TEMPLE ISRAEL’S

Joys of Jewish Learning

ADULT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES 2015|2016

To Our Members and Friends of Temple Israel,

Welcome to another exciting and engaging year of adult learning at Temple Israel! We are very happy to present this year’s catalog, filled with fresh and thoughtful educational opportunities for adults who are eager to begin or continue their Jewish learning journey.


This year’s Joys of Jewish Learning Program (JJo) is focused on the theme of Jewish cultural and ethnic diversity. Together, we will explore our ever-expanding Jewish community and congregation and discover one another in an authentic, meaningful way. Through the lenses of food, literature, poetry, film, theater, discussion, and scholarship, our minds and hearts will be opened, as we learn more about the diverse community in which we live.

We have been gifted a rich Jewish tradition, which has been and continues to be transformed and enriched by an ever-changing Jewish community. It is our hope that the classes and programs brought to you by the Temple Israel Joys of Jewish Learning program this year will allow all of us to better understand this splendid tradition and the beautiful ethnic and cultural tapestry which embraces it.

If you are new to our adult learning program, I invite you to join us at any point during the year. I am always glad to meet with you to provide any guidance. If you are a long-time supporter of the JJo program, we thank you for your ongoing participation and commitment to learning. Adult learning is self-motivated, and I encourage you to give yourself the gift of new knowledge and a deeper connection to Judaism’s beautiful way of life. And here at Temple Israel, adult education is an opportunity to make connections with others at the synagogue and beyond. Come and help us to build that community. Come and learn from one another.

Throughout the year, we will welcome many special guests to our community: chefs, scholars, artists, poets, professors, authors, linguists, and more. In addition, we will learn from some of our very own congregants, whose expertise and passion bring great excitement to our community and whose gifts are sincerely appreciated.

Enjoy this year’s Joys of Jewish Learning catalog and then please mark your calendars for the educational programs that are of interest to you and your family. Please feel free to extend an invitation to your friends as well. All are welcome to come and learn.

Sharon Amster Brown, R.J.E.
Educator

Please note that the information contained within this catalog is also available on our website at www.tilb.org.
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### Professional Staff, Special Thanks, and JJL Patronage
**TORAH STUDY**

Saturdays at 8:45 a.m.
September – August
Facilitator: Rabbi Moskowitz

Each time you study Torah, you find something new in its verses...and in ourselves. Join Rabbi Moskowitz in our engaging Torah study. Each week, an enthusiastic group examines the *parashat hashavuah* (weekly Torah portion) and discusses its meaning and relevance through the use of traditional commentaries, personal reflection, and lively debate.

This Torah study is for everyone — no previous background or knowledge of Hebrew is required! Come one time — or every week! Join us, as we discover and re-discover the timeless teachings in our Torah, and see what the “Torah Study buzz” is all about!

*Cost: none*

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**THE STORY CONTINUES: PROPHETS & PROVERBS**

Thursdays at 10:15 a.m.
September – August
Facilitator: Joan Leb

The Tanach class that began in October 2013 has studied the history of Israel from the entry into the Promised Land through the return from the Babylonian exile as written in Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles. The group has also read the "Minor Prophets" (the shorter books) and is now studying the "Major Prophets" (longer books). Since this is a lay-led group, everyone will have an opportunity to participate. No previous knowledge or experience is necessary; just a desire to learn. Come and join us. We have fun!

*Cost: none*
BEGINNING
HEBREW
Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.
October 7 - December 9
Instructor: Janet Liss

After this ten-week Beginning Hebrew class, students will be able to recognize all the Hebrew letters and vowels, read on a beginning level, follow along in the prayer book, and even read from the Torah on the last day of class! The text we will be using will give students the opportunity to practice reading Hebrew through the use of games, puzzles, and various reading drills. If you want to learn Hebrew in a warm, fun and non-threatening environment, this class is for you!
Cost: $100, including textbook

AARON SAMUELS
Pilger Scholar-in-Residence
Underwritten through the generosity of the Temple Israel Foundation’s Pilger Lectureship Fund

IDENTITY ISH:
Attacks, Assertions, and Privilege Recognition
Friday, October 23 at 8:00 p.m.
(preceded by Shabbat dinner at 7:00pm)
Cost: Shabbat Dinner - $18/person
Lecture, free of charge

We each go through our own unique journey, as we discover our identities. Aaron discusses his own learning process about his mixed identity, from the times that identity slapped him across the face, to the times he expressly asserted his identity through performance poetry. Aaron discusses the nuances of this discovery process through his own battles overcoming oppression, and the lurking realization that with these oppressions also come privileges and advantages.

Aaron Samuels is a Pushcart-nominated poet, a TEDx speaker, and an acclaimed facilitator of critical identity discussions. After declining the advice of a teacher to not break meter, Aaron went on to become one of the premiere performance poets in the country.
She is a Tree of Life: A Beginner's Guide to Kabbalah and Meditation

W ednesdays at 7:00 p.m.  
October 28, November 4, November 11

Instructor: Rabbi Halfon

Kabbalah (literally “a received tradition”) is more than a passing fad; it is a time-honored and diverse collection of teachings, philosophies, cosmologies, disciplines, and rituals that provided wisdom and hope through the centuries, and influenced and was influenced by other esoteric teachings. At times it was hidden and secretly transmitted, at other times popular, and still other times misused by charlatans. In our generation some Kabbalistic concepts are more accessible, and seem to be needed more than ever. In this experiential course we will use text, lecture, song, story, and meditation to explore key insights on creation, prayer, good and evil, life and death, the soul, and the human-Divine encounter. We will also explore implications for religious practice, healing, personal change, and stress reduction. Whether you are a skeptic, a rationalist, a beginner, a mystic, or just someone seeking a deeper connection with your Self and the Divine, this class is for you.

Song and meditation will usually be included in each class.

