



Congregation Beth El Adult Education Programs Fall/Winter 2011 – 2012

**Congregation Beth El
1301 Oxford Street
Berkeley, California 94709
510-848-3988
www.bethelberkeley.org**

Honoring Tradition, Celebrating Diversity, and Building a Jewish Future



Welcome to the Congregation Beth El Adult Education Programs for the Fall/Winter of 2011/2012.

Congregation Beth El Adult Education offers classes, programs, and activities that deepen and enrich the Jewish learning of our congregants. Drawing from the rich resources of our congregation and our community, we offer a stimulating learning environment that encompasses the full range and diversity of the Jewish experience.

Sponsored by the Beth El Adult Education Committee

Roots and Branches: Texts and Ideas of the Jewish Tradition

“The Prophets”

Dates: Sunday at Beth El, October 23 – December 11

Time: 10:00 – 11:30 am

Presenter: Rabbi Yoel Kahn

Join Rabbi Yoel Kahn for an open-ended, on-going, ever-changing exploration of the core ideas and texts of the Jewish tradition. This fall, we will study the prophet Ezekiel along with the Twelve “Minor” Prophets (can you name them?), looking at their place in Jewish history, their impact on later Jewish ideas and their meaning for today. This on-going class is open to everyone. Class is free; drop-ins welcome! No prerequisites, no prior knowledge required.

Winter series begins January 15; schedule and topics to be announced.

Open to everyone; free; drop-ins welcome!

Donations may be made to Beth El Adult Education.



Sponsored by the Beth El Adult Education Committee

Beth El Lay-Led Torah Study

Dates: Every Shabbat in the Beit Midrash

Time: 9:15 – 10:15 am

Our Mission: To create a meaningful spiritual community through an enriching congregant-led study experience. To study the Torah together, to give every congregant an opportunity to delve into our tradition, and to offer those who wish to do so the opportunity to present a drash that is relevant to current times.

Our Core Values: Our Torah Study Community is built on a deep and fundamental respect for different opinions, backgrounds, and perspectives. Part of our vibrancy stems from the fact that we have such a broad spectrum of beliefs (from near-Orthodox to atheist) and backgrounds (Jews, non-Jews, and others, from all parts of the world.)

Our approach is egalitarian: Everyone has an equal opportunity to speak and listen. We believe that each person has something important to say regardless of rank, profession, or academic standing.

Our Torah Study community is lay-led and self-determined. We have grown from a small group to one that is large, excited, and committed. We come together each week to offer parts of our hearts and souls to each other.

Finally, we come each week to learn and grow by participating together in an intellectually stimulating, emotionally supportive, and spiritually nurturing experience.

For more information, contact Beverly Eigner, beigner@comcast.net, or 510-549-3800.

All Beth El Adult Education programs are open to the public. Donations may be made to Beth El Adult Education.

Cosponsors Congregation Beth El, Building Jewish Bridges,
Temple Sinai

Introduction to the Jewish Experience

Dates: 23 meetings, beginning October 26

Time: 7:30 pm – 9:00 pm

Location: Temple Sinai

Led by Rabbi Ruth Adar, this class is geared to our own East Bay Jewish community, a diverse and vibrant constellation of synagogues, institutions, and households. We are co-sponsored by two Reform synagogues, Congregation Beth El of Berkeley and Temple Sinai of Oakland, but we will include a broad range of learning and experiences. People of all backgrounds are welcome and will be treated with respect. This class is administered by [Lehrhaus Judaica](http://www.lehrhaus.org/) of Berkeley, a center for adult Jewish learning.

The entire course is made up of 23 class meetings, with additional optional opportunities for experiences. There are three parts, of roughly eight class meetings each, and new students are welcome at the beginning of each part, in October, January, and March.

Part I, God and the Jewish Life Cycle

October 26 – December 14

Jews express our faith more by “doing” than by “believing.” Jewish lifecycle celebrations and rituals express the relationship of the Jew to the world, and Jewish understandings of the Holy. This course will explore Jewish concepts of God and the world as they are expressed through the experiences of Jewish lifecycle events.

Part II: Torah, Memory and History

January 11 – February 29.

