



Congregation
Beth Israel

ANNUAL PROGRAM

2018-2019 / 5779



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Telling Stories (& Stories That Are Telling)

A SPECIAL SHABBAT SHALEM SERIES



Rabbi Jeffrey Saks

OCT. 19-20

Rabbi Jeffrey Saks is the founding director of ATID – The Academy for Torah Initiatives and Directions in Jerusalem, and its WebYeshiva.org program. He is an Associate Editor of the journal *Tradition*, Series Editor of The S.Y. Agnon Library at The Toby Press, and Director of Research at the Agnon House in Jerusalem. A three-time graduate of Yeshiva University (BA, MA, Semicha), Rabbi Saks has published widely on Jewish thought, education, and literature. He was formerly on the faculties of the YU High School for Girls in New York, and in Israel at Yeshivat Hamivtar, Yeshivat Ohr Yerushalayim, Machon Gold, and currently teaches at Midreshet Amudim.



Rabba Wendy Amsellem

JAN. 25-26

Wendy Amsellem teaches Talmud and Halakha at Yeshivat Maharat and is the Editor of Yeshivat Maharat's *Keren* journal. She is also a faculty member at Drisha Institute and Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies, and she is an editor at *The Lehrhaus*. Wendy is the former Director of the Dr. Beth Samuels Drisha High School Program and she was the Rosh Kollel of the Drisha July Kollel. She has been a Wexner Graduate Fellow and a Mandel Jerusalem Fellow. Wendy is an alumna of the Drisha Scholars Circle and she has a BA in History and Literature from Harvard University. She is currently pursuing a PhD in rabbinic literature at NYU.



Dr. Miriam Udel

MARCH 8-9

Miriam Udel is associate professor of German Studies and Jewish Studies at Emory University, where her teaching focuses on Yiddish language, literature, and culture. She holds an AB in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations from Harvard University, as well as a PhD in Comparative Literature from the same institution. She is the author of *Never Better! The Modern Jewish Picaresque* (University of Michigan Press, 2016), winner of a National Jewish Book Award in Modern Jewish Thought and Experience. Her annotated, translated anthology of Yiddish children's literature, *Honey on the Page*, is slated to appear with New York University Press in Fall 2019. She is also part of the first cohort of Yeshivat Maharat's Executive Kollel Track.

Co-sponsored by



The Richard S. Dinner
Center for Jewish Studies



Rabbi Alex Israel

MAY 24-25

Rabbi Alex Israel teaches Tanakh at Yeshivat Eretz Hatzvi, Matan, and Midreshet Lindenbaum. He is Director of Community Education, the Summer Programs, and Online Learning, at the Pardes Institute. Rabbi Israel gained rabbinic ordination from the Israeli Chief Rabbinate following several years of study at Yeshivat Har Etzion. He holds degrees from the London School of Economics, the Institute of Education, London, and Bar Ilan University. His first book *I Kings - Torn in Two* was published in 2013. The companion volume *II Kings - In a Whirlwind* will be published in 2019. See his *shiurim* and his weekly "Parsha Discussion" at www.alexisrael.org.



Telling Stories (& Stories That Are Telling)

ONGOING ADULT EDUCATION SERIES

The Hart Yearns: The Inner Life of King David

7:30-9:00 PM, MONDAYS, OCT. 15, 22, 29

The book of Psalms illuminates King David's passionate personal responses to historic events. In this series, we will explore three major events in the life of King David as they are recorded in Samuel I, followed by close readings of three corresponding psalms. We will focus on medieval and modern interpretations of distinctive expressions to consider the psalmist's powerful—and often surprisingly relatable—approaches to life's challenges.

Raizy Lichtenstein has taught Judaic Studies and English Literature in a wide variety of educational settings. She holds a master's degree in English Literature from the Hebrew University, and currently teaches English at Touro College. She recently moved to the Bay Area, and thanks the CBI community for its warm welcome.

People of the (Artists') Book: Creating Around the Jewish Sacred Cycle

7:00-9:30 PM, TUESDAYS, OCT. 23, NOV. 20, DEC. 11, JAN. 29, FEB. 26, MAR. 26

Our tradition teaches that the essence of each Jewish month can be expressed through a single corresponding biblical verse. Over the course of six monthly sessions, we will collaboratively create interactive artists' books (i.e., handmade, multi-dimensional books) inspired by our investigation into these mysterious verses. Join Atiq (previously known as Beyond Noah's Ark) and CBI in learning and making as we explore the spiritual opportunities of every month. A gallery show at CBI at the conclusion of the series will share our work with the whole community. All levels of background in Jewish text study and art making are welcome, and all materials will be provided. This course is designed as a series, and participants (to the greatest extent possible) should expect to attend every session. Participation/materials fee: \$50 (Scholarships based on need are available. Please ask!)