Cost: none

Taste of Judaism

Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.  
October 29, November 5 & 12

Instructor: Rabbi Moskowitz

This class is especially designed for unaffiliated Jews, intermarried couples, those seeking an initial orientation into an adult approach to the study of Judaism, and all those searching for an entry into Jewish life.

Cost: none

Jewish Women’s Theater Production of Saffron & Rosewater

in memory of Susanna Levitt

Sunday, November 1 at 4:00 p.m.

Co-sponsored by the Temple Israel Sisterhood

The perfume of Persian nights will transport you in a fragrant evening of stories, song and lovely surprises.

This original show explores the never-before seen on stage stories of the Persian Jewish woman’s experiences. A child flees Iran carrying her family’s treasure. A college student wishes to move into a dorm but must defy her traditional father. A writer making it in America, but not with her mother. This show features works by Persian powerhouse writers.

Cost: none

Image Credit: Painted Doors, Iran  
Collection of Miriam Kove, New York
Bring a vegetarian item to share for dinner and then stay for the screening of this excellent short film.

In 1979, the Islamic Revolution in Iran brought a 2500 year-old history to a close for the Jews who left their homeland for America. Uncertain about their safety and fearing religious persecution in Khomeini’s Islamic Theocracy, an estimated 80,000 of Iran’s 100,000 Jews fled the country. This documentary tells the story of those Jews who re-established a tight-knit community in Los Angeles.

Iranian Jewish families talk about their past in Iran - how the increasingly hostile circumstances forced them to flee their own country in order to secure a better future for their children. They recall the difficulties of starting a new life in the United States. They voice their fears about their children growing up in an alien society, adopting a culture that is far removed from their own. Young Iranian adults, on the other hand, talk about the pressures of confirming to parental expectations, of remaining true to their Iranian Jewish heritage even as they try and carve their own individual identities in modern day American society.

Historical background via the use of archival footage gives a detailed overview of the original Jewish settlement in Iran and their relationship with their adopted country as well as how they fared in the 20th century.

In the American cultural imagination, Iranians are represented by scenes of hardline religious leaders and unruly crowds crying “Down with America.” Very little is known about the religious diversity of Iranians living in America. This documentary helps create a more nuanced view of the culture and religious diversity of Iranians both inside and outside the country.

Cost: none
Jews in Mexico with UCI Professor Jacobo Sefami, PhD.

In Partnership with Temple Israel’s Spanish-speaking chavurah

Sunday, December 13 at 10:00 a.m.

Instructor: Professor Jacobo Sefami, PhD.

In this illustrated talk, Professor Jacobo Sefami will review the Jewish presence in Mexico since the conquest of the Aztec Empire, Crypto-Jews in colonial times, the changes in law allowing for freedom of religion in the 19th century, the migration at the beginning of the 20th century, the establishment of institutions, and the richness of the various communities today. He will also read an excerpt of his book "Mourning for Papá: A Story of a Syrian-Jewish Family in Mexico," a story of childhood memories.

Cost: none

Persian Shabbat Dinner in Los Angeles at the Rabizadeh Home

Friday, December 18 at 6:00 p.m.
(meet at Temple Israel)

Join us for this very unique Shabbat dinner and learning experience at the home of the Rabizadeh family in Los Angeles. The Rabizadehs are a Persian Jewish family, whose daughter is forging a new path for their community, by studying to become a Reform rabbi at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York. Meet this wonderful family, learn about their beautiful Shabbat traditions, and enjoy a delectable Persian Shabbat dinner. Space is limited to the first 10 people to register and pay.

Cost: $30/person
**Intermediate Hebrew 1**  
**Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.**  
**January 6 – February 10**  
**Instructor: Janet Liss**

This class will assist those wanting to improve basic reading Hebrew skills and the ability to translate. We will also be learning two prayers that are recited at virtually every service: the V’ahavta and the Avot V’imahot. Unlike the Beginning Hebrew Class, this class will include discussion about the meaning and history of our prayers, with the hope that students will be able to participate to a greater extent as well as have a fuller understanding and appreciation during services. If you would like to move forward with your Hebrew in a safe, fun environment, this class is for you!

*Cost: $75, including learning materials*

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**Introduction to Judaism**  
**Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.**  
**January 6 – May 11**  
**Instructor: Rabbi Moskowitz**

Introduction to Judaism is an 18-week class designed to provide a rich survey of the Jewish tradition for those interested in exploring Judaism, for Jews who want to become more familiar with the richness of their heritage, and for those who want to examine converting to Judaism.

To register, visit:  
http://www.reformjudaism.org/introduction-judaism-california

*Cost: $280 ($200, for dues-paying members of a URJ congregation), plus the cost of textbooks; (includes a $50 non-refundable registration fee)*

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**Exploring Persian Jewish and Cultural Identity through Food**

Thursday, January 14 at 7:00 p.m.
Teacher: Sagi Rochman

Don’t miss this opportunity to come and spend time with local chef and celebrity Sagi Rochmann, who will delight our senses through food, conversation, and humor. Together, we will learn about the different sub-cultures that make up our beautifully diverse community and congregation through the art of cooking.

Cost: $15

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**The Blending of Two Rich Traditions: The Asian Jewish Family with Professor Helen Kim, PhD.**

Thursday, January 21 at 7:00 p.m.

The Asian Jewish Family is a common and increasing part of progressive Judaism in the United States and especially here in Southern California. Join us for this unique and informative evening, with Professor Helen Kim who serves as Associate Professor of Sociology at Whitman College. Her research with co-author and husband, Noah Leavitt, focuses on intermarriage and family dynamics among Jewish Americans and Asian Americans.

Cost: none
ADULT B’NAI MITZVAH CLASS
Every other Wednesday evening at 7:00 p.m.,
beginning February 10 - fall of 2017
Instructor: Cantor Hass

Participation in our Adult B’ni Mitzvah Program is an incredible way to strengthen one’s connection to Judaism and the Temple Israel community. We are excited to welcome a new group of adult learners this January who will become b’ni mitzvah in Fall 2017.

