

LIVING JUDAISM
A PROGRAM OF JEWISH LEARNING AND LIVING
TUESDAY EVENING, 2019-2020
CONGREGATION BETH SHALOM, SEATTLE
APPLICATION

Letter to the Front (excerpt)

To be a Jew in the twentieth century
Is to be offered a gift. If you refuse,
Wishing to be invisible, you choose
Death of the spirit, the stone insanity.
Accepting, take full life. Full agonies:
Your evening deep in labyrinthine blood
Of those who resist, fail, and resist: and God
Reduced to a hostage among hostages.

The gift is torment. Not alone the still
Torture, isolation; or torture of the flesh.
That may come also. But the accepting wish,
The whole and fertile spirit as guarantee
For every human freedom, suffering to be free,
Daring to live for the impossible.

Muriel Rukeyser

Rabbi Bunam once asked: "Why do they call a zaddik 'a good Jew'?" Jestingly he answered his own question: "If they meant by that that he prays well, they would have to call him 'a good prayer'; if they meant that he learns well, they would have to say 'a good learner.' Now 'a good Jew' thinks well, and drinks well, and everything about him is good."

But to a disciple who had been in Pzhysha only a short time, he said: "You must know why you have come to me. If you think to become 'a good Jew,'" you have come in vain. But if you are here in order to become simply a good Jew, you did right."

Martin Buber, *Tales of the Hasidim II*: 265

Program Description

The Living Judaism Course

Tuesday Evenings, 7:00 to 9:15 p.m. plus additional get-togethers
Hebrew 7:00 to 8:00 & Living Judaism 8:05-9:15 pm

This course serves as both an introduction to Judaism for Jews looking to deepen their knowledge, for non-Jewish partners of Jews, and as the required course for conversion students. It lays the foundation for participants to build a strong personal Jewish identity. The lead instructors are **Ron DeChene and Robert Hovden** with some classes also taught by Rabbi Rose and other guest instructors. We will study the essential spiritual, religious, ethical, legal, historical, and cultural elements that inspire a commitment to Jewish life and involvement. Participants will be encouraged to explore various forms of Jewish identity through practice.

Participants will take one of our Hebrew courses, from Aleph Bet to advanced, during the first hour of the course as part of this year of study or on Shabbat mornings.

Pre-requisites: Interview with Ron DeChene or Rabbi Borodin and completion of this Living Judaism application.

Mentoring

One of the key elements of the program is to provide a supportive environment for participants to learn how to do Jewish rituals and practices. Several Shabbat dinners and festival celebrations hosted by congregational mentors will take place during the year as well as opportunities to participate in Jewish life cycle and communal events. Participants are encouraged to attend the Bierman Scholar-in-Residence program in March.

Siyum: Closing Ceremony

At the end of the year a Siyum takes place on Tuesday evening, the last night of class. We have a festive meal and celebrate a year of learning and fellowship.

Program Faculty

Rabbi Paula Rose was raised in New Jersey and in Cleveland, Ohio. She stayed in the Midwest for college, graduating *summa cum laude* from Washington University in St. Louis with a major in Jewish, Islamic, and Near Eastern Studies, and a minor in Psychology. Rabbi Rose continued her studies at the Jewish Theological Seminary, earning a Master of the Arts in Talmud and rabbinic ordination in May 2017. While studying, she worked in a wide array of rabbinic fields: on college campuses, at summer camp (she is a very proud staff alumna of Camp Ramah in the Berkshires), and as a hospital chaplain, but she fell in love with the varied nature, intergenerationality, and potential for relationship building in

congregational life. In her spare time, Rabbi Rose loves reading, being near water, listening to podcasts, and spending time with her husband, Jeremy.

Ron DeChene is an East Coast transplant who has lived in Seattle since 1987. He holds a degree in Theology from a Baptist seminary and was previously a minister. Ron's love of Judaism and Jewish learning began with a deep dive into Jewish ethics and history which led to his conversion. He has studied Mussar (Jewish ethics and soul refinement) with Rabbi Stone, author of "A Responsible Life – the Spiritual Path of Mussar". He continues to learn daily with his hevruta, his teachers, and especially from his students. Currently Ron serves as the chair of Adult Education at Beth Shalom. Ron's interests include international travel, study and computer work. Ron lives in the north end of Seattle with his husband, Robert.

Robert Hovden: Bio coming soon!

Overview

For whom is CBS's Living Judaism course?

