



ENGAGE!

2022 Class Line-up

All classes run one hour and will be held over Zoom.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 5th – 7:00 PM

OPENING PROGRAM – 7:00 PM All ENGAGE! participants invited to attend

CLASSES – 7:30 PM

NAMES, NAMING AND THE NAME

with **Earl Schwartz** and **Nina Samuels**, Community Educators

In Tanakh the very first human action is to give names. However, this basic human tendency and need comes up short when we come to a name for ha-Shem/the Divine. In this session we explore how, over time, Jews have coped with this puzzle.

WILD SEA STORIES OF THE TALMUD

with **Rabbi Emma Kippley-Ogman**, Associate Chaplain for Jewish Life, Macalester College

The wildest adventures begin with a story. We'll explore a series of sailors' tales from the Talmud that entice us to imagine space-travelling giant waves and a menagerie of mammoth mystical creatures. The seascape makes space for the unexpected, which would be impossible on land. Wading in, we'll consider what these stories spark in our own imaginations.

ADVOCACY IN ACTION OR INACTION

with **Rafi Forbush**, Executive Director, Multiracial Jewish Association of MN; Director of Youth & Camping Chair, Temple Israel
and **Heather Miller**, Professional Educator, Founder, The Multitudes

Diversity, equity and inclusion are a growing focus inside our community and across the country. How can you be part of the movement to ensure that Jewish communities and institutions reflect the multiracial reality of the Jewish people? We'll outline how to advocate for change and support Jews of Color within Jewish spaces and beyond.

ZOOM AFTER PARTY – 8:30 PM All ENGAGE! participants invited to attend.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6th – 3:00 PM

READING OUR SAGES: WHAT IS THE MASCULINE?

with **Rabbi Yosi Gordon**, Talmud Torah of St. Paul

There has never been a non-gendered culture, and each culture constructs gender in unique, interesting, complex and frustrating ways. Our Talmudic sages (men) created their own construction of the masculine, and it has shaped our Jewish communities for over two millennia. Every Jewish person of any gender must consider these texts, possibly for enrichment, possibly for liberation. They are terrific stories, as well.

ARABIC: THE JEWISH LANGUAGE EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW

with **Noam Sienna**, professor of Jewish History

Did you know that Jews have been composing literature, poetry, and philosophy in Arabic for over a thousand years? Did you know that Jewish dialects of Arabic are still spoken today? This class surveys the relationship that Jews have had with Arabic since the rise of Islam until the modern period, concluding with the status of Judeo-Arabic today, and what possible directions its future may hold. No knowledge of Arabic necessary.

A MARRIAGE MADE IN... HEAVEN? ISRAEL'S UNPRECEDENTED COALITION GOVERNMENT

with **Rabbi Adam Rubin**, Beth Jacob Congregation

The broadest coalition ever elected to power in Israel's history includes the first Islamist party to join a governing coalition (Ra'am), Zionist parties from the far right and far left, and members who are Jewish and Arab, Orthodox and secular. Its cabinet contains a record number of women (nine out of 27). While vulnerable to collapse and facing numerous challenges - this government has the potential to remake the political culture of the country. What are the implications for Israel's social divides and the dream of peace with the Palestinians?

A WELLSPRING OF POSSIBILITY: THE POWER OF MODERN MIKVEH RITUALS

with **Cantor Rachel Stock Spilker**, Mount Zion Temple; Maayanot Community Mikveh of Minnesota

What does it mean to reclaim and renew the ancient ritual of mikveh immersion? We'll explore the new mikveh movement that is spreading worldwide, find out what is happening right here in Minnesota, and participate in a hand-washing ritual together. *Please bring a mug and a large bowl, or you can grab one during our session.*

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 7th – 9:30 AM

CHALLAH: BRAIDING AND LEARNING

with **Rabbi Alexander Davis**, Beth El Synagogue

Delicious and loaded with symbolism, challot are made in various shapes and sizes, all of which have a meaning. There's braided, round, ladder-shaped, hand-shaped, and oblong challahs; some sprinkled with seeds, others filled

with raisins. We'll explore the spiritual significance of challah and enjoy an advanced challah braiding demonstration.

GENDER FLUIDITY AND DIVERSITY IN JEWISH TRADITION

with **Isaac Ezra Jennings**, Program Coordinator, J-Pride

Explore some of the ways gender is explored and expressed in Jewish texts and learn some basic etiquette for engaging with gender diverse individuals in a warm, growth-focused environment.

AWAKENING THE HEART

with **Julie Dean**, Jewish educator with a passion for Mussar and mindfulness

This class offers a gently guided experience of Hebrew chanting, meditation, and *hitbodedut**. Join us in slowing down and creating space for spiritual uplift using these three Jewish contemplative practices. No experience needed. (**Hitbodedut*, a style of prayer first popularized by Rebbe Nachman of Breslov, is a spontaneous, personal conversation with YHVH (God) that will be done quietly and individually.)

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8th – 7:00 PM

RECENT SCHOLARLY DEBATES ON INTERMARRIAGE IN AMERICAN JEWISH LIFE

with **Riv-Ellen Prell**, Professor Emerita of American Studies, University of Minnesota

Few debates among scholars are as heated as ones concerning the impact of intermarriage on American Jewish life and American Jews. We will look at how this research has changed over the last two decades—both the questions asked and what has been learned. The purpose of the class is not to advocate for positions on intermarriage, but to understand the different perspectives taken by scholars.

WHAT DOES JUDAISM SAY ABOUT ABORTION: ADVOCATING FOR REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM THROUGH A JEWISH LENS

with **Beth Gendler**, Executive Director, NCJW Minnesota

You'll leave this participatory workshop equipped with the tools to make the Jewish case for abortion access, and the ability to speak about our tradition's approach from a place of deep knowledge and understanding.

WHAT WAS THE MOMENT OF THE REDEMPTION OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE?

with **Rabbi Marcus Rubenstein**, Temple of Aaron

Was it the splitting of the Red Sea, the plague of the first born, the revelation at Sinai or maybe something else? In each of those moments, the catalyst for redemption was the empathetic action of Moshe Rabbenu. Through the lens of traditional Torah commentators, Midrash and the great 19th century Mussar master, R. Yerucham Levovitz, we will explore the power of empathy, its influence on Jewish leadership and its primacy as a Jewish value.