Learners who register for the Temple Israel Adult B’ni Mitzvah course are making a 22-month long commitment to learning. In the first year, we will perfect basic Hebrew reading skills, begin learning the prayers of the Shabbat morning service, learn basic liturgical translation, and discuss the meaning of many of our key prayers. Our Judaica studies will focus on the Jewish lifecycle, Reform observance and history, and Torah study and commentary.

Please note that there is a beginning Hebrew prerequisite for this class. If you are considering participating in the Adult B’nai Mitzvah program and have questions about your level of Hebrew reading, please contact Sharon Amster Brown.

Please contact Sharon for more information about the Adult B’nai Mitzvah experience and to reserve your spot in this meaningful and distinct program.
Cost: $400/over two years

SHABBATON WITH RABBI ANNE BRENNER ON CREATING CARING COMMUNITIES:
THE HOLY PRACTICE OF CARING FOR OTHERS
In Partnership with the Caring Community Committee

Friday, February 19 at 8:00 p.m. (following Shabbat evening services)
and
Saturday, February 20
10:30 a.m. Shabbat Morning Service
11:45 a.m. Lunch and Study
Cost: $12/person for lunch

The week of Parashat Tetzeveh commemorates Moses’ yahrzeit and is traditionally observed by honoring those who serve the community through the caring mitzvot: as bikur cholim/visiting the sick, nichum avelim/comforting the bereaved and leviat hametim/accompanying the dead. This Shabbat, beginning on Friday night, we will explore the values and develop the skills (and the confidence) for doing this holy work. On Shabbat morning, we will see how these principles are embedded in the liturgy through a Meditative Shabbat Morning Minyan, followed by lunch and a workshop in which we will practice these holy tasks and study traditional and contemporary sources for insights on being present with others during their times of vulnerability. The goal: to build a supportive and creative community through which we serve others and enhance our own growth.

EXPLORED MEXICAN JEWISH AND CULTURAL IDENTITY THROUGH FOOD
Thursday, February 11
Teacher: Sagi Rochman
Cost: $15
**MOVIE AND HAVDALLAH: SCREENING OF Adio Kerida**
*Saturday, March 19 at 7:00 p.m.*
Facilitator: Catherine Benamou

Join us for this engaging film by director Ruth Behar, who will be our Lapid-Shapiro Scholar-in-Residence next month. We are lucky to have the associate producer of this movie present to facilitate tonight’s film screening and discussion.

*Adio Kerida* begins with the Cuban-born filmmaker’s own search for memory in Cuba. Having left as a child, she cannot remember Cuba. So she returns over and over to the island to see what she can learn about herself and “her people” in the Cuba of today. She discovers that the 1,000 Jews remaining on the island, almost all of them Sephardic, are constantly being observed, photographed, filmed, and given charity by Jewish tourists from the United States who have recently discovered the exotic tribe of “Castro’s Jews” and want to see them in action before they disappear.

*Cost: none*

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**AN EVENING OF MULTI-CULTURAL MUSIC AND LEARNING**
*Sunday, February 28 at 5:00 p.m.*
Facilitator: Cantor Hass

Join Cantor Hass for an afternoon of Sephardic and Middle Eastern music and education. Take a look and listen into the deep and rich musical tradition of these amazing Jewish cultures and communities.

*Cost: none*

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**MEDITATION AND MINDFULNESS**
*Saturday, March 5 at 10:30 a.m.*
(running parallel to Shabbat Morning Services)
Facilitators: Cantor Hass and Ryan Weiss

Come join Cantor Hass and her brother Ryan Weiss – a life coach and meditation guru - as they take you on a journey utilizing text, music, and meditation. Challenge yourself and dig down deep with Ryan’s meditation and mindfulness thinking, combined with text study and musical accompaniment. Join us for one, two, or all three sessions!

*Cost: none*

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**EXPLORING JAPANESE JEWISH AND CULTURAL IDENTITY THROUGH FOOD**
*Thursday, March 10 at 7:00 p.m.*
Teacher: Sagi Rochman

Don’t miss this opportunity to come and spend time with local chef and celebrity Sagi Rochman, who will delight our senses through food, conversation, and humor. Together, we will learn about the different sub-cultures that make up our beautifully diverse community and congregation through the art of cooking.

*Cost: $15*
Exploring Israeli Jewish and Cultural Identity and Spirituality through Food
Thursday, April 14
at 7:00 p.m.
Teacher: Sagi Rochman

Don’t miss this opportunity to come and spend time with local chef and celebrity Sagi Rochman, who will delight our senses through food, conversation, and humor. Together, we will learn about the different sub-cultures that make up our beautifully diverse community and congregation through the art of cooking.
Cost: $15

Meditation and Mindfulness
Sunday, April 24
at 9:30 a.m.
Facilitators: Cantor Hass and Ryan Weiss

Come join Cantor Hass and her brother Ryan Weiss – a life coach and meditation guru - as they take you on a journey utilizing text, music, and meditation. Challenge yourself and dig down deep with Ryan’s meditation and mindfulness thinking, combined with text study and musical accompaniment. Join us for one, two, or all three sessions!
Cost: none

Ruth Behar, PhD.
Lapid-Shapiro Scholar-in-Residence
Underwritten through the generosity of the Temple Israel Foundation’s Lapid-Shapiro Lectureship Fund

Friday, April 15 and Sunday, April 17

Friday Night: Shabbat Dinner and Teaching
The Jews of Cuba and How the Jews Found a Home in Cuba
6:00 p.m. Shabbat Dinner; $15/person
7:00 p.m. Shabbat Service
8:00 p.m. Lecture

Sunday Morning: Coffee and Learning
Current Cuban–American Relations from a Jewish Perspective
9:45 a.m.
Cost: none

Join us for a wonderful weekend with Dr. Ruth Behar, who will join us as our Lapid-Shapiro lecturer. Dr. Behar was born in Havana, Cuba and grew up in New York. She has worked as an ethnographer in Spain, Mexico, and Cuba, and is known for her humanistic approach to understanding identity, immigration, and the search for home in our global era. As we explore our ever-expanding Jewish community and challenge ourselves to expand our hearts and minds about who our Jewish community truly is, together we become enriched.
**A Future of Congregational Life**

**Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.**

**May 5, 12, 19**

Instructor: Rabbi Moskowitz

One thing certain about the future: it will be different from the present. A second thing certain about the future: you have the power to help shape it. In these workshops, we will explore and begin to shape some of the elements of future congregational life: the nature of authority, the effect of inclusivity on communal identity, the role of spirituality, and what defines inclusion in a congregational community. We will look at some Jewish texts, not for their prescription of what should be but as inspiration of how others have addressed challenges in a changing world.

