

Temple Israel's  
**Joys of Jewish Learning**  
adult education opportunities

Fall 2021-2022 / 5782

# HOMECOMING

a year of learning together



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## To Our Temple Israel Community and Beyond,

We are thrilled to share with you the first Joys of Jewish Learning Program catalog for the 5782 academic year. We invite you to read through the pages and hope that you find something that piques your interest during the fall months ahead.

This year's Joys of Jewish Learning program focuses on the theme of Homecoming. After a year of unprecedented physical separation from one another and our holy synagogue building, we are excited to explore the concept of home within the Jewish tradition and begin to return to our house of prayer and gathering. Whether it be text study, field trips, literature or film discussions, current events and community-interest programming, cooking, theater, or lectures, we look forward to reconnecting with learners over the coming months.

Still committed to creating the safest environment possible, we plan to provide both in-person and virtual opportunities throughout the coming year. Our congregational community is a very special one, and together, we reaffirm our commitment to lifelong learning and Jewish tradition, even during these continued unique times. If you are a long-time supporter of our Joys of Jewish Learning program, I thank you for your ongoing participation and commitment to learning. If you are new to our congregation or adult Jewish learning, I welcome you and hope that your Jewish journey is filled with meaning and happiness.

May your Jewish learning engage your heart, mind, and soul. May your involvement in this community of learners bring you joy and a sense of comfort and home.

L'Shalom,



Sharon Amster Brown

Director of Education and Congregational Engagement



Front Cover artwork by Amanda Berman



Photo by Scott Smeltzer

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**PLEASE RSVP FOR ALL PROGRAMS TO CHARMINE CLW@TILB.ORG**



## TORAH STUDY

**Saturdays at 8:45 am**  
**(In person and Zoom)**  
 Facilitator: Rabbi Scott Fox

Each time we study Torah, we find something new in its verses...and in ourselves. Join Rabbi Fox in our engaging Torah study. Each week, an enthusiastic group examines the *parashat hashavuah* (weekly Torah portion) and discusses its meaning and relevance using 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!

## SOCIAL JUSTICE BOOK GROUP

**Every Other Wednesday at 11:00 am (Zoom Only)**  
 Facilitator: Jared Goldin

The Social Justice Book Group began in 2020 with a presentation by a local African American minister in response to the Black Lives Matter movement and the explosion of related (including Jewish and Latinx) social/legal justice activities and literature, much of it focused on presenting a more objective and fact-based American history. The Group selects, reads (in increments) and discusses books about these events, with a focus (similar to how many reform Jewish scholars study Torah) on how the issues confronted by these books impact us and what responsibility we might have (and how) to address them in our own lives.

## NEW TESTAMENT STUDY FROM A JEWISH POINT OF VIEW

**Mondays at 9:45 am (Zoom Only)**  
**Beginning October 11**  
 Facilitator: Jo Ann Schneider Farris

Jews and Christians read the same stories differently. Explore and discuss the New Testament from a Jewish perspective and learn more about the Jewish roots of Christianity.

**Zoom Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82285979629>

## MUSSAR STUDY GROUP

**Every Other Wednesday at 9:45 am (Zoom Only)**  
 Facilitator: Trish Goldin

Mussar is a system of introspective practices that can help you identify and break through the obstacles to your inherent holiness, using methods that are easy to integrate into daily life. The program laid out in the book *Everyday Holiness: The Jewish Spiritual Path of Mussar* by Alan Morinis focuses on 26 traits (middot) - such as loving-kindness, strength, generosity, compassion, honor, and equanimity - each of which takes center stage for a week of contemplation and exercises, in order to develop and refine that quality in yourself. Our study group meets every other Wednesday morning to work on one or more Mussar soul traits. Come join us!

**Zoom Link:** <https://www.rabbishefagold.com/love-and-truth/>



## TANAKH STUDY GROUP

**Thursdays at 10:15 am (Zoom Only)**  
 Facilitator: Martine Korach

This dedicated group of learners has studied the Tanach for many years and is currently focusing on the Book of Isaiah. Anyone is invited to join the group at any time. The only requirement for the class is curiosity and a willingness to learn.

