



Temple Israel's
Joys of Jewish Learning
adult education opportunities

Winter 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 second 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 winter 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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pages 1-4 January

- Torah Study
- New Testament Study from a Jewish Point of View
- Mussar Study Group
- Social Justice Book Group
- Tanakh Study Group
- Creating Prayer, Song, and Sacred Space
- Introduction to Judaism
- Demography and Diversity: Who are the Jews of 2022?
- Israeli Current Events
- Drop-In Arts and Crafts Clatch
- Intermediate Hebrew
- Coming Home: A Educational Concert and Havdalah

Pages 5-6 February

- Home Cooking and Crowd Pleasers: Soft Pretzels and Cinnamon Rolls
- Changing Faces and Spaces of Antisemitism in the 21st Century
- The Braid (Formally Jewish Women's Theater) Production of Chutzpah and Salsa
- Moses: Provocations from a Disabled Prophet
- Drop-In Arts & Crafts Clatch

Page 7-8 March

- TC Parents' Coffee
- Prayer 101 Mini Session
- The Organ and Music of the Reform Movement
- Israel: The Home of the Jewish People
- Home Cooking and Crowd Pleasers: Passover Favorites
- Israeli Current Events

Page 8-9 Women's Book Club

Page 9 TI Reads One Book

Page 10 JJJ Patrons and Committee Information

PLEASE RSVP FOR ALL PROGRAMS TO CHARMAINE 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)

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 Tanakh 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>



CREATING PRAYER, SONG, AND SACRED SPACE

**Tuesdays at 7:00 pm (in person only)
March 8, 15 and 22**

Teachers: Linda Keiles and Bill Shafton

Join Linda Keiles and Bill Shafton, as we take an innovative dive into the liturgy, using it as inspiration to create our own prayers, music, and ultimately, our own Shabbat service on January 28th. In our three sessions, we'll use different forms of expression (including personal essays, poetry, song, and more) to explore the blessings of our heritage and create our own expression of prayer and Torah. No experience necessary; each one of us has something meaningful to say.



INTRODUCTION TO JUDAISM WITH RABBI FOX

**Wednesdays at 7:00 pm (in person and Zoom)
January 12 - May 4**

We invite you to join with learners of all backgrounds in our Introduction to Judaism course. The course will cover a broad cross-section of topics related to Judaism in a discussion-based format with experts in the field. This class is ideal for anyone looking to explore Judaism for the very first time, seeking conversion, or for folks who would like to fill in pockets of knowledge in a tradition that takes a lifetime to learn. Everyone is welcome. We look forward to your joining us.

Cost: \$200 plus the cost of text books





DEMOGRAPHY AND DIVERSITY: WHO ARE THE JEWS OF 2022?

Thursday, January 13 at 7:00 pm (Zoom Only)

Teacher: Professor Ari Kelman

The 2021 Pew Center’s survey of American Jews offers a snapshot of American Jewish life as we enter the third decade of the 21st century. Who are America’s Jews and how do we count them? What do they say they do and what do they say they believe? How do they understand their connections to Jewish community and tradition? What experiences do they share and where can we see divergences within American Jewish life? Join Professor Ari Y. Kelman, who served on the survey’s advisory committee, for a wide-ranging discussion about what we know - and what we don’t yet know -- about American Jews in 2022.

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87818524124>

Ari Y. Kelman is the inaugural holder of the Jim Joseph Professorship in Education and Jewish Studies, in the Stanford Graduate School of Education, where he is the director of the Concentration in Education and Jewish Studies and serves as the Director of the BJPA @ Stanford. He is the author of a few books about American Jewish life and culture and the author of a number of reports about American Jews, exploring issues like antisemitism and race. His research explores the forms and practices of religious transmission, and it has taken him to church, to Krakow, Poland, to many b’nai mitzvah, and deep into the archives of religious music of the early 1970s.



ISRAELI CURRENT EVENTS WITH DANNY EHRLICH

Wednesday, January 19 at 9:30 am (Zoom Only)

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/82041414315>

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 Curacaoa, 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.

