

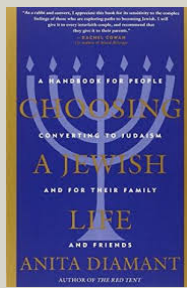
“Your people shall be my people, Your God shall be my God.” —Ruth 1:16

First Steps

If you are new to Judaism and have been thinking about conversion, you should read *Choosing a Jewish Life* and *Living a Jewish Life*, both by Anita Diamant. Both books are readily available at the library or for purchase. You should also attend a few services, study groups, or programs at TBH. (You do not need to be Jewish to begin to attend services and programs.)

Only after you have read those books, and attended TBH a few times, you should you take the next important step on the conversion process: meeting with the Rabbi. (If you have prior experience with Jewish community and have read equivalent books, you may contact the Rabbi initially.) Conversion to Judaism is done under the sponsorship of a Rabbi.

To make an appointment with the Rabbi, email rabbi@bethhatfiloh.org or call (360) 754-8519.



Initial Meeting with the Rabbi

When you meet with Rabbi Seth, you will have the opportunity to share about your background, your interest and past experience with Judaism, and any prior study you may have undertaken. At this meeting you will have the opportunity to ask questions, and Rabbi Seth will outline the steps of the conversion process in depth and will be able to answer any questions you may have..

The Conversion Process

Conversion to Judaism usually takes approximately a year, but may vary depending on past experience and background. As Judaism is a faith tradition that focuses more on deeds than belief, it is necessary to live through a Jewish year to fully acclimate oneself to Jewish life and to allow for adequate time for study. The formal process of conversion requires several steps.

Jewish study: As Jews we never stop learning. However, there is a basic level of knowledge one should have to begin to live a full Jewish life. Since the size of the community means our adult learning class schedule varies, the Rabbi and you will design an individualized bibliography and learning process. If there are classes being offered that are relevant, you will be asked to take those.

Engagement with Jewish practice and community: Since Judaism is a lived experience, and one that is lived with other people, you will be invited to participate in the life of the TBH community by participating in various events, especially Shabbat and holiday celebrations. You will also be expected to engage with individual Jewish practices as you take on meaningful observance in your own life.

Monthly meetings with the Rabbi: The Rabbi serves as your personal guide as well as the representative of the Jewish people. Monthly meetings are important means to check in spiritually, gauge your progress, and plan the next stages of your learning.

Concluding Rituals: Once you and the Rabbi feel ready to engage in the final steps, you will be asked to write a personal statement. The Rabbi will convene a *beit din* (a panel of three rabbis) who will engage you in conversation and questioning, after which you will be guided in the final rituals, including immersion in a *mikveh*, a ritual bath.



We all have our spiritual journeys, and for some, that journey leads to Judaism. Judaism welcomes those without Jewish lineage who wish to join the Jewish people through a process of formal conversion. Conversion to Judaism is a process of learning and growing into Jewish life undertaken with the guidance of a sponsoring rabbi.

As your journey has brought you here to Temple Beth Hatfiloh, our rabbi, Rabbi Seth Goldstein, is available to serve as your sponsor, and the members of TBH are available to support you in your exploration, help guide you on your process, and welcome you into our community.



If you do have Jewish background or lineage, either known or recently discovered, and are not sure what that means for you, the Rabbi is available to meet to discuss this with you.

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Exploring Judaism and Conversion

