

ANNUAL PROGRAM

5783 (2022-2023)

CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL
קהילת בית ישראל





Services

Shacharit: Morning Service

Monday-Friday // 6:45am

Sunday and Legal holidays // 9am

Mincha/Ma'ariv: Evening Service

Sunday-Thursday // 15 minutes prior to *plag ha'mincha*
when clocks change, 15 minutes prior to sunset (*shkiah*)

Shabbat Services

Friday Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat

Spring and Summer // 7pm

Fall and Winter // at candle lighting time

Shabbat Main Service

9am

Shabbat Mincha, Learning, and Ma'ariv

20 minutes prior to sunset (*shkiah*)



Weekly Classes

Topics in Talmud: Baba Kamma, Perek HaChovel

Tuesdays // 12:00pm

Rabbanit Meira Wolkenfeld

The eighth chapter of tractate Baba Kamma deals with compensation for personal injury. It begins with a discourse on the verse “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth” which the rabbis of the Talmud interpret as referring to the requirement of monetary compensation. They struggle with whether their interpretations of the verse are convincing, providing a model for thinking about difficult biblical passages. The chapter deals with topics relevant to creating a just society in the modern world, including retributive versus restorative justice, and how to conceptualize and calculate compensation for shame.

Talmudic Wisdom: Tractate Sotah

Fridays // 9:00am

Rabbi Yonatan Cohen

Tractate Sotah primarily explains the ritual of the bitter water, a trial by ordeal of a woman suspected of adultery by providing close Halakhic readings of biblical verses. Rich in Aggadic references, Sotah also includes material relating to central biblical figures and events. Time and time again, talmudic discussions offer a lens into the rabbis’ views on religious, moral, and theological questions, delving into major themes, such as the futility of sinning in secret, the harmfulness of pride, the evil of flattery, divine retribution, and the superiority of the service of God from love over the service from fear. What starts as an analysis of marital infidelity ultimately turns into a profound reflection on Israel’s own infidelity and the state of deterioration into which the Jewish people sank in the period immediately before and after the fall of the Temple.

Adult Education Series

Abortion and Halachah

Thursdays // November 3, 10, and 17 // 12:00pm on CBI Zoom



Foundational Halachic Sources on Abortion **November 3 // 12:00pm**

Rabbanit Leah Sarna

Rabbanit Leah Sarna is faculty and the Director of Teen Programs at Drisha. She previously served as Director of Religious Engagement at Anshe Sholom B'nai Israel Congregation in Chicago. She was ordained at Yeshivat Maharat, and holds a BA from Yale. She has been awarded the Pomegranate Prize in Jewish Education by the Covenant Foundation and was a Wexner Graduate Fellow. Rabbanit Sarna's published works have appeared in *The Atlantic*, *The Washington Post*, *Lehrhaus*, and *The Jewish Review of Books*.



Reporting on Abortions in the Orthodox Community

November 10 // 12:00pm

*A Conversation with Journalist
Avital Chizhik-Goldschmidt and
Rabbanit Meira Wolkenfeld*

Avital Chizhik-Goldschmidt is a writer whose work has appeared in *The Atlantic*, *The New York Times*, and elsewhere. Her 2018 article "My Dark Secret," which appeared in *The Forward*, shared the stories of Orthodox women who have undergone abortions.



Abortion in Modern Responsa: Rav Moshe and the Tzitz Eliezer

November 17 // 12:00pm

Rabbi Jeffrey Fox

Rabbi Jeffrey S. Fox is Rosh HaYeshiva and Dean of Faculty at Yeshivat Maharat. He was the first graduate of Yeshivat Chovevei Torah. Upon graduation he served as the Rabbi of Kehilat Keshet: The Community

Synagogue of Tenafly and Englewood. Rabbi Fox is a Senior Rabbinic Fellow of the Shalom Hartman Institute and has also been a member of the faculty of the Drisha Institute, the Florence Melton Adult Education School, and Hadar.

Disability and Community

February 2, 8, 16, and 23 // 12pm on CBI Zoom

During February, join us for Jewish Disability Awareness, Acceptance, and Inclusion Month.



May A Blind Person Read the Torah in Braille for the Congregation?

February 2 // 12:00pm

Rabbanit Aliza Sperling

It used to be that blind people could not read Torah for the congregation since the Torah needs to be read, and a blind person's only option was to recite from memory. Now that Hebrew Braille has been developed, can a

blind person fulfill the congregation's obligation of *keriat haTorah* (communal public reading of the Torah) through reading from a Braille chumash?

Aliza Sperling teaches Talmud at the Maharat – Yeshivat Chovevei Torah Beit Midrash Program and directs Maharat's Halakha in Action initiative. She is also the director of HerTorah, an innovative women's Torah study and community program in Washington DC. Aliza received semicha from Yeshivat Maharat and a JD from NYU Law School. Inspired by her daughter Batya, who is blind, Aliza is passionate about including Jews with disabilities in Jewish communal, educational, and ritual life.