**Zoom Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86029516690>



## HOME COOKING AND CROWD PLEASERS: *Cinnamon Creme Cake and Cheddar Biscuits*

**Tuesday, October 5 at 7:00 pm**  
**at Justin Rudd's Home (address given upon RSVP)**

Teacher: Justin Rudd

In this delicious session, Justin will demonstrate baking cinnamon creme cake and cheddar biscuits. Maybe you've delighted in the cinnamon creme cake at Corner Bakery. This is a very similar cake and is so good warmed up for breakfast or with afternoon tea. He'll show some tips and a secret ingredient that makes this cake soft and extra special. Finally, participants will learn the art of making cheddar biscuits. These biscuits are a quick, very tasty treat to compliment your favorite dinners. Bring a bottle of wine to share, if you'd like!

**Cost: \$10 per person (Limit 12 people)**



## RABBI LEE BYCEL

**Nationally acclaimed scholar, author, and activist**

**Lapid Shapiro Scholar-in-Residence**

***Refugees In America***

**Friday, October 8 - Sunday, October 10**

### **Friday Night Shabbat Services followed by Presentation**

Refugees in America: Stories of Courage, Resilience, and Hope

Lee will discuss with us the stories of refugees in his book and the issues that are most pressing for them and for us. (in-person and Livestream)

### **Saturday, October 9 at 8:30 am Morning Torah Study:**

Bringing the Text to Life: Its Meaning for Us Today

Join Lee for his interactive Torah Study. (in-person and Zoom)

No knowledge needed, just a willingness to listen, engage and learn.

### **Saturday, October 9 at 7:00 pm Havdalah Study Session**

Surviving the Unimaginable: Insights from Refugees

Join us for Havdalah, followed by meaningful discussion and impactful insights from Lee's many conversations with refugees from around the world. (Zoom Only)

**Zoom Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83186919686>

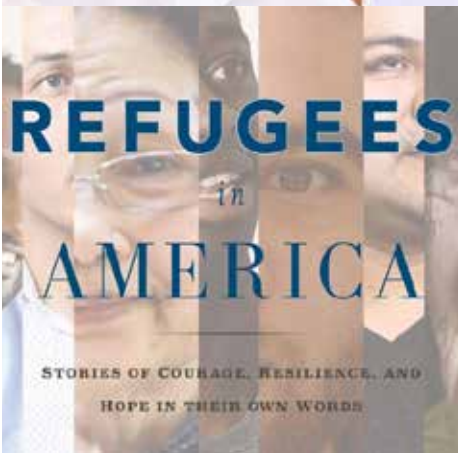
### **Sunday, October 10 at 10:00 am (RSVP for Location)**

#### **Study Session and Discussion with Rabbi Lee Bycel**

Lessons about Life:

What Can We Learn from the Refugee Experience

Although most of us have not experienced the journey of the refugee, we still go through many of the same challenges in our lives: loss, adjusting to new conditions, going through difficult times and finding the anchor that allows us to continue to embrace life. This theme and many others will be explored. (in-person only)



*Generously sponsored by the Temple Israel Foundation's Lapid Shapiro Fund*



## BEGINNING HEBREW

**Tuesdays at 7:00 pm (in person only)**

**October 12, 19, 26, November 2, 9, 16, 23, 30,  
and December 7 and 14**

Teacher: Janet Liss, Temple Israel congregant and long-time Hebrew instructor

Have you ever wanted to learn the Alef Bet but thought that you just could not do it? It was too hard. You are not good at languages. You do not want to embarrass yourself. Well, now's the time to put all those false beliefs to bed. This 10-week Beginning Hebrew class is painless and fun and by the 10th week of study, you will be reading Hebrew! We guarantee it. Come join other adults who, just like you, want to read Hebrew too. This is not your father's or mother's Hebrew class!