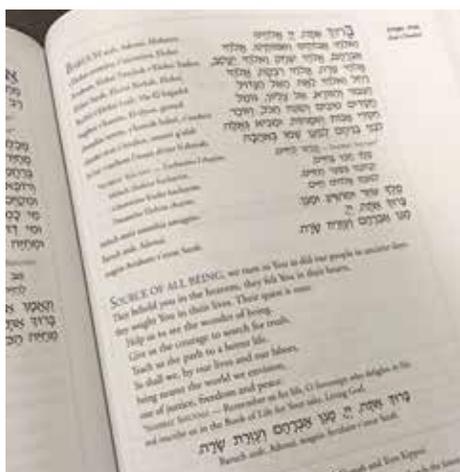


DROP-IN ARTS AND CRAFTS CLATCH

Wednesday, January 19 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.



INTERMEDIATE HEBREW

Wednesdays 7:00 pm (in person only)

January 19, 26, February 2, 9, 16, 23

Teacher: Janet Liss

This six-week class is for people who want to learn in a fun and encouraging environment some basic blessings that we use often, as well as a standard prayer recited at every service. Prayers will depend on who enrolls in the class and interest level for specific prayers. We will look at the meaning of the prayers, as well as learning the Hebrew.

Cost: \$80, including learning materials



COMING HOME: AN EDUCATIONAL CONCERT AND HAVDALAH WITH CANTOR COOPER

Saturday, January 29 at 7:00 pm

(In person and Livestream)

In this educational concert, we will explore songs about coming home, coming together, and ways in which we can make the world, our home, a better place. It will feature songs based on our sacred texts. Join me as we explore melodies, both old and new, together.



**HOME COOKING AND CROWD PLEASERS:
*Soft Pretzels and Cinnamon Rolls***

**Tuesday, April 5 at 7:00 pm (In person)
at home of Justin Rudd (address upon RSVP)**
Teacher: Justin Rudd

In this delicious session, Justin will take participants through the steps of soft, gooey cinnamon rolls with a cream cheese frosting (like at Cinnabon!), and soft pretzels (like at Wetzel's!). Don't miss this very tasty and sweet evening in the kitchen! Bring a bottle of wine to share, if you'd like!



**CHANGING FACES AND SPACES OF
ANTISEMITISM IN THE 21ST CENTURY**

**Thursdays at 7:00 pm (In person only)
February 3 and 10**
Teacher: Zachary Benjamin, CEO Jewish Long Beach

The ability to persevere against existential threats is a characteristic that has defined the Jewish people for millennia. However, the face of contemporary antisemitism is rapidly evolving. The garish, cartoonish, and obvious expressions of traditional antisemitism are giving way to the subtle, subversive, persuasive, and deeply dangerous tactics of a new brand of anti-Jewish hate. Online spaces, college campuses, and other environments are teeming with increasingly well-organized and well-funded anti-Semitic movements, cloaked in the rhetoric of politics, populism, and human rights, that are compelling young Jewish people to abandon both their Zionist principles and their Jewish identities as a perceived condition of joining other meaningful social efforts. Learn about contemporary sources of anti-Semitic intimidation, where it thrives, its goals, how to identify it, and how we as engaged Jewish community members must equip ourselves and our children with the necessary tools to both stand up to and educate others against new strains of this age-old scourge.



**CHUTZPAH & SALSA:
*A Live Theatrical Performance by The Braid
(formerly Jewish Women's Theater)***

Sunday, February 6 at 2:00 pm (In person only)
in partnership with Temple Israel Sisterhood

The immigrant story you don't know and won't see anywhere else! Stories, poems, and songs written by Latin Jews reveal funny, poignant, and pivotal moments in their lives. One 14-year-old girl learns the lesson of social justice when her actions help a close family member "surface" in Argentina after she has "disappeared" during the Dirty War. A Sephardic Jewish woman from Mexico City can't understand why she's such an oddity in a small town in Oregon. A convert from Cuba is moved when members of her shul help to arrange a Catholic funeral for her beloved mother. These and other stories will move you and make you laugh. A winner for all!



