



ANNUAL PROGRAM

5786 (2025–2026)

CONGREGATION
BETH ISRAEL
קהילת בית ישראל





Services

SHACHARIT: MORNING SERVICE

Monday–Friday // 6:45am

Sunday and Legal holidays // 8:00am

MINCHA/MA'ARIV: EVENING SERVICE

Spring and Summer // 20 minutes prior to *plag ha'mincha*

Fall and Winter // 15 minutes prior to sunset (*shkiah*)

SHABBAT SERVICES

Friday Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat

Spring and Summer // 7:00pm

Fall and Winter // at candle lighting time

Shabbat Main Service

9:00am

Shabbat Mincha, Learning, and Ma'ariv

20 minutes prior to sunset (*shkiah*)



Classes



MIDRASH ON THE PARSHA

Rabbanit Meira Wolkenfeld

Tuesdays // 12:00pm

This class explores the weekly Torah portion through the lens of midrash. Looking closely at the biblical text, we notice peculiarities that the rabbis used as hooks for creative interpretation. Come think about the Parsha

on Tuesdays, and you'll always have a d'var Torah ready for your Shabbat table!



MODERN HALAKHIC VOICES: RESPONSA OF THE 20TH CENTURY

Rabbi Yonatan Cohen

Wednesdays // 8:00pm

**October 29, November 12, November 19,
December 3, December 10**

This class delves into the world of contemporary halakhic responsa, with a focus on leading rabbinic figures of the past century. We will study selected writings from Rav Moshe Feinstein, Chacham Ovadia Yosef, the Tzitz Eliezer, and Melamed Leho'il, among others. Through their responsa, we'll explore how these poskim addressed the challenges of modern life while remaining rooted in tradition, and how their legal reasoning continues to shape halakhic discourse today.

MEN'S MISHNAH CHABURAH

Rabbi Yonatan Cohen

A weekly Mishnah learning group (*chaburah*) for men, meeting after weekday morning services and facilitated by Rabbi Yonatan Cohen. The group offers a consistent framework for Torah study and meaningful engagement with the text. Space is limited – please contact Rabbi Cohen to see if openings remain. If you're interested in starting a new *chaburah*, our clergy are available to help explore interest and support the launch of additional groups.

ADVANCED PLANNING WITH SINAI MEMORIAL

Cara Walden

November 5 // 12:00pm

Join Cara Walden, Advance Planning Counselor at Sinai Memorial Chapel, for an informative and thoughtful session on Jewish end-of-life traditions and funeral planning. Cara will guide us through what advance planning entails, how it supports our loved ones, and the steps to take now to ensure peace of mind later.

We'll discuss: Why plan in advance? What in our Jewish tradition encourages advance planning? Who is Sinai? What are the core things to think about when making an advance plan? And the steps to proceed.

If you are interested in learning more but are unable to come to this program feel free to reach out to Cara Walden directly at 201-724-4958 or cwalden@sinaichapel.org.

BOOK EVENT: THE JEWS: 5,000 YEARS AND COUNTING

Rob Kutner

December 1 // 7:30pm

Rob Kutner is an Emmy-winning TV comedy and animation writer for shows like "The Daily Show," "CONAN," and "Teen Titans Go!", a bestselling author for Marvel, and a serious Jew.

The Jews: 5,000 Years and Counting is a comedic survey of all of Jewish history, from Adam & Eve to Zabar's — vetted by two historians and three rabbis! But don't worry: the jokes are (mostly) his.

KADDISH

Rabbanit Meira Wolkenfeld

Join the Rabbanit for three sessions exploring the history, halakhah, and meaning of kaddish.

History of the Mourner's Kaddish

March 8

The Different Types of Kaddish

March 15

Kaddish in Literature and Modern Memory

March 22

THE WISE PARENT WITHIN US

Elana Reinin, Certified Coach (CPCC), MPH

March 18 // 7:30pm – 9:00pm

Join us for an interactive evening of learning with parenting coach and certified positive discipline parent educator, Elana Reinin. This session will include exploration of parenting styles and tools that empower both parents and children, including opportunities to share your parenting challenges and practice some of the tools introduced. **At Oakland Hebrew Day School.**

Co-sponsored by Congregation Beth Israel, Berkeley and Beth Jacob Congregation, Oakland.