Disability and the Politics of Healing

Wednesday February 8 // 12:00pm

Dr. Rabbi Julia Watts Belser

The lame shall leap and the mute shall sing? In a famous passage from the Hebrew Bible, the prophet Isaiah imagines the world to come as a world where human bodies are transformed. But what are the social and political implications of these images of

heavenly healing, and how do they resonate with contemporary calls for disability pride and disability justice? In this talk, we'll bring ancient Jewish sources into conversation with contemporary voices from disability communities—and grapple together with questions of disability, difference, and the politics of healing.

Dr. Rabbi Julia Watts Belser is Professor of Jewish Studies in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at Georgetown University, as well as core faculty in Georgetown's Disability Studies Program. She is also a longtime advocate for disability and gender justice. When she's not teaching or writing, she's a passionate wheelchair hiker and a lover of wild places.



Coping Mechanisms for Depression in a Halachic Context

February 16 // 12:00pm

Rabbi Yoni Rosensweig

Rav Yoni Rosensweig is a community rabbi in Beit Shemesh, founder of Maaglei Nefesh, and author of *Nafshi Beshe'elati* which deals with questions of Halacha and mental health.



May a Megillah be Written in English? A Story of Tradition, Innovation and Access

February 23 // 12:00pm

*Rabbanit Devorah Zlochower
and Netanel Linzer*



In this conversation between mother and son, we will describe the process by which we had an English language megillah written. Rabbanit Devorah will discuss the halakhic sources and her side of the story of the commissioning of the megillah. Netanel Linzer will discuss his experiences listening to the megillah read in the original and reading an English megillah for himself.

Rabbanit Devorah Zlochower has been a Talmud and halacha educator for 30 years.

She served as Rosh Beit Midrash at Drisha, a faculty member at SAR High School, Hadar, and YCT Rabbinical School, as well as Rosh Yeshiva and Rosh Kollel at Yeshivat Maharat. She has lectured and written on Orthodox feminism, but her real passion is her advocacy work on full membership in our communal institutions for Jews with disabilities.

Netanel Linzer graduated from Adelphi University in May 2022 and is currently pursuing Latin and Greek studies at Brooklyn College. Netanel attended the Aaron School from elementary through high school. He lives in Riverdale.

Climate Change

October 29, December 3, January 28, February 25, and March 25

Join us for a year-long speaker series on the critical realities of climate change. We will explore climate change as Jews, local community members, and global citizens, hoping to learn more, gain inspiration, and come away with concrete tools to incorporate into our lives. Join us on Shabbat afternoons as we hear from scholars and community members Naama Sadan, Adam Berman, Rabbi Ariel Mayse, and Dr. Joel Gerwein.

Shabbat Scholars -in-Residence



Rabbi Yair Silverman

November 11-12

Rabbi Yair Silverman is co-founder and Rabbi of Moed in Zichron Yaakov, Israel. Moed brings together secular and religious Israelis in the Carmel region in study and social action to reimagine and generate passionate and shared Jewish life in modern Israel. He also serves as a judge

on the Rabbinic court of *Giyur K'halacha* for conversions. R. Yair is an active member of the Rabbinic organizations Beit Hillel, Tzohar, International Rabbinic Fellowship, and Rabbinical Council of America, and serves on the Rabbinic Advisory Board of Yeshivat Chovevei Torah. Before making aliyah in 2006, R. Yair served as the Rabbi of Congregation Beth Israel. R. Yair is ordained by Rabbainu Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary of Yeshiva University, studied at Yeshivat Birkat Moshe, and served in a combat unit of the IDF. He holds an M.A. in Jewish Philosophy and B.A. in Western Thought from Yeshiva University. R. Yair is looking forward to spending time with friends new and old in the CBI community.



Dr. Malka Simkovich

December 9-10

Dr. Malka Z. Simkovich is the Crown-Ryan Chair of Jewish Studies and the director of the Catholic-Jewish Studies program at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. She is the author of *The Making of Jewish Universalism: From Exile to Alexandria* (2016), and *Discovering Second Temple*

Literature: The Scriptures and Stories That Shaped Early Judaism (2018), which received the 2019 AJL Judaica Reference Honor Award. Simkovich's articles have been published in academic journals such as the *Harvard Theological Review* and the *Journal for the Study of Judaism*, and in mainstream publications such as *The Jewish Review of Books* and *The Christian Century*. She is involved in numerous interreligious dialogue projects which help to increase understanding and friendship between Christians and Jews. Dr. Simkovich joins us before Chanukah to share her expertise in the history of the Hasmonean Period and the earliest extant sources about the holiday of Chanukah.



Dr. Michal Raucher

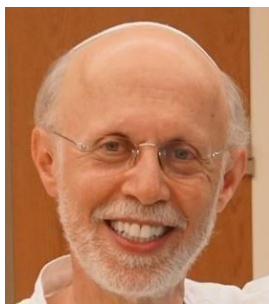
February 17

Dr. Michal Raucher is an associate professor of Jewish Studies at Rutgers University. Her research lies at the intersection of the anthropology of women in Judaism, reproductive ethics, and religious authority.