**Cost: \$100, plus the cost of textbook**



## NARRATIVES OF RECONCILIATION AND RECONNECTION IN GENESIS

**Thursdays at 12:00 pm (Zoom Only)**

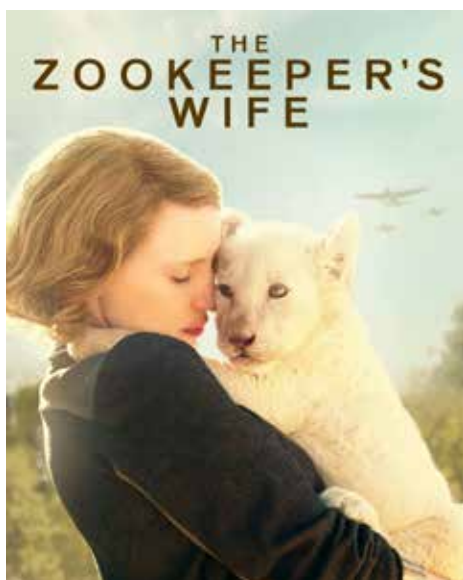
**October 14, 21, and 28**

Teacher: Rabbi Robin Foonberg

The stories in Genesis are about families and relationships. These stories provide the foundation for Jewish values and for the focus on relationships in our tradition. They are stories told thousands of years ago that remain timeless in their message for us today. Join Rabbi Robin as we explore our ancestors' stories of reconciliation, reconnection, and love.

**Zoom Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83254787164>

**Rabbi Robin Foonberg** holds a Master's Degree in Jewish Education from Spertus Institute for Jewish Studies and Rabbinic Ordination from the Academy of Jewish Religion/CA. Robin serves as Rabbi/Educator at Congregation B'nai Israel in Tustin. She also proudly serves as national Vice President for the Jewish Educators Assembly.



## MOVIE DISCUSSION: THE ZOOKEEPER'S WIFE

**Saturday, October 23 at 7:00 pm (Zoom Only)**

Facilitator: Linda Keiles, Temple Israel congregant and Torah Center teacher

This film tells the true story of Antonia Zabinski and her husband, Dr. Jan Zabinski. It is 1939, and the Warsaw Zoo flourishes under Jan's stewardship and Antonia's care. When their country is invaded by Nazis, the Zabinskis covertly begin working with the Resistance to rescue hundreds of Polish Jews from the Germans by hiding them.

Please watch film before discussion. Film available on Netflix.

**Zoom Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83986846863>





## TORAH CENTER PARENT'S COFFEE WITH RABBI FOX

**Sunday, NOVEMBER 14 at 11:00 am**

**(in person only on the Temple's front patio)**

Come join Rabbi Fox for coffee and conversation, and enjoy this opportunity to connect with Rabbi and meet some other parents. We'll discuss a few current events, explore some big Jewish questions, and have a little fun along the way. For current Torah Center parents only, please.



## TASTE OF JUDAISM

**Wednesdays at 7:00 pm (In person and Zoom)**

**November 3, 10 and 17**

Teacher: Rabbi Fox

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. If you have any questions about this class, please contact Rabbi Fox.

**Zoom Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85939677061>



## ISRAELI CURRENT EVENTS WITH DANNY EHRLICH

**Thursday, November 4 at 7:00 pm (In person and Zoom)**

Understanding the Israeli Political System: What does right & left mean in Israeli politics? Are we seeing the emergence of new social/political partnerships which transcend older ideological lines?

**Zoom Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85439319243>

**Danny Ehrlich** was the Founding Director of the Tehilla Aliyah movement and Director of Yeshiva University's Communal Services and of the Bnei Akiva Zionist Youth Movement. Since making aliyah, Danny has been the editor of the Amiel Publications Project and worked for the Chief Rabbinate of Israel and the Coalition for Missing Israeli Soldiers, while serving the Jewish community of Curacao, Netherlands Antilles as Cantor. As a noted Holocaust Educator, Danny leads Keshet groups in Poland and other parts of Europe. He has Master's Degrees in Community Social Work and Jewish History. As a licensed Tour Guide and pioneer in Jewish-Christian relations, Danny has served as Israel Tour Educator for a wide variety of Jewish and Christian groups, and he appears as guest speaker and scholar in residence at churches and synagogues all over the world.





## PRAYER 101 MINI-SESSION

*Ma'ariv Aravim/Yotzeir Or*

**Friday, November 12 at 6:15 pm (In person only)**

Teacher: Cantor Cooper

Let's dive deeper into the prayers that we recite at services. We'll translate them, look at their origins, and explore why the sages felt it was important that they be included in our liturgy. Looking forward to studying them with you!



## DROP-IN ARTS AND CRAFTS CLATCH

**Wednesday, November 17 at 7:00 pm (In person only)**

Teacher: Eve Lunt, Temple Israel congregant and Torah Center Art Specialist

Calling all creatives! Come to the TILB art room for some adult arts and crafting time. There will be an organized project each month, but you are welcome to bring whatever you are working on to share your knowledge with the group. Our goal is to inspire each other in a supportive and creative way.