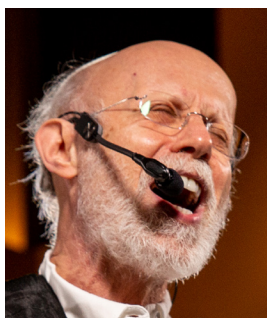
Shabbat Scholars-in-Residence



DR. SARA LABATON

November 21-22

Sara Labaton has served as the Director of Teaching and Learning at the Shalom Hartman Institute of North America since 2019. She received a doctorate in Jewish Thought from the Skirball Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies at NYU, where she wrote on esotericism (*sod*) in the commentaries of Abraham ibn Ezra. Sara has taught at Beit Rabban Day School, the Frisch School, Yeshivat Hadar, and the Wexner Heritage Program. After spending the past year in Jerusalem, Sara and her family are back to calling White Plains, NY home.



ELLI KRANZLER

January 9-10

Elli Kranzler M.D. is a practicing psychiatrist in New York and former faculty at Columbia University School of Medicine. He is the *Shliach Tzibbur* 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, including CBI in March 2023. We are so excited to sing and daven with him again!



RABBI YSOSCHER KATZ

March 20-21

Rabbi Ysoscher Katz is the Chair of the Talmud department at Yeshivat Chovevei Torah and the past Senior Rabbi of the Prospect Heights Shul. He studied at the Satmar, Brisk, and Beit Yosef Navaradok yeshivot. Receiving his *smicha* shortly after highschool, R. Katz has taught Talmud and halakhah at a wide array of institutions. For nine years, he delivered a daily *daf yomi shiur* – twice a day in Borough Park- attended by many. During the past years, he has taught weekly Jewish thought and Talmud classes for professionals on the Upper East Side and Park Slope, and at the Skirball Center for adult education. A graduate of HaSha’ar’s educators program, he also worked as the Judaic studies coordinator for the innovative Luria school, and taught at Ma’ayanot, SAR, and Ramaz High Schools. In addition, he has directed the Lindenbaum Center for Modern Orthodox Halakhah, composed responsa on vital contemporary halakhic issues, and writes extensively on matters pertaining to Jewish society for publications including the *Forward*, *Jerusalem Post*, *Makor Rishon*, and the *Times of Israel*.



RABBANIT NECHAMA GOLDMAN BARASH

June 19-20

Rabbanit Nechama Goldman Barash teaches contemporary halakhah and Talmud at Matan, Midreshet Torah V’Avodah (MTVA), Amudim and the Pardes Institute in Jerusalem. She is the educational director of the Pardes Learning Seminar. She moved to Israel in 1991, after graduating with B.A. from Stern College in New York. Nechama holds a master’s degree in Talmud from Bar-Ilan University and is a graduate of Nishmat’s Yoetzet Halacha program and fertility counselor’s program, which certified her to serve as an advisor to individuals with halakhic questions around marital intimacy and is a certified sex educator. She is an alumna of Matan’s Advanced Talmud Institute where she studied in Matan’s Hilkhata, Advanced Institute for Halakhic Studies. She is an active member of the rabbinic organization Beit Hillel and has participated in interfaith dialogue through Roots, an organization based in Gush Etzion where she lives.

Shavuot Scholar-in-Residence



RABBI BEN GREENFIELD

May 21-23

Rabbi Ben Greenfield is the Director of Jewish Learning at The Adelson School, a K-12 community day school in Las Vegas. His innovative writings in Jewish thought appear in Tablet and Lehrhaus and have been recognized with several national awards.

He trained at Gush, YU, Oxford, and Yeshivat Chovevei Torah; he is also the uncle of CBI members Ayala, Ari, and Elisheva Kanefsky.