As the Jews travel through history, we have recorded our experiences in various texts: Bible, Midrash, Mishnah, Talmud, Codes, Responsa literature, and the Prayer Book, which Jacob Petuchowski, a scholar of Jewish liturgy, has described as “the diary of the Jewish people.” This course will begin with an overview of Jewish history, followed by an examination of how those texts illuminate Jewish life in the past, as well as in

the present day. The class will culminate in a study of the Haggadah, the “script” of the seder, and a model seder.

Part III: The People Israel

April 4 – May 23

Who is a Jew? Who are the Jews? We will explore these questions by looking at Jewish life from many different angles: kashrut, Israel, the Movements of Judaism (Reform, Conservative, Orthodox, Reconstructionism, and Renewal), Jewish institutions, and the relationship of Judaism and its sister religions, Christianity and Islam.

For more information or to register for this series, please contact Lehrhaus Judaica, <http://www.lehrhaus.org/> or 510-845-6420, or visit <http://jewishexperienceonline.com/>.

Registration for the series is \$240 to the public, or \$195 for Beth El members, payable to Lehrhaus Judaica.

Sponsored by the Beth El Adult Education Committee

The People of the Book are Reading & Meeting

Dates: Wednesdays, October 12, November 9, December 14

Time: 7:00 – 8:30 pm

Join Professor Naomi Seidman, Director of Jewish Studies at the Graduate Theological Union, for a discussion series on Jewish literature.

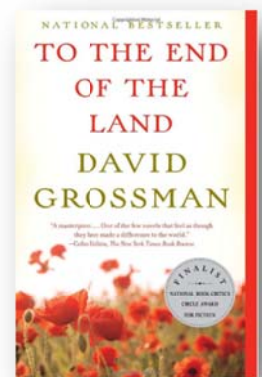
October 12: Poems of Jerusalem and Love Poems
by Yehuda Amichai

November 9: The Little Disturbances of Man
by Grace Paley

December 14: To the End of the Land
by David Grossman

For more information, contact Beverly Eigner, beigner@comcast.net, or 510-549-3800.

All Beth El Adult Education programs are open to the public. Donations may be made to Beth El Adult Education. Suggested contribution for non-members is \$30



Cosponsored by Congregation Beth El and Lehrhaus Judaica, the Aleph Society, Kevah, in partnership with the JCC East Bay, and Congregations Beth Israel, and Netivot Shalom

Beth El Kevah Group

Dates: *The second Sunday of the month*

Time: *7:30 pm - 9:00 pm (7:15 pm for socializing)*

Join a women's monthly Torah study group, largely focused on parenting. All women are welcome.

Cost is \$180 per year (can be paid in two or three installments) and you are welcome to come to the first meeting for free to see if the group is a good fit for you. Checks should be made out to "Kevah".

For more information, contact Elizabeth Friedman Branoff at efbranoff@gmail.com / 510-524-5960 or Debra Massey at debra@bethelberkeley.org / 510- 848-3988.

BAY AREA COMMUNITY TALMUD CIRCLE

Dates: *Sundays, October 30, November 13, December 4, January 15, February 5, February 26, March 18, April 22, May 13*

Time: *9:30 – 11:30 am*

Location: *Lehrhaus Judaica, 2736 Bancroft Way, Berkeley*

Help us build a community of Talmud students. We are seeking curious, committed, and community-minded adults to become the first East Bay cohort of Aleph Fellows for the 2011-12 academic year. Aleph Fellows meet one Sunday morning a month for nine months, to engage in chevruta study (partner study) and discussion, participate in webinars, and attend an exclusive event in the spring of 2012 with Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz, one of today's greatest Talmud scholars. To apply, please visit www.lehrhaus.org.

Cost: \$135

Faculty: Professor Deena Aranoff

Applications are required. Visit www.lehrhaus.org to apply for this program.

Sponsored by the Beth El Adult Education Committee

Lunch & Learn Forums

...in pursuit of Lifelong Learning

Dates: *Second Thursday of every month*

Time: *Noon – 1:30 pm*

Bring a brown bag lunch. Dessert and beverages will be provided.

