

Congregation Emanu-El Introduction to Judaism
The Madeleine Haas Russell Institute of Jewish Learning
2021-2022 Course Syllabus

- Tuesdays 7:00 – 9:00 pm; 2 Shabbat Dinner experiences.
- Jewish partners of students are strongly encouraged to attend and warmly welcomed—we promise you did not learn all of this when you studied for your bat or bar mitzvah!

Attendance is required for Jewish partners of students seeking conversion at Emanu-El.

- In accordance with city and county guidelines, the first trimester will be on Zoom. We will assess after that if we can start meeting in person, which is our ideal, in the winter trimester.
- Required books:
 - Tapper, Aaron H., *Judaisms: A Twenty-First-Century Introduction to Jews and Jewish Identities*. UC Press, Oakland
 - Dosick, Wayne D., *Living Judaism: The Complete Guide to Jewish Belief, Tradition, and Practice*. HarperCollins, New York
 - Timoner, Rachel., *Breath of Life, God as Spirit in Judaism*. Paraclete Press, Brewster

Fall Trimester

October 5 What does Judaism mean and what does it mean to be a Jew?

Judaisms, a Twenty-First-Century Introduction to Jews and Jewish Identities by Aaron J. Hahn
Tapper. Introduction, pages 1-11

October 12 We Were All at Sinai: The Torah, Tanakh, Revelation and Truth

Judaisms, 28-38 (stop at “interpreting the Torah”)

October 19 Interpreting the Tradition: Talmud, Codes, Commentaries & Rabbinic Judaism

Judaisms, 38-43 (start with “interpreting the Torah”)

October 26 The Jewish Calendar; Festival & Holiday Review

Living Judaism by Rabbi Wayne D, pgs. 119-157

November 2 Theologies: Thinking God Jewishly

Breath of Life, by Rabbi Rachel Timoner. Read entire book, 145 pages. Read at least section 1, (chapters 1-3 for this session, but try to read entire book),

November 9 Introduction to Prayer and Siddur

Living Judaism, pgs. 73-129; 201-223

November 16 Temples, Maccabees, Destructions & Reactions

Living Judaism, pgs. 151-54; 357-374

Shabbat Experience I

December 3 The Basics of Shabbat: Experiential Shabbat Service, Dinner and Class –
Required: *Class & dinner at 7:15 PM. You must attend either 6pm service or 8:30pm young adult service in addition to the dinner learning session. Significant others welcome.*

[November 28– December 5: Participate in one of our Emanu-El Chanukah Events

WINTER BREAK December 7 - 28]

Winter Trimester

January 4 Halacha: Mitzvot, Blessings and Being Commanded

Judaisms, 73-92

January 11 Halacha Case Study: Kashrut and The Ethics of Jewish Eating

Living Judaism, pgs. 256-268, Judaisms, 93

January 18 Reform Responsa & Contemporary Applications of Halacha

Reform Responsa is modern Reform responses to Jewish questions. For reading this week, go to <https://www.ccarnet.org/rabbinic-voice/reform-responsa/> and select one rabbinic response to read on a topic of interest to you. Come to class prepared to talk about the one you choose.

January 22 American Jewish Religious Movements

Judaisms, pgs. 145-158

February 1 Tikkun Olam: Social Justice, Activism and Acceptance

Living Judaism, pgs. 30-53

February 8 Global Judaism: Sephardim, Ashkenazim, Mizrachim and other World Jewries

Judaisms, 113-138

February 15 Mystics and Chasids: Kabbalah & Chasidut

Judaisms, 95-112

February 22 History of Judaism in 2 Hours

Judaisms, 12-26

Shabbat Experience II

February 25 *Learners Minyan and Musical Shabbat Dinner – Required*

Class & dinner at 6:00 – 8:30 PM. Please do your best to attend both the service and dinner for a full experiential opportunity. Partners/Family welcome.

SPRING FESTIVITIES:

March 16 - 19 – Congregational Purim Festivities. Check website for details.

March 1-31 Spring Special: NO Introduction to Judaism courses on Tuesday nights but we encourage you to participate in Tauber SPARK: Ignite your Jewish Learning Program – Details to follow. March 8, 15, 22

Spring Trimester

April 5 The Goldberg Rush: The Story of the Jews of San Francisco

Judaisms, 186-189, 209-212

April 12 Passover: Ritual and Meaning

Living Judaism, pgs. 118; 162-173

April 26 Shoah - Historical & Contemporary Anti-Semitism

Living Judaism, pgs. 181-194; Judaisms, 168-183

May 3 Zionism and the State of Israel

Judaisms, 190-207, 212-216

May 10 Birth, Bar & Bat Mitzvah, Marriage

Living Judaism, pgs. 285-300

May 17 End of Life and Beyond

Living Judaism, pgs. 301-322

May 24 Summer Observances, High Holy Days and Beyond

Living Judaism, pgs. 130-196

Addition Recommended Reading:

- Central Conference of American Rabbis., *On the Doorposts of Your House: Prayers and Ceremonies for the Jewish Home*, CCAR Press, New York

- Syme, Daniel B., *The Jewish Home*, URJ Press, New York
- Wylen, M., S. *Setting of Silver: An Introduction to Judaism*. Second Edition. Paulist Press: New York, Mahwah, and N.J.
- Levy, Richard, *A Vision of Holiness: The Future of Reform Judaism* URJ Press, New York