Holiday Celebrations

Throughout the year, we come together to celebrate holidays. Mark your calendars for these special CBI traditions:

SUKKOT DINNER UNDER THE STARS

Monday, October 6

HANUKKAH GAME NIGHT

Wednesday, December 17

TU B'SHVAT CREEK CLEAN UP WITH FRIENDS OF FIVE CREEKS

Sunday, February 1

PURIM SEUDAH DANCE PARTY WITH SHAMATI

Tuesday, March 3

YOM HAZIKARON COMMEMORATION AND YOM HAATZMAUT MUSICAL HALLEL

Tuesday, April 21



Youth Programming

WEEKLY SHABBAT GROUPS

Tot Room

Our upstairs loft space serves as a hangout for babies and toddlers (up to age 3) to play with their caregivers during services.

Around 10:40am we have a parent-led tot Shabbat circle with songs, props, and a little tefillah for our youngest members.

Drop Off Care At Gan Shalom

Kids aged 3 through 4th grade can be dropped off at Gan Shalom starting at 9:00am on Shabbat mornings. Around 10:00am they are served a hardy snack and then split into groups for tefillah and games. Children are also served a light lunch and can be picked up from Gan Shalom after services. Childcare ends at 12:00pm.

Our intrepid youth coordinator Adriana oversees our Shabbat morning program at Gan Shalom. Our bat sherut, Or, provides educational content. We're so excited to welcome new Shabbat morning staff (including Anna, Becca, Alexandra, and Maia), bringing creativity and energy to our Shabbat morning program.





YOUTH PROGRAMMING

Mishmash

Mishmash offers CBI's parents and children in grades K through 8th an opportunity to study in pairs in a *beit midrash* atmosphere. Come for the Torah, stay for the pizza!

30 minutes after the end of Shabbat on select winter Shabbatot

November 15

December 13

January 17



Special Youth Programming Shabbatot

Young Kids & Families Kiddush @ Gan Shalom

November 15

Tot Shabbat Dinner

December 6

Teen Minyan & Kiddush

February 21

Pre-Pesach Bagels in the Park

March 28

Bar & Bat Mitzvah Lunch with the Rabbanit

May 9

NCSY

NCSY's Latte & 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 and other events contact Eliezer Cohn cohne@ncsy.org.



Women's Tefillah

SHABBAT AFTERNOON MINCHA

Join the women of CBI for communal prayer, Torah reading, Torah learning, singing, and community.

November 22

December 13

January 24

February 28

May 30

June 20

Social Groups

MAH JONGG

Tuesdays // 12:00pm – 3:00pm // 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.

COMMUNITY BUILDING EVENTS

The community building team organizes community events and hospitality for Shabbat and Yom Tov meals. Stay tuned for events like our name tag kiddush, mix it up meals, and community *malaveh malka* throughout the year. Reach out to Karen Kadish at hospitality@cbiberkeley.org to get involved.

BIKKUR CHOLIM INITIATIVE

The Bikur Cholim initiative is dedicated to supporting members of our community who are ill, recovering, or navigating medical challenges. Rooted in the mitzvah of visiting and caring for the sick, this effort seeks to ensure that no one is left to face times of vulnerability alone. It creates opportunities to build community, respect confidentiality, and treat patients with the dignity that they deserve.

If you're able to volunteer — whether by making visits, delivering meals, offering rides, or simply checking in with a phone call — or if you have medical supplies to lend, reach out to Joan Reich and Nomi Fuhrman at bikurcholim@cbiberkeley.org.

JEWISH COALITION OF BERKELEY (JCOB)

The Jewish Coalition of Berkeley unites Jews of all backgrounds and their allies to advocate for a safe, vibrant Jewish presence in and around Berkeley. We organize to confront antisemitism, build resilient community, celebrate our connection to Israel, and promote civility and understanding across faiths and communities.



Congregation Beth Israel

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Photos courtesy of Hagit Caspi