**Cost: none**

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**The Story and Allure of the Iranian Jewish Community with UCLA Professor Saba Soomekh, PhD.**

**Sunday, May 1 at 10:00 a.m.**

Saba Soomekh will be speaking about her book *“From the Shahs to Los Angeles: Three Generations of Iranian Jewish Women Between Religion and Culture”* (State University of New York Press, 2012). She will also discuss the history of the Jewish community in Iran and now Los Angeles.

“From the Shahs to Los Angeles” offers a fascinating portrait of three generations of women in an ethnically distinctive and little-known American Jewish community, Jews of Iranian origin living in Los Angeles. Based on interviews with women raised during the Iranian constitutional monarchy of the earlier part of the 20th century, those raised during the modernizing Pahlavi regime of mid-century, and those who have grown up in Los Angeles, the book presents an ethnographic portrait of what life was and is like for Iranian Jewish women across generations. Mother-daughter relationships, double standards for sons and daughters, marriage customs, the appeal of American forms of Jewish practices, social customs and pressures, and the alternate attraction to and critique of materialism and attention to outward appearance are discussed by Soomekh and through the voices of her informants.

**Cost: none**

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**Meditation and Mindfulness**

**Saturday, May 21 at 10:30 a.m.**

(running parallel to Shabbat Morning Services)

Facilitators: Cantor Hass and Ryan Weiss

Come join Cantor Hass and her brother Ryan Weiss – a life coach and meditation guru – as they take you on a journey utilizing text, music, and meditation. Challenge yourself and dig down deep with Ryan’s meditation and mindfulness thinking, combined with text study and musical accompaniment. Join us for one, two, or all three sessions!

**Cost: none**
**TEMPLE ISRAEL READS ONE BOOK**

*The Luminous Heart of Jonah S.*

with author Gina Nahai

Sunday, May 15 at 4:00 p.m.

Don’t miss this opportunity to come meet Ms. Nahai here at Temple Israel! From Tehran to Los Angeles, *The Luminous Heart of Jonah S.* is a sweeping saga that tells the story of the Soleymans, an Iranian Jewish family tormented for decades by Raphael’s Son, a crafty and unscrupulous financier who has futilely claimed to be an heir to the family’s fortune. Forty years later in contemporary Los Angeles, Raphael’s Son has nearly achieved his goal—until he suddenly disappears, presumed by many to have been murdered. The possible suspects are legion: his long-suffering wife; numerous members of the Soleyman clan exacting revenge; the scores of investors he bankrupted in a Ponzi scheme; or perhaps even his disgruntled bookkeeper and longtime confidant.

Award-winning novelist Gina B. Nahai pulls back the curtain on a close-knit community that survived centuries of persecution in Iran before settling and thriving in the United States, but now finds itself divided to the core by one of its own members. By turns hilarious and affecting, *The Luminous Heart of Jonah S.* examines the eternal bonds of family and community, and the lasting scars of exile.

**Cost:** *none*

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**THE JEWISH LATINO STORY**

MODERATED BY ADOLFO-GUZMAN-Lopez

Thursday, June 2 at 7:00 p.m.

Moderator: Adolfo Guzman-Lopez

Join us for a fascinating evening, as we expand our hearts and minds by hearing the rich and engaging stories of some of our Latino members here at Temple Israel. The panel will be moderated by congregant and NPR reporter Adolfo-Guzman Lopez. Enjoy a fun dinner with food from some of these congregants’ countries of origin.

**Cost:** *$12/dinner*

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**BEGINNING HEBREW**

Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.

June 8 – August 10

Instructor: Janet Liss

After this ten-week Beginning Hebrew class, students will be able to recognize all the Hebrew letters and vowels, read on a beginning level, follow along in the prayer book, and even read from the Torah on the last day of class! The text we will be using will give students the opportunity to practice reading Hebrew through the use of games, puzzles, and various reading drills. If you want to learn Hebrew in a warm, fun and non-threatening environment, this class is for you!

**Cost:** *$100, including textbook*
**TIKKUN LEIL SHAVUOT**  
**Saturday, June 11 at 6:45 p.m.**  
Facilitators: Rabbi Moskowitz, Cantor Hass, Sharon Amster Brown, and congregants

Revelation at Mount Sinai was a shattering experience for the Israelites. It cracked open reality as they had come to accept it and disclosed a dimension of profound beauty and power, which they were invited to embrace. To ritualize this moment of creative disorientation the 16th century Kabbalists of Safed created an evening of all-night study (Tikkun Leil Shavuot), which concluded at the break of dawn with a service welcoming the festive moment of Shavuot. Tikkun Leil Shavuot celebrates a moment of truth and wonder which remains eternally alluring.

Join us as we embrace this tradition of study, celebration and wonder.  
**Cost: none**

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**MOVIE AND HAVDALLAH:**  
**SCREENING OF LITTLE WHITE LIE**  
**In partnership with Temple Israel Sisterhood**  
**Saturday, June 25**  
6:30 p.m. wine & cheese  
7:00 p.m. movie  
Facilitator: Barry Mitnick

What happens when you discover that your family has been hiding a Little White Lie? For Be'chol Lashon's Director of Outreach, a family secret led to a journey to redefine her identity. Lacey Schwartz’s personal tale of growing up in a white Jewish family, uncovering a secret about her biological black father, and coming to terms with her mixed black and Jewish heritage has been praised by critics across the country including *The New York Times* and MSNBC.