MOSES: PROVOCATIONS FROM A DISABLED PROPHET?

Saturday, February 12 at 8:45 am (In Person and Zoom)

Teacher: Rabbi Julia Watts Belser

When God sends Moses to lead the Israelites out of slavery, the prophet famously says no. Why? Moses describes himself as “slow of speech and slow of tongue”—in other words, a stutterer. While some commentators consider Moses’ stutter as “a challenge to overcome,” this session sets Moses’ story into conversation with the life experiences and activism of contemporary disability communities. We’ll grapple with spiritual and political questions about access and equity, invisibility and silence, as well as state violence and shame—and explore the power of spiritual leadership that centers disability wisdom.

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85839852510>

Rabbi Julia Watts Belser (she/her) is a scholar, activist, and spiritual teacher. She is an associate professor of Jewish Studies at Georgetown University and core faculty in Georgetown’s Disability Studies program, where she brings Jewish texts into conversation with queer, disability, and feminist ethics. She is the author of two scholarly books, *Rabbinic Tales of Destruction: Gender, Sex, and Disability in the Ruins of Jerusalem* (Oxford University Press, 2018) and *Power, Ethics, and Ecology in Jewish Late Antiquity: Rabbinic Responses to Drought and Disaster* (Cambridge University Press, 2015). A passionate advocate for disability and gender justice, she co-authored the Health Handbook for Women with Disabilities, developed in collaboration with disability activists from 42 countries, to help challenge the root causes of poverty, gender violence, and disability discrimination. She currently directs a project on disability, climate change, and environmental justice – and when she’s not teaching or writing, she’s a passionate wheelchair hiker.



DROP-IN ARTS AND CRAFTS CLATCH

Wednesday, February 16 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.



TORAH CENTER PARENTS' COFFEE WITH RABBI FOX

Sunday, March 6 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.



PRAYER 101 MINI-SESSION WITH CANTOR COOPER

Ahavat Olam/Ahavah Rabbah

Friday, March 11 at 6:15 pm (In person and Zoom)
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!

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84013136372>



THE ORGAN AND MUSIC OF THE REFORM MOMENT

Sunday, March 13 at 2:00 pm (In person and Livestream)
With Organist David York and Cantor Emeritus Marvin Finnley

Did you know that Temple Israel has a pipe organ? While some associate the sound of the organ with the church, the organ was the principal instrument of accompaniment for Shabbat worship in the Reform movement from the mid-19th century until recent times. Join Cantor Emeritus Marvin Finnley and Organist David York for a look at the history of the use of the organ in the Reform movement, concluding with a tour of the organ loft at Temple Israel.



ISRAEL: THE HOMELAND OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE

Thursdays at 7:00 pm (Zoom only)

March 24, 31 and April 7

Teacher: Rabbi Michal Loving

The Reform Jewish movement's relationship to Israel is complicated. What is the role and meaning of the land of Israel to Jews and Judaism throughout history and today? What factors drove the modern Zionist movement and the desire for a Jewish homeland in the Land of Israel? And how do we reconcile the difficulty of modern politics with this historical yearning? No Hebrew required.

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84906976188>



HOME COOKING AND CROWD PLEASERS: *Passover Favorites*

Sunday, March 27 at 10:00am (In person only)

Teacher: Amy Lipeles

In this class, we will be cooking a chicken dish which is good for a crowd or just a few, as well as delicious Passover brownies that you can make for yourself or share with others. It's a hands on class so bring your aprons!

Cost \$10



ISRAELI CURRENT EVENTS WITH DANNY EHRLICH

Wednesday, March 30 at 9:30 am (Zoom Only)

Israel as the Nation State of the Jewish People: Part 1. What does being "Jewish" mean in Israel? Is there a tension between Jewish national and religious identities? How relevant are terms like Orthodox, Conservative, Reform and Secular?

