have balanced between these trends is the story of Jewish political history. From kings, prophets and priests to rabbis, town elders and democracy, Jewish views of politics provide a window into Jewish views of ourselves and our relationship to God.

Please join us for all or any portion of this four part class:

- **Session I: Politics in the Bible- Of Kings, Prophets and Priests.** Nov. 7
- **Session II: The Sandhedrin and Rabbinic Power.** Nov. 14.
- **Session III: Jewish Powerlessness and Jewish Politics.** Nov. 28.
- **Session IV: Jews and Democracy- a natural fit?** Dec. 5.

*All sessions start at 7:30 PM. Minyan will be held prior to class starting at 7:15. Class is suspended on Nov. 21st for the community wide interfaith Thanksgiving service.



Living in the Tree of Life: Kabbalah, Healing & Transformation

Taught by Dr. Mitchell Flaum

Tuesdays at 7:30pm 11/15, 12/6, 1/3, 2/7 (3/6 snow date)

\$36 suggested donation

In the Jewish mystical tradition, there is the notion that we exist simultaneously in four dimensions - namely, the physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual. This concept can also be found in the contemporary writings and medical healing practices of such well known holistic physicians such as Dr. Deepak Chopra and Dr. Andrew Weil.

In Four Worlds Healing, participants will learn more about the nature of the four worlds, and how to improve our lives by a greater understanding about how these different dimensions operate and interact in our lives. Through both lecture and experiential exercises, workshop members will gain a greater awareness of numerous factors contributing to health and illness, along with new tools to facilitate the healing process. Topics may include the following:

- * **Kabbalistic theory related to the four dimensions of being**
- * **Using a Body Scan technique for stress management**
- * **Cultivating the Art of Forgiveness**
- * **The psychological components of Mind/Body Healing**
- * **Tapping in to the power of intuition**
- * **Harnessing our creative resources for improved problem solving and decision making**
- **Discovering the unique purpose of our Being**

Dr. Mitchell Flaum is a psychologist and graduate of Yeshiva University who focuses on Spirituality and Psychological development. He serves as the Family Life Education Coordinator at Jewish Family Services in Stamford.





Lunch & Learn in NYC

Join Rabbi Fish for a study session and schmooze over lunch.

At the Manhattan office of Beth El member Brett Cohen

Tuesday, November 22. 12:15pm

Topic: Is Thanksgiving Kosher? A defense of this day as the most Jewish of American holidays?

Tuesday, February 28. 12:15pm

Topic: Pikuach Nefesh-When the Law and Life Clash

Learning Shabbat: Saturday, December 3

Our regular Shabbat morning service will be followed by a study and discussion session. The service will include no sermon that morning. Kiddush will come a little earlier. Then regroup with Rabbi Fish to learn in a less formal setting.

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

Watch for information about this quintessential Beth El experience!

CONGREGATION BETH EL

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