Adina Polen is the founder of Atiq (atiqmakers.org), a Jewish Maker Institute where people of all ages delve into Jewish sources and create sacred material resources for deepening personal paths of meaning. Atiq partners with Jewish organizations throughout the Bay Area to bring sacred art making into a wide variety of contexts, and by November 2018 will be launching a community makerspace within the East Bay.

The Most Telling Rabbinic Stories of Dispute

7:30-9:00 PM, TUESDAYS, NOV. 6, 13, 27, DEC. 4, & MAR. 5, 12, 19

Every page of the Talmud is replete with rabbinic disagreements concerning Jewish law and practice. At several points, the Talmud also provides detailed descriptions of some of the more critical controversies that both plagued and enriched the rabbinic culture of dispute in its early and later stages of

formation. This series will examine some of the most telling stories that best characterize this feature of our rabbinic inheritance.

Rabbi Yonatan Cohen serves as the rabbi of Congregation Beth Israel, Berkeley. He has been a guest lecturer on Jewish Medical Ethics at UC Berkeley and on Jewish Liturgy at the Magnes Museum of Jewish Art and Life. He has also served on the faculty of the Wexner Heritage Program. R. Cohen received ordination from Yeshivat Chovevei Torah and he is a Sr. Fellow of the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem.

What's in a Name?

7:30-9:00 PM, TUESDAYS, JAN. 8, 15, 29

Some of the most well-known and critical characters in Biblical narratives remain anonymous, leaving us to wonder why we never learn their names. Names and identities are essential to our understanding of various personalities in Tanakh, and their enduring legacies. We will explore why these significant individuals remain anonymous. As many of these unnamed characters are women, we will also touch on the larger issues of how women's stories are told, and how they are not told, in Tanakh.

Maharat Victoria Sutton is the Director of Education and Community Engagement at Congregation Beth Israel, Berkeley. She received ordination from Yeshivat Maharat and graduated from Barnard College, with a BA in Biological Sciences.

Narrative in the Jewish Mystical Tradition

7:30-9:00 PM, TUESDAYS, FEB. 5, 12, 19

This three-part series will explore the rich tradition of storytelling and narrative in Jewish mysticism both medieval and modern. Our first class will examine the idea of narrative in the Zohar, looking at specific tales about mystical teachers in this work as well as the poetics of interpreting biblical stories. The second session will look at storytelling in Hasidic thought and culture, with a particular focus on the fantastic tales of Rabbi Nahman of Bratslav. Finally, our third class will engage with Neo-Hasidic thinkers like Martin Buber and Elie Wiesel, who have drawn upon Hasidic stories to spark contemporary renewal and to deal with the deepest existential questions. Class time will be devoted to *hevruta* learning as well as group text-study and discussions.

Ariel Evan Mayse joined the faculty of Stanford University in 2017 as an assistant professor in the Department of Religious Studies, after previously serving as the Director of Jewish Studies and Visiting Assistant Professor of Modern Jewish Thought at Hebrew College in Newton, Massachusetts. He holds a Ph.D. in Jewish Studies from Harvard University and rabbinic ordination from Beit Midrash Har'el in Israel.

Telling Stories

ONGOING ADULT EDUCATION SERIES CONT.

Mishmach

Tell Your Story: Redemption and Revelation

10:00-1:00 PM, SUNDAY, MAR. 31, 2:00-5:00 PM, SUNDAY, MAY 19

Each 3-hour workshop will teach you the structure of compelling storytelling and give you the opportunity to tell a story to other participants. Being able to tell a story well is a great skill to have. It's also a chance to bond with your fellow CBI members and hear a story about them you never have before!

Michael Kaye is a writer and performer who has garnered press in Rolling Stone, Billboard, The San Francisco Chronicle, and The Los Angeles Times. Michael has been a writing fellow at the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, the Julia and David White Colony, Ragdale, the Millay Colony for the Arts, and the WUJS-Arad Arts Program in Israel. He taught memoir writing for four years at the famed Gotham Writers' Workshop in New York and is the author of Mastering the Narrative.