## HOME COOKING AND CROWD PLEASERS:

*Hanukkah Cocktail Latke Party*

*Cooking Demo and Light Dinner*

**Thursday, November 18 at 7:00 pm (in person only)**

Facilitator: Eve Lunt, Temple Israel congregant and Torah Center Art Specialist

Learn how to host a Festival of Bites in this twist on traditional potato latkes. We'll be demonstrating a variety of mini latkes with scrumptious toppings – even a dessert version! A special holiday inspired Chanuk-Kahcktail will be served.

**Cost: \$10**



## TALMUD STUDY: MAKING OURSELVES AT HOME

**Wednesdays at 7:00 pm (In person and Zoom)**

**December 8, 15, and 22**

Teacher: Rabbi Fox

Few things have captured the Jewish imagination more than the concept of home, specifically, where we find it and how. Join Rabbi Fox as we look the concept of discovering, returning, and creating home through the lens of the rabbis in the Talmud. We will learn and study Jewish stories and tell our own.

**Zoom Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84983248456>



## TORAH CENTER PARENTS' COFFEE WITH RABBI FOX

**Sunday, December 12 at 11:00 am**

**(in person only on the Temple's front patio)**

Come join Rabbi Fox for coffee and conversation, and enjoy this opportunity to connect with Rabbi and meet some other parents. We'll discuss a few current events, explore some big Jewish questions, and have a little fun along the way. For current Torah Center parents only, please.

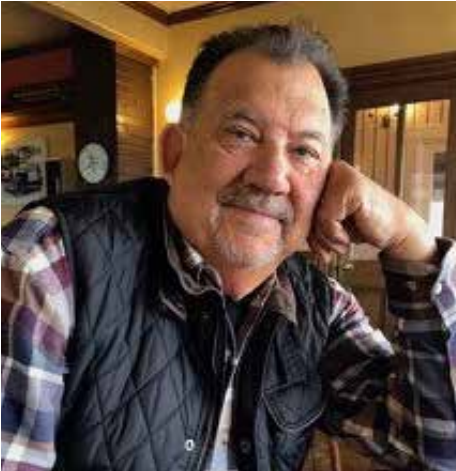


## DROP-IN ARTS AND CRAFTS CLATCH

**Wednesday, December 15 at 7:00 pm (In person only)**

Teacher: Eve Lunt, Temple Israel congregant and Torah Center Art Specialist

Calling all creatives! Come to the TILB art room for some adult arts and crafting time. There will be an organized project each month, but you are welcome to bring whatever you are working on to share your knowledge with the group. Our goal is to inspire each other in a supportive and creative way.



## SINATRA'S TAILOR: A CONVERSATION WITH AUTHOR MARK THOMPSON

Thursday, December 16 at 7:00 pm (in person and Livestream)

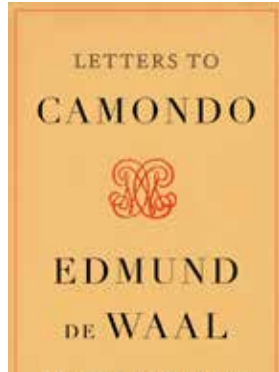
Join us for a memorable evening with Mark Thompson, active member of the congregation, who grew up at Temple Israel, and served as our interim Cantorial Soloist, and learn more about how he came to write this wonderful book and how he built a connection with Umberto Autore - the man who would ultimately become Frank Sinatra's tailor.

*Sinatra's Tailor* is the remarkable coming-of-age story of Umberto Autore, set in Italy during WWII. Orphaned at the age of four, Umberto's grandfather who can no longer care for Umberto deposits him in an orphanage run by nuns in the coastal town of Gaeta. As the Allies invade Italy, the 94th division of the German army, fearing that the enemy will attack at the Gulf of Gaeta, barrack their soldiers in the orphanage, thus leading to a quip that Umberto was "raised by nuns and Nazis." Umberto survives everything from being shot by a German soldier to beatings on the soles of his feet by the nuns. After a series of misadventures and unexpected revelations Umberto receives his training as a tailor and immigrates to the U.S. He eventually becomes the tailor to Frank Sinatra, the Rat Pack, as well as Steven Spielberg and many other Hollywood luminaries and current California sports figures. Published by Aakenbaaken & Kent, 2019. Available for purchase on Amazon in paperback, Kindle and Audible.com, as well as local booksellers. Signed copies will also be available for purchase at the event.

## WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

**Wednesdays at 7:00 pm via Zoom**

We have selected an exciting array of books for the 2021-2022 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](mailto:donna.mitnick@gmail.com).



### ***Letters to Camondo*** by Edmund de Waal **September 8**

Letters to Camondo is a collection of imaginary letters from Edmund de Waal to Moise de Camondo, the banker and art collector who created a spectacular house in Paris, now the Musée Nissim de Camondo, and filled it with the greatest private collection of French 18th-century art.



### ***The Hidden Palace: A Novel of the Golem and the Jinni*** by Helene Wecker **November 10**

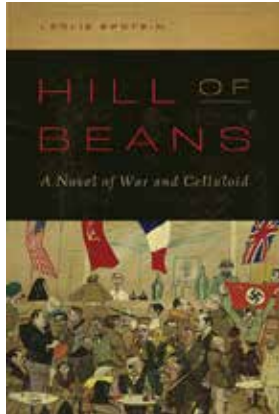
Chava is a golem, a woman made of clay, who can hear the thoughts and longings of those around her and feels compelled by her nature to help them. Ahmad is a jinni, a restless creature of fire, once free to roam the desert but now imprisoned in the shape of a man. Fearing they'll be exposed as monsters, these magical beings hide their true selves and try to pass as human - just two more immigrants in the bustling world of 1900s Manhattan. Brought together under calamitous circumstances, their lives are now entwined - but they're not yet certain of what they mean to each other.



### ***Sole of a Survivor: A Memoir*** by Nhi Aronheim **January 12**

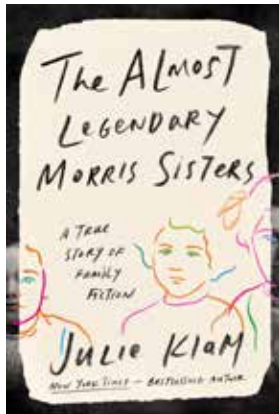
*Sole of a Survivor* isn't just another inspirational survival story. It's about the lessons Nhi learned about humanity, diversity, and unconditional love since arriving in the United States. She now has a deeper appreciation for the parallels between the Jewish and Vietnamese cultures, and others. After she met her Jewish beau, they got married. She eventually converted to Judaism, though the process was challenging for an Asian woman adopted into a Christian household. Her story shows it matters less what religion we're part of, as long as we radiate goodness to those we meet. Now she relishes being a Vietnamese Jew.





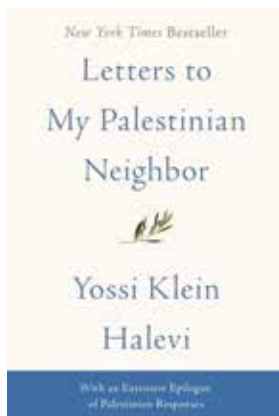
***Hill of Beans***  
by Leslie Epstein  
**March 9**

Leslie Epstein's *Hill of Beans* is the story of how one nation, one industry, and in particular one man responded to that desperate hope. That man is Jack Warner. His impossible goal is to make world events--most importantly, the invasion of North Africa by British and American forces in 1942--coincide with the release of his new film about a group of refugees marooned in Morocco. Arrayed against him are Stalin and Hitler, as well as Josef Goebbels, Franklin Roosevelt, a powerful gossip columnist, and above all a beautiful young woman with a terrible secret. His only weapons are his chutzpah and his heroism as he struggles to bring cinema and city, conflict and conference together in an epic command performance.



***The Almost Legendary Morris Sisters:***  
***A True Story of Family Fiction***  
by Julie Klam  
**May 11**

*The Almost Legendary Morris Sisters* is the revealing account of what Klam discovered about her family - and herself - as she dug into the past. The deeper she went into the lives of the Morris sisters, the slipperier their stories became. And the more questions she had about what actually happened to them, the more her opinion of them evolved. Part memoir and part confessional, and told with the wit and honesty that are hallmarks of Klam's books, *The Almost Legendary Morris Sisters* is the fascinating and funny true story of one writer's journey into her family's past, the truths she brings to light, and what she learns about herself along the way.