Given Be'chol Lashon's commitment to celebrating racial and ethnic Jewish diversity, we are delighted to be the producer of Little White Lie and see the movie as a vehicle to open up important conversations about race, identity and family life. It's important to be able to talk about differences in age where intersectional identities are becoming the norm. Highlighting inclusion, diversity and connection as hallmarks of Judaism, provides basic building blocks for instilling Jewish pride in an increasingly global world.  
**Cost: none**
Mishkan HaNefesh: A New Machzor for the Days of Awe Get Acquainted, Explore, Appreciate

Thursdays, Sept. 15 & 22 at 7:00 p.m.
Facilitators: Dawn Haldane and Joanne Levy, with introduction by Rabbi Moskowitz and Cantor Hass

Mishkan HaNefesh, the new Reform machzor, was compiled with great care to meet the needs of the contemporary Reform Jewish community, and reflects the many changes that have occurred over the past decades. These sessions are meant to enable congregants to become familiar with Mishkan HaNefesh.

Mishkan HaNefesh follows the layout style and multiple option approach of Mishkan T’filah while introducing some significant changes from the familiar Gates of Repentance. Some of the biggest changes stem from the understanding that the contemporary Jewish experience is both a communal and a deeply personal spiritual journey. Mishkan HaNefesh aims to speak to and engage these dual desires.

Join us, as we delve in and explore our new machzor in preparation for the High Holy Days.
Cost: none

Tisha B’Av Study and Service
Saturday, August 13 at 7:00 p.m.
Facilitators: Rabbi Moskowitz, Cantor Hass, and Jay Alhadeff

Tisha B’Av, which means the “Ninth of Av,” refers to the traditional day of mourning the destruction of both ancient Temples in Jerusalem. In contrast to Orthodoxy, Reform Judaism has never assigned a central religious role to the ancient Temple. Therefore, mourning the destruction of the Temple in such an elaborate fashion did not seem meaningful. More recently, in Reform Judaism, Tisha B’Av has been transformed into a day to remember many Jewish tragedies that have occurred throughout history and provides an opportunity to consider ways to make peace within our community.
Cost: none
Temple Israel Women’s Book Club

We have selected an exciting array of books for the 2015-2016 season. Read with us for a taste of many forms of Jewish literature whether you can attend one or all of our meetings. Temple Israel women and their guests are encouraged to join our spirited discussions, led by member facilitators. For more information, contact Donna Mitnick at (714) 287-4069 or donna.mitnick@gmail.com.

Dissident Gardens by Jonathan Lethem
Wednesday, September 9 at 7:30 p.m.

This is an epic family saga about three generations of all-American radicals. At the center is Rose Zimmer, an unreconstructed Communist and mercurial tyrant, and her brilliant and willful daughter, Miriam, passionate in her own activism. Written so that “someone’s hot breath is always in the reader’s face” the novel ranges from the “parlor communism” of the 30s, through McCarthyism, the civil rights movement, up to the latest Occupy movement. The author’s vivid storytelling shows that the personal may be political, but the political is also personal. “Brilliantly constructed as it weaves across time and among characters, ... the novel is riotous and haunting, satiric and a joy to read.”

Lady at the O.K. Corral: The True Story of Josephine Marcus Earp by Ann Kirschner
Wednesday, November 18 at 7:30 p.m.

The New York born daughter of Polish-Jewish immigrants, Josephine Sarah Marcus, a flamboyant actress and dancer, was the common-law wife of Wyatt Earp for nearly 50 years. She was a valiant frontierswoman in her own right. Interpreting the fabled 1881 shootout at the OK Corral as a consequence of a love triangle, the author ably brings Josephine’s story out of the shadows of history. The story ranges from San Francisco in the Gay Nineties to rough mining camps, gaudy gambling casinos, and Hollywood, and offers a new look at this period of the Wild West.


Invisible City by Julia Dahl
Wednesday, January 6 at 7:30 p.m.

Rebekah Roberts, a new reporter for a New York tabloid, is sent to cover the gruesome murder of a Jane Doe, whose body was found in a Brooklyn scrap yard. Rebekah soon learns that Jane is actually Rivka Mendelsohn of the Borough Park Hasidic community. She meets Saul Katz, who once knew her estranged mother when they were both members of the same Hasidic community. As she digs deeper into Jane’s murder, she discovers the political power of the religious community and wonders more about her mother’s disappearance from her life. Her desire to learn the truth gets her into trouble in a world where she is a stranger, and where compliant wives like Rivka learn to live with domestic violence, sexual abuse and mental illness or escape at their peril.

**Henna House** by Nomi Eve  
**Wednesday, March 9 at 6:30 p.m.**  
*Special start time*

Join us for this special session, as we welcome a henna artist to Temple Israel to demonstrate the art of henna.

A magical and fascinating story set in a tiny village in the mountains of Yemen. Adela Damari is surrounded by a community that follows ancient Jewish traditions and dress. One aspect of the culture is the women drawing elaborate paintings on each other in henna. Through this practice, Adela learns to read and write. The community also lives in fear of the Confiscator, a Muslim official who can seize orphaned Jewish children and give them to Muslim families. They all eventually depart for Aden, which becomes less and less welcoming and in 1947, they go to Israel on “wings of eagles.” This is a compelling story that illuminates a time and way of life unknown to most of us.

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**The Nightingale** by Kristin Hannah  
**Wednesday, May 11 at 7:30 p.m.**

Set in France during World War II, this is the story of sisters Isabelle and Viann, plunged into chaos by the war who must find the courage to face the forces of destruction to keep their families together. The first paragraph of the book sets out the central issue: “In love we find out who we want to be; in war we find out who we are.” This is a “compelling, character-driven novel, which takes us along on the journey toward the choices these women were forced to make to rescue their children and preserve their way of life.”