Lovesick: Dark Tales of Friendship

7:30- 9 PM, TUESDAYS, MAY 14, 21, 28

The rabbinic maxim "Either friendship or death!" underscores the vital importance of friendship in the Jewish tradition. *Havruta*—dialogical conversation between friends—is the primary medium of Torah learning and spiritual growth. Yet we know from experience that friendship, like family, while a huge blessing can provoke complex conflict and evoke profound pain. Literary narrative—based on large thematic tensions and nuanced character development—is the best medium to capture the intricacy and depth of conflicts and contradictions between friends. During these three sessions, we shall explore friendship in three narrative genres: The Biblical tale of Job, the Talmudic story of Reish Lakish and R. Yohanan, and selections from modern short stories, including Franz Kafka.

Dr. Bernie Steinberg is Director Emeritus, Harvard Hillel, teaches at the Graduate Theological Union, and Kevah in Berkeley, and M2 The Institute for Experiential Jewish Education, based in Chicago. He recently wrote an essay on Maimonides for Oxford University Press Bibliographies.

Mishmach offers CBI's parents and children an opportunity to study in pairs in a unique beit midrash atmosphere. For guidance in choosing learning materials best suited to each individual need, please contact Maharat Victoria Sutton at maharatvictoria@gmail.com. Children in grades K-8 and their parents are invited to participate.

The evening begins with pizza, as parents and children settle into their learning spaces. At the close of each Mishmach, a *Dvar Torah* is given over by one of the children.

Mishmach meets twice a month, November to March, on Motzei Shabbat (Begins about 30 min after Shabbat ends):

Nov. 10	Dec. 1	Jan. 12	Feb. 9	Mar. 9 <i>Siyum</i>
Nov. 17	Dec. 15	Jan. 26	Feb. 23	

Women's Tefillah

Join CBI's women's community for a series of unique opportunities to pray, sing and learn Torah together. Mincha and Torah reading will be followed by *seudah shelishit* and learning.

Please contact Maharat Victoria Sutton at maharatvictoria@gmail.com if you wish to serve as a *gabbayit*, read Torah, lead prayers, teach during the meal, or sponsor *seudah shelishit*.

Simchat Torah Women's Torah Reading: Tuesday, Oct 2 @ 10:30 am

Megillat Esther Women's Reading: Thursday, March 21 @ 12 pm

Women's Tefillah will meet for Shabbat Mincha on the following dates (1st Shabbat of the month):

- Nov. 3, 2018
- Dec. 1, 2018
- Jan. 5, 2019
- Feb 2, 2019
- March 2, 2019
- April 6, 2019
- May 4, 2019



Tzedakah & Tikkun Olam

CBI Sock & Underwear Drive

BENEFITING YEAH! YOUTH ENGAGEMENT ADVOCACY HOUSING

Between Rosh Hashanah and Simchat Torah, join us as we collect new (unopened, unused) socks and underwear for **YEAH!** Housed in Berkeley, YEAH! provides shelter and support for at-risk homeless youth.



CBI Cooks at the Shelter

BENEFITING THE BERKELEY MEN'S OVERNIGHT SHELTER

CBI is committed to helping our local community by preparing and serving dinner to more than 50 clients at the **Berkeley Men's Overnight Shelter** each month. This is a great opportunity for both teens and adults to become involved in tzedakah va'hessed (justice and loving kindness). We need volunteers to assist in shopping, cooking, serving and cleanup. We are also always happy to receive donations to underwrite this activity.

New Location: The shelter has moved to 2140 Dwight Way

5:00-6:30 Cooking Shift

6:30-7:30 Serving and Clean-Up Shift

Meets on the 4th Wednesday of the month except when noted

September 26, 2018

October 24, 2018

November 28, 2018

December 26, 2018

January 23, 2019

February 27, 2019

March 27, 2019

April 16, 2019 (Tuesday)

May 22, 2019

June 26, 2019

July 24, 2019

August 28, 2019



BERKELEY FOOD &
HOUSING PROJECT

Holiday Dinner Drive

BENEFITING THE ALAMEDA COUNTY COMMUNITY FOOD BANK

116,000 people (1 in 5) residents of Alameda County rely on the **Alameda County Community Food Bank** services, often faced with impossible decisions between rent or gas and food. A holiday meal is too often simply out of the question. Your donation of \$30 provides 6 family meals, your donation of \$100 provides 20 family meals.

You can make your contribution online
donate.accfb.org/hdd-bethisrael.



ALAMEDA COUNTY
COMMUNITY
FOOD BANK

Until everyone's fed