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Lifelong Learning - Fall Offerings

Continuing to learn as adults is a basic element of our Jewish tradition. The Lifelong Learning Committee, Rabbi Klein and Rabbi Siegel are pleased to provide many opportunities to study with master teachers and listen to world-class speakers. Some of the offerings are inspiring, some are thought provoking, and some are just for fun.

During this challenging year, many classes will be online or hybrid. We hope to be able to meet in person as often as it is safe and possible. A few classes require pre-registration so that materials can be ordered, and for others you can just show up!

This is just a preliminary listing. Watch for additional programs as details become available. Your suggestions and requests for learning opportunities are welcome.

Looking forward to learning with you!

Lifelong Learning Committee
Joanne Skop and Steve Greenfield, Co-Chairs
Ira Blankstein
Mindy Goldstein
Steve Kussin
Terri Lieberman
Cheryl Uram
Rabbi Klein and Rabbi Siegel, Advisors

Noteworthy Speakers – watch your email for login information as the dates draw near.

- ✚ Thursday, November 11th, 7:00 pm - **Ambassador Dennis Ross** will speak live at the Merrick Jewish Centre. An outstanding diplomat who has represented the U.S. in Middle East negotiations under multiple administrations, Ambassador Ross will discuss the U.S.- Israel alliance, past and future.

New Offerings

Reading the Hebrew Bible from a Literary Perspective

Taught by Saul Rosenberg, PhD. Past President of MJC, Saul acquired a strong yeshiva education in London before attending Cambridge and earning a PhD in Literature from Columbia. These 3 sessions are drawn from a full semester course that he is teaching at the New School in NYC this year.

Dates for the course are yet to be determined. This will be a hybrid event: you are invited to attend in person in the CJL or attend via Zoom. Register for the course by emailing lifelonglearning@merrickjc.org

The stories in the Hebrew Bible – the Tanakh – are traditionally presented in synagogues of all denominations as a source of teaching – in our personal lives, in how we interact in the world, and indeed as a touchstone for how all groups within society should ideally interact.

Such a presentation, enormously valuable though it is, sometimes has the effect of smoothing away some of the most difficult – and most interesting – elements in these stories. By taking an explicitly literary approach to three story-cycles in this greatest of Western literary texts, this three-class course will direct our focus to precisely those elements, suggesting that the Bible is at once a stranger and a richer book than our familiarity with it might lead us to think.

The three story-cycles we will examine are:

1. The “Primeval History” of Bereishit (Genesis Chapters 1-11), in which we will draw out less-discussed elements in the stories of the Creation, Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, and Noah.
2. Revenge and Reconciliation – the stories of the patriarchs and matriarchs in which we will focus on the surprising emotional content and how these texts that we have looked at so often defeat some of our interpretative preferences.
3. The story of Deborah, and how a woman came to be perhaps the most remarkable of the “judges” who guided Israel at crucial moments in the transitional period between the leadership of Joshua, who led the Jews into Cana’an after the death of Moses, and the monarchy initiated when the prophet Samuel anointed Saul.

The course will meet on consecutive Wednesdays, December 1, 8 and 15 from 8:15 - 9:30. Each class will consist of a mix of lecture and discussion. To maximize discussion, we encourage you to attend in person in the CJL. If you don’t feel comfortable in a spread out group, you may attend via Zoom. Register for the course by emailing LifelongLearning@merrickjc.org.

Learn How to Conduct a Shiva Minyan

Steve Kussin will provide training for congregational members who would like to assist families suffering a loss by leading a home shiva minyan. If you are interested please email lifelonglearning@merrickjc.org

Ongoing Classes and Programs

- ✚ **Hebrew Instruction** - Sharyn Kussin offers two different classes for those who want to learn basic Hebrew and those who wish to improve existing Hebrew understanding. To register or request additional information email lifelonglearning@merrickjc.org

- ✚ **Learn Español** – Sharyn Kussin continues her class from last year in basic Spanish. Tuesday nights on Zoom at 7:00 pm. To register email lifelonglearning@merrickjc.org

- ✚ **Would you like to Chant a Haftorah?** – Sharyn Kussin—again our star teacher—is willing to teach the Haftorah trope which will help you prepare to chant a haftorah at Shabbat Services. To register email lifelonglearning@merrickjc.org

- ✚ **Virtual Hollywood** - Coming to you live from Omaha, Rich Knox will continue his weekly presentations on Sunday mornings at 10:00 am which focus on Hollywood greats or related topics of interest. Watch your email for upcoming programs and login information. No pre-registration required.

- ✚ **Weekly Zumba Classes** - Carrie Dale leads weekly Zumba classes online from her Dance Studio in Merrick. Email lifelonglearning@merrickjc.org if you are interested in getting on her contact list. Classes also posted in your email. There is no charge to participate.

- ✚ **Coming to a Theater Near You...** - We will continue our film series by picking a recent Israeli movie for you to watch independently and then host a discussion group led by Cheryl Uram. Warm up with this offering in December.

- ✚ **Our Rabbis Teach**
 - Rabbi Charles Klein - “**Five Books in Five Weeks**” on Wednesday nights, starting October 20 from 7:00 - 8:00 pm. Rabbi Klein will share some of his favorite insights.

- Rabbi Howard Siegel - "**Gutsy Torah**," weekly on Wednesdays, starting October 13 from 11:00 am – noon. Participants will be exposed to an "eye opening" discussion of the week's Torah portion. Meet, discuss, and debate "up close and personal" with the most profound and controversial Torah scholars of the past two- thousand years. Class will be live and on MJC Zoom.