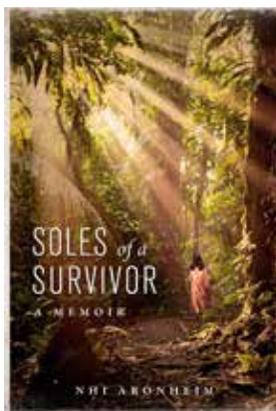
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Danny Ehrlich was the Founding Director of the Tehilla Aliyah movement and Director of Yeshiva University's Communal Services and of the Bnei Akiva Zionist Youth Movement. Since making aliyah, Danny has been the editor of the Amiel Publications Project and worked for the Chief Rabbinate of Israel and the Coalition for Missing Israeli Soldiers, while serving the Jewish community of Curacaoa, 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.

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.

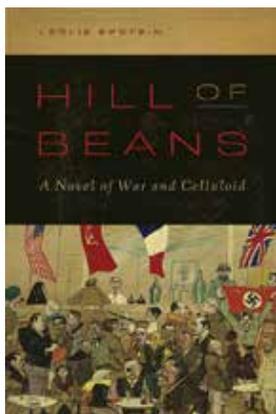
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***Soles of a Survivor: A Memoir***

by Nhi Aronheim

January 12

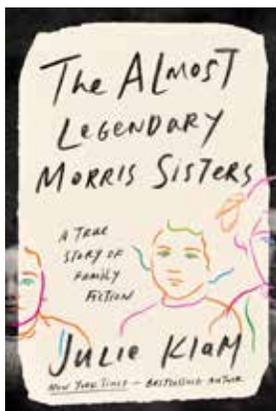
Soles of a Survivor isn't just another inspirational survival story. It's about the lessons Nhi learned about humanity, diversity, and unconditional love since arriving in the United States. She now has a deeper appreciation for the parallels between the Jewish and Vietnamese cultures, and others. After 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.

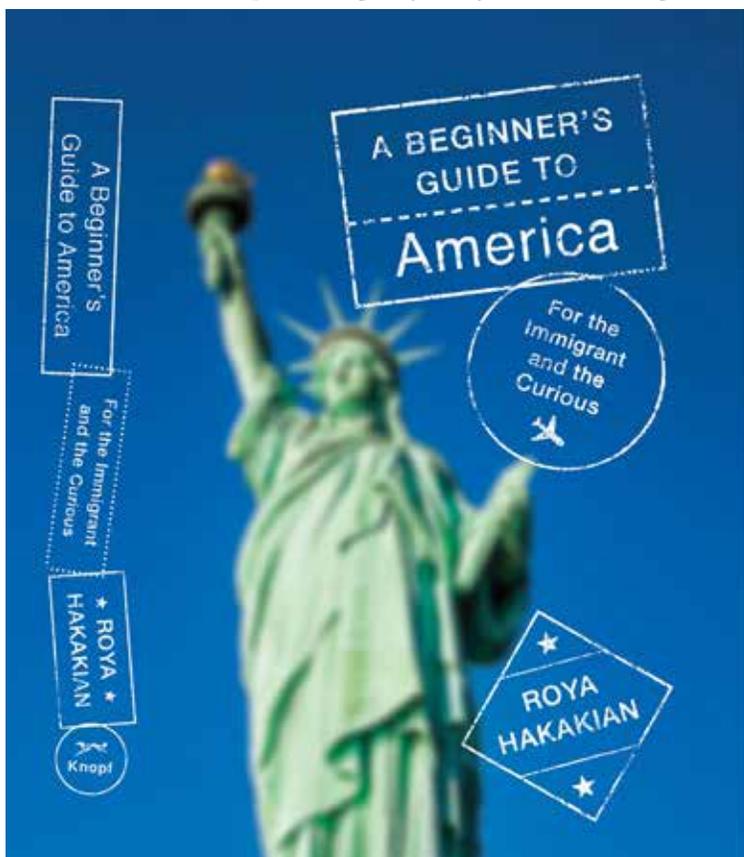
TI READS ONE BOOK

***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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Chairperson

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Tila Carrol

Kim DeCelles

Deborah Fabricant

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Judith Hardaker

David Leib

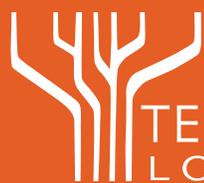
Barry Mitnick

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

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