



Religious School Curriculum Guide

2017-2018

The mission of CBH RS is to provide children with an education rich in meaningful experiences that will fill them with pride in their heritage. By engaging children in critical thinking and interactive learning, and by promoting family involvement in rituals and celebrations, we seek to instill not just a spiritual connection to the Jewish people, but a lifelong, joyful connection to the Jewish community as well.

Curriculum Objectives

Jewish Living Skills and Celebrations

- Familiarity with Jewish life-cycle events and holidays that are part of the Jewish way of life.
- Exposure to Jewish information that help to make important Jewish decisions about personal and communal celebrations and observances.
- Finding new meaning in old traditions, and being able to apply them to your life.

Values and Ethics

- Knowledge of the "values of spiritual peoplehood" and using them in decision-making.
- Understanding the spiritual meaning of Jewish traditions
- Understanding the relationship between ethical dilemmas, the resources of the Jewish tradition, and moral decision-making.
- Learning to live a Jewish life while being a participant in American and world civilizations.

Prayer and Spirituality

- Ability to fluently recite important Hebrew prayers, including but not limited to, Shabbat Brachot, Torah Blessings, and lifecycle/holiday prayers.
- Understanding the meaning of important prayers, and the use of prayer to explore the traditional and Reconstructionist understandings of God.
- Knowledge of the order of the service in order to participate in the prayer experience, and have a level of comfort in leading communal prayer.
- Understanding key concepts related to prayer.

Peoplehood and Israel

- Knowledge of Jewish cultures and traditions from around the world.
- Familiarity with the central role of the people, land, and dream of Israel in the life of the Jewish people.
- Knowledge of the history of the formation of the state of Israel, and contemporary issues in Israeli life.

Jewish Texts: Sources and Applications

- Familiarity with Torah as a Jewish text that reflects Judaism as an evolving religious civilization.
- The ability to use the Torah as a source for moral decision-making, and to address the challenges of living in two civilizations.

Hebrew

- The ability to utilize Hebrew as the language of prayer.
- Awareness of Hebrew as the "living language" of the people of Israel.

Educational Goals of the Reconstructionist Movement

- Present Torah as the ongoing, creative, and sacred search for meaning in life, a record of human encounters with the Divine.
- Recognize that the Jewish people's experience of God, Torah and peoplehood has changed and grown throughout history.
- Focus on Hebrew as the language uniting all Jews and provide programs that allow Jews to develop Jewish language skills that allow for enriched connections with Jewish civilization of the past, present, and future.
- Recognize praying, participation in ritual and text study as expressive modes of Jewish spirituality that can shape Jewish lives.
- Encourage active, egalitarian participation in a sense of responsibility for the Jewish community.
- Draw students of all ages into caring, committed, and knowledgeable relationships with the land and people of Israel.
- Seek to understand the human spirit that lies behind diverse Jewish understanding of God and encourage individuals to reflect on the meaning of godliness in their own lives.
- Understand the concept of Mitzvah as obligation and perpetuate Jewish values reflected in deeds of social justice and acts of loving-kindness.

We are dedicated to intellectually honest inquiry combined with faithfulness to our tradition and commitment to the continuity of the Jewish people. We believe this happens best with challenging, caring, and supportive learning environments.

Prayers

We recognize that Hebrew reading and prayer is an essential component of our curriculum. The following is a list of prayers that are covered, and the grade in which they will be studied. At the beginning of each year, there will be a review of the prayers learned in the previous years. This list is our goals, but we recognize that not all children will be proficient in all of these prayers.

Grade 4

Shema
Barechu
Motzi
Candle Blessings
Shehechyanu
Four Questions
Kiddush
V'ahavta
Avot v'Emot
Mi Chamocha (F)
V'shamru

Grade 5 Prayers

Gevurot
Mi Chamocha (S)
Kedusha
Yotzer Or
Or Chadash
Adon Olam
V'shamru
Birkat HaMazon
Hatikvah
Etz Chayim

Grade 6 Prayers

Chatzi Kaddish
Yehalelu
Ein Keloheinu
Gevurot
Kedusha
Ahavat Olam
Tallit Blessing
Mourner's Kaddish

Judaic Curriculum for Grades 1-7

Our overall theme for this year, for grades 1-7 are Jewish Values in the 21st century, and how we celebrate our Jewish heritage, along with the challenges of the modern world. We will discuss Torah text, Holidays, and Israel. Our goal is to build a solid Jewish identity for our students by teaching them the tools that they will need to become adult members of the Jewish community.

Our classes will be multi-grade with students in Grades 1- 7 separated into 2 groups. Both groups will share a theme for the day, with age appropriate lessons.

We will have regular teacher-taught lessons, in addition to art, cooking, music, and movement, led by “Specialists.”

Shabbat Tots: A monthly introduction to Jewish Learning for 4 & 5 Year Olds

A monthly program for early learners to “taste” Judaism. Topics to include holidays, Jewish values, and torah stories. There will be songs, stories, puppetry, arts and crafts, and creative play.

Confirmation Class – Grades 8-10

Our post B’nai Mitzvah students will be in their second year of piloting a new curriculum, Chai Mitzvah for Teens. This curriculum is designed to spark conversation, increase meaning in ritual observance, and inspire creative ideas in social action. Each class will emphasize a different virtue, or middah, and will be taught from a Mussar prospective, which is a Jewish ethical, educational, and cultural movement, with an emphasis on moral conduct.