

Dear Parents,

As your children progress through our religious school, you may not know what programs in which they will participate. This is a short description of what your child will be doing by grade level. I hope this will explain not only what they will be doing in the current year, but also what they have to look forward to in the coming years.

Our TAPT (Toddlers and Parents Too) program is perfect for 2 and 3 year olds. Children and their parent(s) meet for an hour and a half every other Sunday morning where they experience learning about Judaism with singing, art projects, special snacks and child-centered activities.

Grades PreK through grade 2 meet from 9am to 12 noon on Sunday mornings. These classes learn about Jewish holidays, Hebrew letters, bible stories and Torah from wonderfully creative teachers who have had years of experience with children of these ages. They also have special programs, which run a few times a year: Gan Days for students and parents in PreK and K and Home Start for students and parents in grades 1 and 2.

Grades 3 through 7 also meet on Sunday mornings and on Wednesday afternoons from 4:00-6:00pm. Here students really begin their study of the Hebrew language learning to read and write Hebrew. They also learn Hebrew prayers for various daily and Shabbat services. By 7th grade they will be ready to prepare for becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Grades 3 through 7 have additional curriculum on Israel, an in depth study of holidays, Jewish history, learning about their feelings toward God and why things happen as they do, being a "mensch," and in 7th grade discussing and analyzing Torah text and learning about the holocaust. Our Stella Kurland Wise Family Education Program for grades 3 & 4, happens once a month for student and their parents. Parents are given a wonderful opportunity for adult study while their children are in class. For the last hour the students join in for some special themed activities with their parents. Students in grades 5 through 7 experience some wonderful field trips. They may go the Mayyim Hayyim (the mikvah), or on a Jewish scavenger hunt in Brookline, or to a Shabbaton in the White Mountains among others.

Our High School program for students in grades 8 through 12 meet on Monday evenings from 6:00 – 8:00pm. We begin with some time for socialization; pizza and ice cream, and then proceed to class. 8th graders learn about comparative religions (while enjoying some sweet treats), our 9th graders prepare for their Confirmations and our 10th through 12th graders discuss current topics related to Judaism, ethics and values and prepare for Jewish college life. Many of these students also belong to HEFY, our temple youth group.

If you have any question about these wonderful programs, please call me at 978-373-3861. I am looking forward to a wonderful year with you and your children.

*B'Shalom,
Morah Devorah (Debbi)*

*Debra Levasseur, Religious School Director
debbi@templemanu-el.org*

