

# HAR SHALOM RELIGIOUS SCHOOL FAMILY HANDBOOK



**WELCOME TO THE 2011-2012/  
5772 SCHOOL YEAR!**

Dear Families,

Welcome to the Har Shalom Religious School! The Faculty, Lay-leaders and I are honored that you have entrusted your child's religious school education to us. We take this sacred responsibility very seriously and have a great year planned – full of meaningful learning, celebration and exploration. Please, if you have any questions at any time about the school program, do not hesitate to be in touch.

L'Shalom,

*Debbie*

Rabbi Deborah Bodin Cohen

Director of Congregational Learning

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## HOW TO CONTACT THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL OFFICE

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## CLASS HOURS

**Grades K, 1, 2** – Sundays 9 am to Noon

**Grades 3 to 7** – Sundays 9 am to Noon & Tuesdays from 4:15 to 6:15 pm

**Grades 8 to 10 (Keshet)** – Sundays 6 to 8 pm

**Grades 11 & 12** – Tuesdays 6:30 to 7:45 pm, twice/month

## CURRICULUM AT A GLANCE

**Kindergarten** is a hands-on, fun introduction to Judaism and our Religious School. Students learn about the Holidays, Shabbat, Israel and our Synagogue. The day is filled with music, crafts and story time.

**First Graders** are introduced to the Alef-Bet and also to the stories from the Torah. Their curriculum also includes the Jewish holidays. Their classroom is active – with music, art, games and more.

**Second Graders** focus on building beginning Hebrew reading skills and learn a Jewish value connected to each Hebrew letter. Each week, they study the Torah portion in an age-appropriate, hands-on way. They have music each week and often art as well!

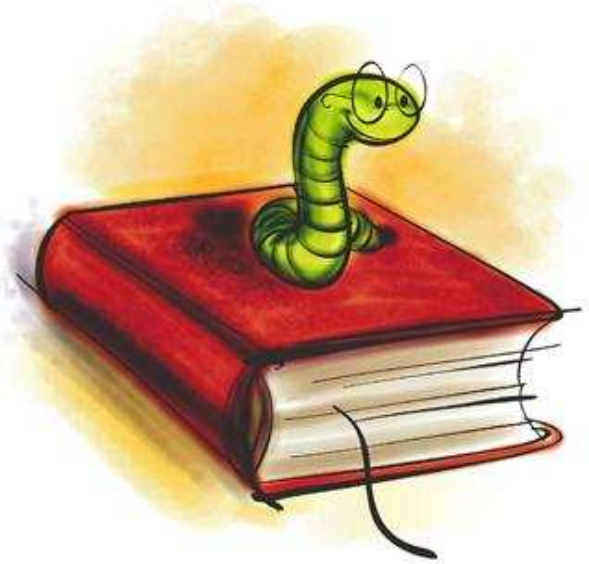
**Third Graders** focus on Hebrew reading and learning blessing and prayers. They study Torah and Israel, as well as some conversational Hebrew and mitzvot. A highlight of the year is Haggigat HaSiddur when they receive their first siddur.

**Fourth Graders** learn the prayers surrounding the Shema. Their Judaica focus is life-cycle; they talk about the different ceremonies that mark a Jewish person's life – baby-namings, Bar Mitzvah, weddings and more. Torah, Israel and holidays round out their curriculum.

**Fifth Graders** learn the prayers of the Amidah. Their Judaica focus is Israel. They also study a series of ethical dilemmas and Jewish responses. For a half hour each Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> graders meet with Hazzan Ozur Bass and learn Trop (Torah Cantillation).

**Sixth Graders** learn with the congregation's clergy: they study with Rabbi Raskin on Tuesdays and, on Sundays, they have a weekly Learner's minyin with the Hazzan, which parents are invited to also attend. For Hebrew studies, they focus on the Torah service. They also study Jewish History and Torah.

**Seventh Graders** study the Holocaust following the ADL's Echoes and Reflections curriculum. The class travels together to the National Holocaust Museum Memorial. In the spring, the students do an extended community service project, visiting an assisted living for a number of weeks and getting to know the residents. Their Hebrew curriculum reviews the prayers needed for B'nai Mitzvah and, then, focuses on Conversational Hebrew.



**Keshet (Grades 8 to 10)** students study a variety of topics relevant to Jewish teens through discussion and hands-on projects. Each session starts with dinner followed by an interactive program, exploring Judaism from a more mature level. Rabbi Cohen and Rabbi Raskin both teach in the program, along with Danny Meisterman, an experienced youth leader and programmer. Trips, guest speakers and special program enrich the experience. Keshet culminates with Confirmation in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Post-Confirmation** (Grades 11 & 12) students learn every other week with Rabbi Raskin and Rabbi Cohen. In 2011-12, the class will follow a curriculum "Understanding the Arab-Israeli Conflict" created by The David Project. This curriculum, designed for 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> graders, provides the analytical framework, historical facts, communication skills and key values to enable teenagers to grasp some of the complexities of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Moreover, the curriculum empowers students to articulate those complexities to others.

## SPECIAL NEEDS & TUTORING PROGRAM

Har Shalom is committed to meeting the needs of all students. We work with parents, students and teachers to integrate students into the school. If your child has a special learning need, please let us know and, if applicable, share their IEP with Rabbi Cohen. Special learning needs often make Hebrew acquisition more difficult. To help all our students learn Hebrew, Har Shalom has developed an extensive tutoring program. A tutor is assigned to each grade on Tuesdays, teenage madrichim give more support and, if needed, a tutor meets with students outside of class time for private tutoring. Individualized programs are developed to meet each child's needs.