***Letters to My Palestinian Neighbor***  
by Yossi Klein Halevi  
**July 13**

*Letters to My Palestinian Neighbor* is one Israeli's powerful attempt to reach beyond the wall that separates Israelis and Palestinians and into the hearts of "the enemy." In a series of letters, Yossi Klein Halevi explains what motivated him to leave his native New York in his twenties and move to Israel to participate in the drama of the renewal of a Jewish homeland, which he is committed to see succeed as a morally responsible, democratic state in the Middle East.

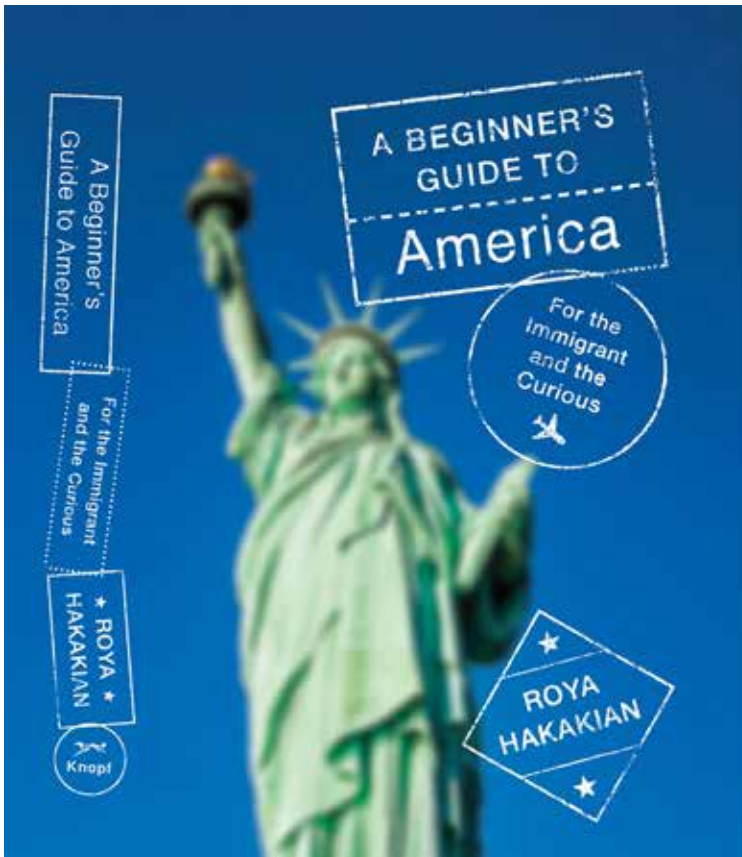
## TI READS ONE BOOK

***A Beginner's Guide To America* by Roya Hakakian**

**Saturday, May 7 at 7:00 pm (In person and Livestream)**

This perfectly timed book gives us a portrait of what the new immigrant experience in America is really like. Written as a “guide” for the newly arrived, and providing “practical information and advice,” Roya Hakakian, an immigrant herself, reveals what those who settle here love about the country, what they miss about their homes, the cruelty of some Americans, and the unceasing generosity of others. She captures the texture of life in a new place in all its complexity, laying bare both its beauty and its darkness as she discusses race, sex, love, death, consumerism, and her experience of being from a country far from friends with the United States. Her tenderly perceptive and surprisingly humorous account invites native-born Americans to see themselves as they appear to others, making it possible for them to rediscover their many American gifts through the perspective of the outsider. In shattering myths and embracing painful contradictions that are unique to this place, *A Beginner's Guide to America* is Hakakian's candid love letter to America.

Author will be here in person. *Copies of book for sale at the Temple.*





## BECOME A PATRON OF OUR JOYS OF JEWISH LEARNING PROGRAM

Temple Israel's Joys of Jewish Learning Program is self-sustaining, 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 our 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.

After reading through this Joys of Jewish Learning catalog, we hope 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 recognized throughout the year.

We thank you, in advance, for your generosity and support. Please contact our Director of Education and Congregational Engagement, 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.



*Thank you to Temple Israel's graphic designer, Michelle Techau,  
for her beautiful work on this catalog.*

### ***With special thanks to our Joys of Jewish Learning Committee***

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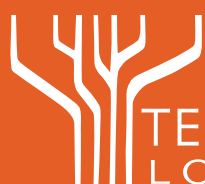
Barry Mitnick

Susan Philips

Heather Raphael

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.



TEMPLE ISRAEL  
LONG BEACH

Temple Israel | 269 Loma Avenue Long Beach, CA 90803 | 562.434.0996 | [www.tilb.org](http://www.tilb.org)