



Official newsletter



## Tu B'Shvat Higiya, Chag Ha'Ilanot

January was quite the month - we moved quickly from the Hebrew month of Tevet into the Hebrew month of Shvat. In the month of Shvat, we celebrate the Holiday of the Trees (Chag Ha'Ilanot), Jewish Arbor Day. This day marks the season in which the earliest-blooming trees in the Land of Israel emerge from their winter sleep and begin a new fruit-bearing cycle. To celebrate, it is customary to eat from the seven species of plants found in the Land of Israel (wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates). All students explored this special holiday from different perspectives.

### Upcoming Events:

**Friday, February 2:**  
4th Grade Shabbat, 6pm

**Saturday, February 3:**  
Family Shabbat Services, 9:30am

**Sunday, February 4:**  
Gesher/Pre-K: In session  
Kadima, 5-6:30 pm  
USY: 7:30-9pm

**Saturday, February 10:**  
Community Havdalah and Ice  
Skating Event, 6:15pm

**Sunday, February 18 -  
Sunday, February 25:**  
**NO RS - February Break**



## Gesher (Pre-K) Update

Morah Leora Cohen

It was so nice to see our Gesher students the first week in January. We began the day with Tefila in the sanctuary with our friends in Kindergarten and 1st Grade. This month, we discussed and celebrate Shabbat together as a class. Students learned about the special items we use to begin Shabbat: candles, grape juice and challah. It was such a fun day.

## Kindergarten Update

Morah Alyssa Silberman

This month has been dedicated to two very important holidays: Tu B'Shvat and Shabbat! Our students learned all about the special birthday for the trees - Tu B'Shvat. To celebrate, students planted parsley seeds that will hopefully be ready to eat by Passover!

Kindergarten students also explored the sanctuary and went on a very fun scavenger hunt around the building to learn about the symbols found in a synagogue.

We have just begun our unit on Shabbat. Students will be making items for their own Shabbat kits to take home and use.

## 1st Grade Update

Morah Lori Bookspan

Morah Michelle Kettner

First Grade began the month of January learning about the holiday of Tu B'Shvat and created their own edible trees using bananas, clementines and grapes.

In Hebrew, students learned the letter Ayin that begins the Hebrew word "Eytz" - this Hebrew word means tree. We discussed the importance of Trees in our lives and the holiday of Tu B'Shvat. We also learned the letter Resh that begins the word "Rimonim." Rimonim are crowns that can be found on a Torah.

This past week, students learned about the story of Jacob and Esau, two brothers. We discussed feelings of jealousy and anger and the difficult parts of being a sibling.



## 2nd Grade Update

Morah Melissa Barry and Morah Haviva Samuels  
Morah Jessica Meltzer and Morah Caroline  
Danziger

Our 2nd Grade students have learned so much this month. We celebrated the holiday of Tu B'Shvat, the birthday of the trees, with a Tu B'Shvat seder with the 3rd Grade students. We also planted lettuce seeds that are already starting to sprout! During the seder, we drank four glasses of grape juice. We began with a cup of all white grape juice. The second and third cup added some red grape juice and the final cup was all red. This represented nature changing from winter to spring.

This month we also prepared for our special Grade Level Shabbat service that was held on Friday, January 19th. Students practiced the special prayers for Shabbat.

Our classes are now moving back into our units on the Torah.

## 3rd Grade Update

Morah Melissa Barry and Morah Haviva Samuels  
Morah Jessica Meltzer and Morah Caroline  
Danziger

The month of January has flown by! Our students have explored the holiday of Tu B'Shvat and joined Second Grade for a special Tu B'Shvat Seder. We learned that there are different kinds of fruits to eat: fruits with peels, but an edible inside (like a clementine). Fruits with an edible outside, but an inedible pit inside (like a date or apricot). And fruits that are completely edible (like grapes).

Third Grade has now started our unit to prepare for our Siddur Ceremony that will be held on Sunday, March 17th. We are looking forward to sharing this special moment with our family and friends.



## 4th Grade Update

Morah Ellen Marcus and Dr. Evita Sokol  
Lauren Belferder, Rebecca Slavsky and  
Morah Cila Klingher

January has been filled with so much learning. Our Fourth Grade students have moved into their holiday unit and have delved into the holiday of Tu B'Shvat. Students in Morah Marcus' class shared presentations about the seven species found in the land of Israel - check out the posters in the Religious School hallway.

All Fourth Grade students tasted the special fruits for the holiday of Tu B'Shvat: fruits with an inedible peel, fruits with an inedible pit in the center, and fruits that can be eaten completely.

In Hebrew, students are learning to master the Hebrew letter and vowel combinations. There has been quite a lot of review - please remember to continue at home.

## 5th Grade Update

Morah Ellen Marcus and Dr. Evita Sokol  
Lauren Belferder, Rebecca Slavsky and  
Morah Cila Klingher

In addition to our lessons on Tu B'Shvat and tasting all seven species that are discussed in the Torah, our Fifth Grade students have moved into their life cycle unit. Students have learned about the special ceremonies for babies right after birth - a brit milah for a boy and a baby naming for a girl. Rebecca's class have moved onto a deeper look at conversion and even had the opportunity to meet with someone from our community that went through the conversion process.

In Hebrew, our Fifth Grade students are moving through the prayer service. Our Sunday/Tuesday students have helped lead services for our Kindergarten and First Grade students and have been learning all about three-letter root combinations, called a Shoreshe.



## 6th Grade Update

Morah Tanya Altman  
Morah Miriam Hertzson

Our 6th Grade students continue to move through their Torah books and will hopefully begin their Parasha Projects soon. They also continue to learn about Israel. Students met with Mara Kotler to learn about Torah trope and chanting from the Torah.



## 7th Grade Update

Morah Chari Nacson  
Mr. Marty Hirschfield

Our 7th Grade has fully jumped into their Holocaust studies with a showing of "From the Fires," a powerful play that provides an overview of the Jewish experience during WWII. Students continue to learn about Israeli culture with songs and music and conversational Hebrew.

## Tichon: Hebrew High School Update

Rabbi Joel Levenson, Leora Cohen, and Tali Medwed

Our Tichon students joined together in January to look at the holiday of Tu B'Shvat from a more spiritual perspective. They met with our Shinshin, Shira Yaron, to explore what it means to be Jewish and American and the complexities of identity.

We are looking forward to our volunteer program on Tuesday, February 13 from 5pm-7pm. As a reminder: all participants must sign up and fill out permission slips in order to attend. We are also looking for parent volunteers to help with transportation!

## SCENES FROM RELIGIOUS SCHOOL



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