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**Pity The Poor Immigrant** by Zachary Lazar  
**Wednesday, July 13 at 7:30 p.m.**

This novel is the story of a handful of characters, some real and some fictional, interwoven with Jewish history and the state of Israel. There’s Meyer Lansky, comparing the founding of Las Vegas to the building of Israel and seeking asylum in that country; Gila, a Holocaust survivor, continually wandering; and Hanna Groff, a journalist investigating a murder of a poet whose last work re-imagined King David as a modern gangster. The author explores the paradox of modern Israel where “to exercise power is to be ridden with guilt.”
COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

JEWISH STUDIES PROGRAM

College of Liberal Arts
California State University
Long Beach

LECTURE SERIES
co-sponsored by the Alpert JCC and the Jewish Federation

Featuring key leaders and speakers, this lecture series is a true gem of the Long Beach Jewish community. Come and learn more about the issues facing our greater community and their impact on the Jewish community. For spring lecture dates and additional information, please contact CSULB Jewish Studies Department or go online at www.jewishlongbeach.org.

Monday, October 26 at 7:30 p.m.
Dr. Jessica Maya Marglin
Jewish-Muslim Relations in 19th Century Morocco

Thursday, November 5 at 7:30 p.m.
Laura Silver
Author of Knish: In Search of the Jewish Soul Food

Thursday, December 10 at 7:30 p.m.
Dr. Amy-Jill Levine
Christmas for Jews: The Jewish Context for Jesus’ Birth

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Beneath the Helmet
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Deli Man

For more info. and sponsor opportunities, contact Susan Paletz
spaletz@alpertjcc.org, (562) 426-7601, ext. 1012
Jay Alhadeff has been a member of Temple Israel as well as a Torah Center teacher for 17 years. He enjoys getting involved in many aspects of Temple life, including Torah Study, assisting with services when Rabbi Moskowitz is away, Family Camp, and Adventure in the Park. Jay is a proud graduate of the Jewish Federation’s New Leadership Development program, and he is looking forward to continuing the legacy of his parents, who have taught him about the joys of volunteering in the Jewish community.

Ruth Behar, PhD. was born in Havana, Cuba, and grew up in New York. She is a Professor of Anthropology at the University of Michigan. Among her honors, she is the recipient of a MacArthur "genius" Award, a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship, and a Distinguished Alumna Award from Wesleyan University. Ruth has worked as an ethnographer in Spain, Mexico, and Cuba, and is known for her humanistic approach to understanding identity, immigration, and the search for home in our global era.

Her books include The Presence of the Past in a Spanish Village; Translated Woman: Crossing the Border with Esperanza’s Story; The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology That Breaks Your Heart; and An Island Called Home: Returning to Jewish Cuba. Her documentary, Adio Kerida/Goodbye Dear Love: A Cuban Sephardic Journey has been shown in festivals around the world.

As much a provocative scholar as a creative writer, Ruth is also known for her essays, poetry, and fiction. Her latest book, Traveling Heavy: A Memoir in between Journeys was published by Duke University Press in April 2013.

Catherine L. Benamou is Associate Professor of Film & Media Studies, Chicano-Latino Studies, and Latin American Studies at University of California-Irvine. In addition to serving as Associate Producer for the documentary Adió Kerida (2002), she was Associate Producer and Senior Research Executive for It’s All True: Based on an Unfinished Film by Orson Welles, dir. Richard Wilson, Myron Meisel, and Bill Krohn (1993), and her book It’s All True: Orson Welles’s Pan-American Odyssey was published by University of California Press, 2007. She has published numerous articles and reviews on Latin American cinema and Orson Welles and regularly consults on film and archival projects.

Rabbi Anne Brener, LCSW is Professor of Ritual and Human Development at the Academy for Jewish Religion, where she trains rabbinical, cantorial, and chaplaincy students to create caring and healing spiritual communities. A Spiritual Director and Psychotherapist, Anne assists institutions in creating communities grounded in compassion. Her writing has appeared in many anthologies on Jewish spirituality and healing, and she is a frequent contributor to The Los Angeles Jewish Journal. A founder of one of California’s first shelters for victims of domestic violence, Anne has worked as a Hospice Chaplain and co-founded a Jewish Spiritual Direction Training Program. A Rabbis Without Borders Fellow, she serves on the steering committees of the Kalsman Institute on Judaism and Medicine and the Southern California Jewish Burial Society.

Adolfo Guzman-Lopez is a proud Temple Israel member and has been the education reporter for KPCC 89.3FM, the NPR affiliate in Southern California for the last 10 years. His reporting has earned him the Edward R. Murrow regional award and the 2006 L.A. Press Club Radio Journalist of the Year Award. He and his wife Lysa are the proud parents of Jordan and Elyanna.

Dawn Haldane is a long-time active Temple Israel member who has held many positions, including VP, Ritual Practices. Her volunteerism at the Temple has included serving on the Torah Center Committee, and chairing the College Connection. Both of her children (now 31 and 27) had their b’nai mitzvah at Temple Israel, and Dawn herself became an adult bat mitzvah in 2009. Long interested in Jewish liturgical practices, Dawn led classes several years ago, helping our congregants transition to the then new siddur, Mishkan T’filah.

Rabbi Moshe Raphael Halfon, M. Ed Psy, D.D., is a prison chaplain at the California Institution for Women, an international singer, and served as Temple Israel’s Associate Rabbi in the late 90’s. He has been a congregational rabbi, cantor, hospice chaplain, and administrator, and has held almost every position on the rabbis’ baseball team. He is a Reiki Master and pastoral counselor, and in his spare time, he teaches dance, Torah trope, Tai Chi, meditation, blues guitar, and organic gardening.