Sukkot – Historical Meaning and Current Practices

Date: *October 6*

Time: *Noon – 1:30 pm*

Presenter: *Rabbi Bridget Wynne*

FDR and the Holocaust

Date: *November 10*

Time: *Noon – 1:30 pm*

Presenter: *Bob Brandfon, UC Berkeley History Professor Emeritus*

Illustrated Lecture on Antarctic Science and Life in the Antarctic Scientific Community

Date: *December 8*

Time: *Noon – 1:30 pm*

Presenter:

Dr. Spencer Klein, physicist at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory

Watch for details

in the *Beth El*

Builder and the

weekly e-mailings. Questions? Contact Beverly Eigner, beigner@comcast.net, or 510-549-3800



All Beth El Adult Education programs are open to the public. Donations may be made to Beth El Adult Education.

Sponsored by the Beth El Adult Education Committee

Adult Bat/Bar Mitzvah Program

It's never too late to become bat or bar mitzvah at Beth El!

Study Hebrew and Torah chanting

Learn with a committed group of other adults on the journey

Work with our rabbis to develop an individual course of study on a Jewish topic of your choice

Develop your skills in Torah interpretation and become familiar with a range of Jewish traditions

Prepare to lead a Shabbat service

Celebrate as you are called to the Torah as a bar or bat mitzvah!

Our current class will be called to the Torah on January 21, 2012. The next cycle of study begins in October 2012, but there are opportunities to begin your studies year-round. We will help you structure a course of study that meets your intellectual and spiritual needs, talents, and interests.

Contact Rabbi Reuben Zellman, 510-848-3988 ext. 228 or RabbiRZ@bethelberkeley.org

All Beth El Adult Education programs are open to the public. Donations may be made to Beth El Adult Education.



Sponsored by the Beth El Adult Education Committee

Learn and Sing with the Beth El Chorus

Our chorus sings at occasions throughout the year: Shabbat, the High Holy Days, and public performances. Join us for fun, learning, great people and glorious music!

Rehearsals take place Wednesday evenings, 7:00 - 8:45 pm in the sanctuary

Always open to new singers--any member of Beth El who loves to sing is encouraged to join us!

No musical background necessary (rehearsal CDs are available as well as sheet music)

The commitment is one "season" at a time--you can sing with the chorus for one or more sets, without committing to any other time of year.

Learn celebratory and reflective music of Jewish cultures from Casablanca to Poland to Israel and more; develop your knowledge of Jewish languages, liturgy and artistic traditions as well as musical skill; and

have a lot of fun in a lively and supportive community atmosphere.

Full rehearsal schedules are available via the Music Board, newsletter and e-updates, or contact Rabbi Reuben Zellman, Assistant Rabbi and Music Director, for more information at 510-848-3988 ext. 228 or RabbiRZ@bethelberkeley.org.

All Beth El Adult Education programs are open to the public. Donations may be made to Beth El Adult Education.

Cosponsored by Lehrhaus Judaica and the Beth El Adult Education Committee

Beginning Modern Hebrew

*Dates: Wednesdays, October 26 – December 14
(no class 11/23)
Time: 6:30 – 7:30 pm*

This class is for individuals with little or no knowledge of the Hebrew alphabet, grammar, or vocabulary.

Registration for this class is \$95 to the public, or \$80 for Beth El members, payable to Lehrhaus Judaica.

For more information or to register for this series, please contact Lehrhaus Judaica
<http://www.lehrhaus.org/> or 510-845-6420.

Cosponsored by Lehrhaus Judaica and the Beth El Adult Education Committee

Intermediate Modern Hebrew

*Dates: Wednesdays, October 26 – December 14
(no class 11/23)
Time: 7:45 – 8:45 pm*

This class is for individuals who can read and write, but have little or no knowledge of Hebrew vocabulary and grammar. Learn to create simple sentences, verbally and in writing.



Registration for this class is \$95 to the public, or \$80 for Beth El members, payable to Lehrhaus Judaica.

For more information or to register for this series, please contact Lehrhaus Judaica
<http://www.lehrhaus.org/> or 510-845-6420.

Sponsored by the Beth El Adult Education Committee

A New Year's Eve Havdalah

*Date: December 31
Time: 6:00 – 8:00 pm*

Join us to welcome in 2012! Last year we had our first New Year's Eve celebration - our wonderful Champagne Shabbat.

We are following that tradition this year with a Champagne Havdalah to welcome in 2012. It is a perfect beginning for your New Year's Eve celebration! It

will be at Beth El from 6:00-8:00 pm, leaving you free to go to your many other parties or to head home, cuddle up, and watch the ball fall at Times Square.