1. Adults of Jewish origin seeking to deepen their Jewish knowledge and practice.
2. Adults who may not be of Jewish origin who want to be an active partner in a committed relationship.
3. Adults who may not be of Jewish origin who are considering conversion to Judaism.

How do I sign up for Living Judaism?

The program runs from Fall 2019 through Spring 2020. The tuition is \$500 for an individual member of the synagogue and \$600 for an individual who is not a member. For those attending the course as a couple, the tuition is \$700 for a couple if at least one person in the couple is a member and \$800 for a non-member couple. **This tuition includes a Hebrew course during the first hour.** Conversion candidates are expected to attend the Hebrew class; all others are strongly encouraged to.

Tuition scholarships and consideration are available for all members who need it.

To apply for the program, please send the enclosed application **and** make an appointment to meet with one of the instructors (a prerequisite) by calling the synagogue at **206-524-0075** or emailing our Community and Membership Engagement Director, at sarahgreenberg@bethshalomseattle.org. Please send all inquiries to:

Congregation Beth Shalom
6800 35th Ave. NE
Seattle, WA 98115
206 524-0075
Fax 206 525-5095
sarahgreenberg@bethshalomseattle.org

Living Judaism—Beginning Where You Are

A Personal Essay on Jewish Identity and Commitments

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

E-mail: _____

Gender Pronouns: _____

Date: _____

The following questions are designed to elicit from you a personal statement that will help the faculty of Living Judaism work with you during the coming year and match you with a mentoring family. Please send in a copy of your response. If you and your partner are taking this course together, please submit individual responses.

1. Please describe your religious/cultural background, including your parents' background.
2. Please describe your general education and profession.
3. For those of you who are in a partnership or part of a family, who are the other members?
4. From where you stand right now, with all your experience and inexperience, knowledge and ignorance, how would you define Judaism in one sentence?
5. What are the beliefs and values in Judaism that you find most appealing and persuasive?
6. Please describe your current comfort with and practice of Shabbat, kashrut, Jewish study, and synagogue attendance.
7. Please share any significant encounters with Judaism and Jewish people you have had up to this point. Have you formed friendships or relationships with individuals that have been important to you on your path?
8. Is there a particular Jewish book or thinker that has influenced you or attracted you to Judaism?
9. Are there any particular Jewish areas of interest or questions you would like to cover?
10. What, for you, is the greatest obstacle to embracing or accepting Judaism?
11. With which religious organizations do you currently have a connection? What is the nature of this connection?
12. If you are involved with a Jewish partner, please invite them to answer this question: How has your partner's interest in Judaism affected your feelings about Judaism and your commitment to its practices?

**Living Judaism
Congregation Beth Shalom
Registration for 2019-2020**

Please Return to: Congregation Beth Shalom
6800 35th Ave NE FAX: (206) 525-5095
Seattle, WA 98115
or email to: sarahgreenberg@bethshalomseattle.org

Date _____

Name(s) _____

Phone (h) _____ (w) _____ Cell phone _____

E-Mail _____ Fax _____

Address _____ City/Zip _____

Studying for conversion to Judaism: YES NO

Date of Meeting & Orientation with Ron DeChene, Rabbi Rose or Rabbi Kurland _____

- Hebrew Class 7:00 - 8:00PM
- Living Judaism 8:05 - 9:15PM
 - \$500* Individual (member)
 - \$600* Individual (non-member)
 - \$700* Partners Discount (members) – Only one person needs to be a member
 - \$800* Partners Discount (non-members)

*Tuition includes the cost of one of our Hebrew courses as well as the Living Judaism course (fees do not include the cost of books or materials.)

Payment Schedule

- Full Payment
- Post-dated checks for full amount payable by December 31.

Financial Consideration for Beth Shalom Members

Financial consideration is kept in strict confidence. Indicate the amount that you feel you can afford to pay for the program. _____

Please indicate to us how you would like to pay the amount above. _____

Early Withdrawal

Beth Shalom cannot refund fees for withdrawal after January 1, 2020. Withdrawal before that date will be refunded on a prorated basis.

Signature _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

[For Office Use Only]

- Original to Community and Membership Engagement Director
- ALT File created in Chaver-ware
- Add to Adult Ed roster
- Copy to Rabbi Borodin/Rabbi Rose
- Copy with check to Bookkeeper
- Copy to Lifecycle Coordinator
- Bill total course fee
- Apply payment