Joys of Jewish Learning...Celebrating Our Jewish Diversity
Joan Leb is a graduate of Bryn Mawr College and has a Master's in Library Science from the University of Pittsburgh. She spent five years going to Hebrew school as a child, but her real Jewish education began as an adult, when she started studying with the Rabbi of a small congregation in Cleveland, Ohio, and has continued to this day. Joan and her husband moved to Long Beach in 2000 to be closer to their children and grandchildren. They joined Temple Israel and began attending Torah Study, which she continues to enjoy. After so many years of reading Torah, she wants to go further in the Tanakh. In her spare time, she tends to the Temple Israel Library.

Joanne Levy is excited about helping introduce the new Mishkan HaNefesh to our temple community. As current VP of Ritual Practices, she has a deep commitment to engaging congregants, so they remain enthusiastic, confident and fulfilled in their Jewish practice. In addition to baking thousands of hamentaschen over the years, Joanne has chaired the College Connection and is on the Sisterhood board. Long time active members of Temple Israel, Joanne and her husband, Jerry have two children, ages 27 and 24. In 2012, Joanne also became an adult bat mitzvah. A regular Torah Study attendee, she is learning to chant Torah. Joanne holds a Master’s degree in Speech-Language Pathology, and, though now retired, she is a substitute teacher.

Janet Liss has been involved at Temple Israel since she was two years old. She began her career teaching at Temple Israel in 1971 and enjoyed teaching music, 2nd grade and the 7th grade B’nai Mitzvah class, as well as the Adult B’nai Mitzvah class. In June of 2015, Jan retired as a Torah Center teacher but still enjoys teaching adult Hebrew classes. When not teaching, Jan serves as the Office Manager at the LA campus of Hebrew Union College, substitute teaching at many neighboring synagogues, and tutors students privately in Hebrew and Judaic Studies. Jan is the mother of Rabbi Michal Merraro Loving, who is a graduate of our own Torah Center, and currently serves as the rabbi at Temple Beth Orr in Coral Springs, Florida. But the title Jan values most highly is “Bubby” to her three precious grandsons Xander, Ari, and Connor Loving.

Barry Mitnick is a long-time Temple Israel member active in adult education including Chairman of the Joys of Jewish Learning Committee. A current member of the Board of Directors and a father of three Torah Center alumni, he has an intense interest in communicating Jewish history and values to young people who may not otherwise be exposed to this rich heritage.

Gina Nahai is a best-selling author, columnist, and professor of Creative Writing at USC. Her novels have been translated into eighteen languages, and have been finalists for many awards including the Jewish Book Council's Fiction Award. She is the winner of the Los Angeles Arts Council Award, as well as the Persian Heritage Foundation's Award. Her writings have appeared in numerous national and international publications, as well as in a number of literary and academic journals and anthologies. She writes a monthly column for the Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles. Nahai holds a BA and a Master's degree in International Relations from UCLA, and a master of Professional Writing from USC. Her latest novel, The Luminous Heart Of Jonah S., was a finalist for the Jewish Book Council's fiction award in 2014.
Sagi Rochman and his wife went on vacation ten years ago, driving across America from East to West. One of their last stops was Long Beach. They fell in love with the city and decided to move here. He and his wife have four young sons: Itamar, Eitan, Yoav and Alon. At home in Eliat, Israel, Sagi owned and operated many successful restaurants, cafes, bars and night clubs; including the well-known Green Beach. It was no question that he would do the same in Long Beach. In 2005, Sagi and business partner Josh Lowenthal opened Sachi, Long Beach’s most popular and successful night club. Five years ago, Sagi opened up his first upscale restaurant and lounge, Sababa, was known for its modern decor, comfortable ambiance, and its innovative Mediterranean American fusion cuisine. Sagi has recently sold Sababa and is putting all his time into his new company, Better Chains, an online management solution for the restaurant and hospitality industry. Over the past twenty years, as a restaurant and club owner, Sagi has grown to love the art of cooking and all that gastronomy has to offer.

Aaron Samuels is a Pushcart-nominated poet, a TEDx speaker, and an acclaimed facilitator of critical identity discussions. Raised in Providence, Rhode Island, by a Jewish-American mother and an African-American father, Aaron discovered spoken word poetry at age 14, when his English teacher told him he was not allowed to break meter. After declining this advice, Aaron went on to become one of the premiere performance poets in the country, having performed throughout the United States alongside acclaimed musicians, poets, and speakers.

He is a four-time member and coach of the Providence Youth Poetry Slam Team featured on HBO’s Brave New Voices. As a youth coach and educator, Aaron stresses the urgency for cultural dialogue, teaching writing workshops for middle schools, high schools, universities, and community organizations across the country. Aaron is a graduate of Washington University where he founded WU-Slam, the first performance poetry collective on campus.

Aaron’s work has been published in multiple journals, and his first book of poetry, Mutually Assured Destruction, has been described as “both a personal reflection on the intersections of race and faith, and an unrelenting critique of U.S. Empire,” as it dives into the confluences of race, religion, class, and gender in the modern world. His most recent book, Yarmulkes & Fitted Caps, was released in the fall of 2013. Aaron is Black and Jewish.

Dr. Saba Soomekh is the Associate Director of Research at UCLA’s Alan D. Leve Center for Jewish Studies. She teaches Religious Studies, Middle Eastern History and Women’s Studies courses. She received her BA in Religious Studies from the University of California, Berkeley. Her Masters in Theological Studies from Harvard Divinity School and her Ph.D. in Religious Studies from the UC, Santa Barbara.

She teaches and writes extensively on World Religions, Women and Religion, and the geo-politics of the Middle East. Professor Soomekh is the author of the book From the Shahs to Los Angeles: Three Generations of Iranian Jewish Women between Religion and Culture (SUNY Press, 2012). Her book was awarded the Gold Medal in the 2013 Independent Publisher Book Award in the Religion category. She is also editor of the book Sephardi and Mizrahi Jews in America (2015).