We will have – of course! - champagne and bubbly non-alcoholic drinks and an assortment of delicious snacks. Barry Silverblatt, Stacey Shulman, and Alan Spector will once again play and sing for us. We will even clear out a space for those of you who want to dance! So come and join us – and toast in the best year ever!

For more information, contact Beverly Eigner, beigner@comcast.net, or 510-549-3800.

All Beth El Adult Education programs are open to the public. Suggested donation for this event is \$10 may be made to Beth El Adult Education.



Cosponsored by Congregation Beth El and the New Israel Fund

The Crisis of Israeli Democracy and What to Do About It

Date: Wednesday, November 16

Time: 7:30 pm

Presenter: Gershon Gorenberg

Israel's character as a democratic Jewish state is under threat as never before. Israeli historian and journalist Gershon Gorenberg will explain what has created the crisis, and describe the essential steps for solving it. Based on his provocative new book, *The Unmaking of Israel*, this talk will provide a guided journey through little-known parts of Israel's past and a liberal vision for its future.

Gorenberg's previous book is *The Accidental Empire: Israel and the Birth of the Settlements, 1967-1977* (Times Books). Based on previously unpublished documents and extensive interviews, *The Accidental Empire* sheds new light on Israel's post-1967 history and Israel-U.S. relations. He is also the author of *The End of Days: Fundamentalism and the Struggle for the Temple Mount*, which portrays the role of religious radicalism in the Mideast conflict. He co-authored *The Jerusalem Report's* 1996 biography of Yitzhak Rabin, *Shalom Friend*, winner of the National Jewish Book Award.

As a commentator on Middle East affairs and on religion, Gorenberg has appeared on *Sixty Minutes*, *Nightline*, *Dateline*, *Fresh Air* and on CNN and BBC. For many years an associate editor of *The Jerusalem Report*, he is now a senior correspondent for *The American Prospect*.

Gorenberg made aliyah from California in 1977. He has an MA in Jewish education from the Hebrew University, and served for many years as a reservist in the IDF Education Corps. He lives in Jerusalem with his wife, journalist Myra Noveck. They have three children, two of them now serving in the Israel Defense Forces.

This free lecture is open to the public. For more information, please contact the Beth El office.

Sponsored by the Beth El Adult Education Committee

Persian Shabbat and discussion: "Iranian Jewry in Modern Times"

Date: Friday, November 4, 2011

Time: 6:30 Gourmet Persian Oneg Shabbat

7:30 Shabbat Service

8:15 "Iranian Jewry in Modern Times"

Presenter: Dr. Jaleh Pirnazar, Ph.D., UC Berkeley Lecturer in Persian, Modern Iranian history, Persian language and literature.

RSVP by October 28 and for more information contact Juliet Gardner in the Beth El office at 510-848-3988 or email juliet@bethelberkeley.org.





CONGREGATION BETH EL ADULT EDUCATION SURVEY

FIELD TRIPS

The Congregation Beth El Adult Education committee is considering organizing weekday field trips to a variety of interesting locations. We would like your input as to whether such activities would be of interest. Please complete the following and return it to Beverly Eigner, via the Beth El office. You can also call Beverly at (510)

549-3800 or send her an email with your feedback to beigner@comcast.net.

Are you interested in participating in a weekday field trip with other Beth El members?

Yes

No

If so, which of the places listed below would you like to visit? Please check as many as you wish:

- Reutlinger Home for Jewish Parents (a guided tour and complimentary lunch)
- San Francisco Jewish Museum
- Museum of Modern Art (1st Tuesday of the month)
- De Young Museum (1st Tuesday of the month)
- Jewish Film Festival (August 2012)
- Asian Art Museum (1st Sunday of the month)
- Pyramid Ale House summer outdoor movies

- Chabot Observatory
- UC Berkeley Botanical Gardens (1st Thursday of the month)
- Palo Alto Gardens
- Oakland Museum (1st Sunday of the month)
- Exploratorium (1st Wednesday of the month)
- UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive
- (1st Thursday of the month)
- Palace of the Legion of Honor

Other (Please write in your suggestions) _____

Regarding transportation, would you be willing to:

- drive yourself and others
- use public transportation

Optional:

Your name (please print): _____

Email address: _____