Michal has a background in religion, gender studies, anthropology, and bioethics.

As a Fulbright Fellow, Dr. Raucher conducted research on the reproductive ethics of Haredi (ultra-Orthodox) Jewish women in Israel. Her first book, which is based on this research, was published by Indiana University Press in 2020. It is titled, *Conceiving Agency: Reproductive Authority among Haredi Women*.

Dr. Raucher's second book, titled *The New Rabbis*, is based on five years of research with women who have been ordained as Orthodox rabbis in America. Research for this book has been supported by the Israel Institute, the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute, the American Academy of Religion, and the University of Cincinnati. Michal has also published on Jewish pronatalism, the study of Orthodox Judaism, sexuality and gender in Judaism, religion and bioethics, abortion legislation in Israel, and female religious advisors on the Internet. Michal will speak on the topic of "Books and Babies: Reproductive Literacy among Haredi Women in Jerusalem."



Musical Shabbat with

Dr. Elli Kranzler

March 10-11

Dr. Elli Kranzler is a practicing psychiatrist in New York and former faculty at Columbia University School of Medicine. He is also the *Shliach Tzibbur* (communal prayer leader) at the Hebrew Institute of Riverdale.

Elli has recorded albums with *Dveykus* and *Journeys* and, with his daughter Ravital, the recording *Ki Ata Imadi - Because You Are With Me*. He has performed and been a scholar in residence in communities throughout the United States and beyond. He joins us for a Shabbat of singing and inspiration.



Rabbanit Sara Wolkenfeld

April 28-29

Rabbanit Sara Tillinger Wolkenfeld is the Chief Learning Officer at Sefaria, an online database and interface for Jewish texts. Sara is also a fellow at the David Hartman Center at the Hartman Institute of North America, and is a member of Class Six of the Wexner Field Fellowship.

Her previous experience includes serving as Director of Education at the Center for Jewish Life - Hillel at Princeton University as part of the OU's Jewish Learning Initiative on Campus and serving on faculty at the Drisha Institute for Jewish Education. She writes about Jewish texts and Jewish law, and her current projects focus on applying Talmudic ideas to questions of advancements in digital technology.



Youth Programming

Weekly Shabbat Groups

Children 0-3 can join their caretakers in the CBI loft space for *tefillah* (prayer), songs, and stories beginning around 10:40am every Shabbat.

We also provide drop-off programming for children ages 3 through 2nd grade at Gan Shalom. Children can join our youth staff for games, *tefillah* (prayer), and snacks from 9:00-11:30am.

Shabbat Lunches

December 17, January 21, March 18, and April 22

Join us for kids-focused Shabbat lunches.

Mishmash

January 7, January 21, February 11, and February 25

30 minutes after the end of Shabbat

Mishmash offers CBI's parents and children in grades K through 8th an opportunity to study in pairs in a beit midrash atmosphere.

NCSY

NCSY's Latte and Learning serves up Judaism in a relaxed, inspirational, and fun environment. L&L is the place for teens to ask questions, voice their feelings, and connect with each other. For more information contact polanskya@ncsy.org.



Women's Tefillah

October 18 (Simchat Torah), November 5, February 4,
April 1, and May 6

Join the women of CBI for communal prayer, Torah reading,
Torah learning, and singing on Shabbat afternoons.

Social Groups

Mah Jongg

Tuesdays, 12:00pm // 3:00pm at CBI

CBI's Mah Jongg group meets weekly and is open to players that
know how to play and already have their National Mah Jongg Play
Card. Beginners are also invited to come learn how to play with
Marti Zedeck.



Social Justice

Sock and Underwear Drive Benefiting YEAH! Youth Engagement Advocacy Housing

Between Rosh Hashanah and Simchat Torah, join us as we collect Adult men's and women's new socks and underwear for YEAH! An organization housed in Berkeley, YEAH! provides shelter and support for at-risk homeless youth.

Spruce up the Bay with Friends of Five Creeks in Honor of Tu B'Shvat

A family-friendly way to give back to the earth in advance of Tu B'Shvat, and give back to our East Bay community, by sprucing up a local waterfront site with Friends of Five Creeks.

Backpack Packing and Welcome Notes for Refugees Resettling with JFCS East Bay

During the three weeks between the 17th of Tammuz and Tisha B'av, CBI spearheads a school supplies and basic necessities drive in partnership with JFCS East Bay to support East Bay families and recent refugees.

Dwight Way Shelter

CBI supports a monthly meal at Berkeley's Dwight Way Shelter. Please donate to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund to support this essential service to our wider community.

Alameda County Community Food Bank

Since the COVID-19 outbreak took hold, ACCFB has seen an unprecedented surge in need. If you are able to make an additional gift this time of year, support of any amount is greatly appreciated. Gifts can be made directly to the Alameda County Food Bank at accfb.org.



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