Jacobo Sefami, PhD. the grandson of Sephardic Jews who immigrated to Mexico from Turkey and Syria, received his BA from the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, and his PhD. in Latin American literature from the University of Texas, Austin. He taught at NYU, and is currently Professor in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at UCI. He is also the Director of Middlebury College’s Summer Spanish School. He publishes articles, and book reviews for various literary journals in Mexico, Spain, Venezuela, Chile, and the U.S. His books concentrate on Latin American poetry. He has also lectured on various Jewish Latin American writers. His novel Los Dolientes/Mourning for Papá, A Story of a Syrian-Jewish Family in Mexico explores the rituals of mourning in the context of Syrian Jews in Mexico City, and his book-in-progress will deal with the effects of migration on his own identity as a Sephardic Jew.

Ryan Weiss serves as a leading influencer in the Mindfulness space, as well as curates and speaks at worldwide events about the blend of meditation and technology. His passion inspires thousands of people who wake up to his daily morning emails - Waking Up With Ryan. Ryan speaks weekly at the brand new Wanderlust Hollywood, a wellness center. If you're not in LA, you can grab his week-long video series produced by PopExpert at wakingupwithryan.com. Oh, and he's a triplet, along with Cantor Sara Hass and their sister, Cantor Lizzie Weiss.
Rabbi Steven Moskowitz was born in New York City, where he attended Central Synagogue. Rabbi Moskowitz graduated from Reed College in Portland, Oregon, and then from Lewis and Clark Law School, also in Portland. Prior to rabbinic school, he was a lawyer and spent seven years working for the City of Portland, first as a deputy city attorney and then as an Assistant to the Mayor. Subsequently, he went into private practice, where he primarily represented cities and school districts around the state of Oregon. While in Portland, he served on a number of Jewish Federation committees as well as on the board of trustees of Congregation Beth Israel. Rabbi Moskowitz received rabbinic ordination in 2004 from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Los Angeles. He has been serving Temple Israel since that time, first as Associate Rabbi and now as its Rabbi. Rabbi Moskowitz and his wife, Ana, were both members of their synagogue in Portland, which is where they met. They have five children and seven grandchildren.

Sharon Amster Brown was born in Texas and grew up in Dallas, Chicago, and Orange County, California. She attended the University of Colorado at Boulder, where she received a degree in Communication Disorders and Speech Science. She then went on to receive a Joint Master’s degree in Jewish Education and Jewish Communal Service from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Los Angeles in 2000. While in graduate school, Sharon worked at the Westside Jewish Community Center in Los Angeles and Temple Beth Sholom of Santa Ana. She has proudly served as the Educator of Temple Israel for the past 16 years. In 2004, Sharon received the distinguished Reform Jewish Educator title. In addition to her work at the Temple, Sharon is actively involved with the Rhea Hirsch School of Education of the Hebrew Union College Alumni Association and The Association for Reform Jewish Educators. Sharon and her husband, Adam, live in Long Beach and are the proud parents of Johanna, Brandon, Sadie, and Levi.

Cantor Sara Hass grew up in the Los Angeles area, where she was involved in the Jewish community there from a very early age. In May 2015, she received her ordination from the Hebrew Union College- Jewish Institute of Religion in New York City. After graduating from the University of Miami with a degree in Music Business, Cantor Hass spent a year in New York City pursuing musical theater. She then moved back to Los Angeles and made the decision to pursue the Cantorate. There she worked for the Professional Leaders Project – a small Jewish non-profit catering to young adults in their 20's and 30’s, as well as for the Jewish Federation of Los Angeles in the legal and entertainment divisions. Growing up, she spent fourteen summers at Camp Newman/Swig, and it was there she discovered her love for Jewish music. Cantor Hass has also worked as a song leader and tefillah coordinator at several URJ Camps, including URJ Jacobs Camp, URJ Eisner Camp, as well as Camp Newman. Temple Israel is Cantor Hass’ first position since receiving her ordination. Previously, she has served as cantorial intern at Temple Beth David in Cheshire, CT, Temple Rodef Shalom in Falls Church, VA, Congregation Shma Koleinu in Houston, TX, and Beth El Temple Center in Belmont, MA.
BECOME A JOYS OF JEWISH LEARNING PATRON

Temple Israel’s Joys of Jewish Learning Program is a self-sustaining one, seeking to bring top quality teachers, speakers, and programs to Temple Israel. We therefore invite you to please consider becoming a Joys of Jewish Learning Patron of that ongoing tradition. With your generous support, we will be able to continue to offer our many unique programs and grow our adult education program for many years to come.

The cost of JJL patronage is $180 per person or couple. After reading through this catalog of Joys of Jewish Learning offerings for the coming year, we hope that you will see the value in supporting adult education at Temple Israel. Gifts and sponsorships for any particular event are also gladly accepted, as are contributions to our various adult education special funds.

Patrons will be invited to a special Joys of Jewish Learning Patrons reception in advance of our Temple Israel Reads One Book program on Sunday, May 15th at 3:00pm with author Gina Nahai.

We thank you, in advance, for your generosity and support. Please contact Temple Educator, Sharon Amster Brown, for more information. In order to become a Joys of Jewish Learning Patron, please contact the Temple Israel Office (562) 434-0996 and/or watch your mail for information this fall.

With special thanks to our Joys of Jewish Learning Committee

Barry Mitnick – Chairperson
Deborah Lewis– VP of Education
Sharon Amster Brown – Educator, R.J.E.

Jay Alhadeff
Linda Calderón
Gayle Chapin
Lidia Fahlk
Karen Fried
Roberta Friedman
Carol Greenberg
Joan Leb
Dave Leib
Natalie Swit

We are always looking for new ideas and creative perspectives on our Joys of Jewish Learning Program at Temple Israel. If you’re interested in getting involved, please feel free to contact us at any point during the year.