## ENHANCEMENTS TO THE CURRICULUM

**Music** – Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade and 7<sup>th</sup> grade meet weekly with the Music Specialist to learn holiday songs, prayers and blessings. For 2011-2012, Eitan Goodman is the Har Shalom Music Specialist. Eitan is a student at University of Maryland who loves Jewish music. His background includes working at Jewish summer camps.



**Art** – Sunday school students meet on a rotating basis with the art specialist Stefie Jo Heideman. The art curriculum is designed to enhance the classroom learning. Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students meet more frequently with the art specialist but grades 3 through 6 work on more intensive projects.

**Technology** – Incorporating technology into the classroom is a focus of the 2011-2012 school year. Lori Miller, a technology special for MCPS, joins the faculty and will help develop a technology program at the religious school, especially focused on Hebrew learning.

**Chugim** – Students in Grades 3 to 7 have Chugim or Clubs every other Tuesday afternoon. Students get to choose from a variety of options, including art, music, cooking, Conversational Hebrew and more. Each Chug (club) meets for half the year, so students take two Chugim over the course of the year.

**T'filah** – Students in Grades 3 to 7 have a prayer service for the last half hour of class, every other Tuesday. Hazzan Ozur Bass leads this service, using it as an opportunity to talk about the meaning and customs of Jewish liturgy.

**Family Education Days** are spread throughout the school year. These days are opportunities for parents to learn with their children, meet the teachers and experience the religious school first hand. Please make family education days a priority!

**Sifreinu** is a program unique to Har Shalom. Students in grades 3 to 7 and their parents read two assigned books during the year. The books are chosen with the grade's curriculum in mind. After reading each book, the students and parents come together for a discussion around the book's themes.

## INVOLVEMENT OF THE CLERGY

**Rabbi Adam Raskin** works closely with the Religious School and its faculty. He is one of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers and also frequently teaches in Keshet. On Sundays, Rabbi Raskin visits other classrooms and participates in special learning opportunities, like assemblies and field trips.

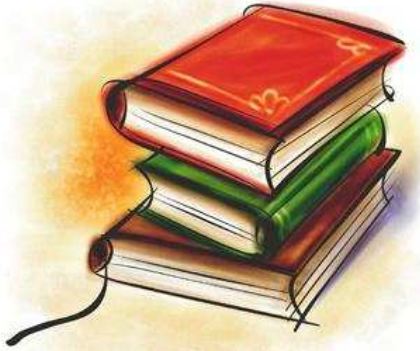


**Hazzan Henrique Ozur Bass** leads the Learner's Service with the 6<sup>th</sup> grade class each Sunday morning and leads the Religious School T'filah every other Tuesday afternoon. He especially supports the Hebrew teachers and the music specialist for the school and works closely with Rabbi Cohen on bridging the Religious School and the B'nai Mitzvah Program.

## HOMework

Students in grades 2 through 7 should expect Hebrew homework each week. This homework is usually to practice reading. Repetition is critical to language acquisition; Hebrew students should plan on spending 10 to 15 minutes, three times per week studying their Hebrew. Students who practice Hebrew at home generally progress more quickly in their Hebrew studies. Most of the Judaica learning takes place during Religious School. Some teachers may assign small projects to complete at home. In addition, Students in grades 3 to 7 will be asked to read two Sifreinu books at home during the year; parents are highly encouraged to also read the books.

## JUNIOR CONGREGATION



**New in 2011-2012/5772** – Har Shalom is proud to introduce a new Junior Congregation to Har Shalom for grades 1 through 7. Junior congregation will meet twice a month from 10 am to noon on Shabbat morning. The goal is creating an age-appropriate prayer environment for our congregation's young people. Junior Congregation will be broken into two groupings – Grades 1 through 3 and Grades 4 through 7. Attending Junior Congregation fulfills the below Shabbat service requirement.

## PASSPORT TO JEWISH LEARNING

**New in 2011-2012/5772** – Students in Grades 2 through 7 will receive a “passport” on the first day of class. The teachers will stamp this passport throughout the year as students meet Hebrew learning goals; the passports include 10 Hebrew learning goals for each grade level. Parents sign their student's passport as Hebrew goals are met. There is also space to stamp the passports as students fulfill their Shabbat service requirement, show Menschlichkeit behavior in class and complete mitzvot. Students who have 30 or more stamps at the end of the year will be invited to a special celebration.

## SHABBAT SERVICE REQUIREMENT

The Religious School focuses on teaching real life skills and knowledge to our students. Learning Hebrew and the tefilot/prayers is central to the school's mission. To best learn and, more importantly, find their learning meaningful, students need to put it to use. We encourage parents and children to attend services together as much as possible as both a way to further learning and also to enrich spirituality and family bonds. As a guideline, the Religious School requires that students attend at least 10 Shabbat services each year. Both the main congregational service and junior congregation count towards this requirement. To get “credit” for attending, the student should offer a “Shabbat Shalom” to Rabbi Raskin, Hazzan Ozur Bass, Rabbi Cohen or one the Junior Congregation leaders who, in turn, will give out the student a card indicating their attendance. The student should show the card to their teacher on Sunday morning to have their passport stamped.

## FIELD TRIPS & SPECIAL EVENTS



Learning at Har Shalom enriched and made more enjoyable through many special events, guest speakers, field trips, and volunteer projects. Examples include Mitzvah Days, a Model Seder, the Holocaust Museum field trip, holiday parties, special services and family B'nai Mitzvah programming. Many of activities need parent volunteers and chaperones. Keep your eyes open for fliers and announcements throughout the year.

## SCHOOL BOARD

The School Board, led by Eileen Penner, works with Rabbi Cohen to set curriculum and to consider improvements to the school program as a whole. David Silver, Vice President of Education and Youth, sits on the School Board and serves as liaison to the Executive Committee of Har Shalom. The School Board meets every month to six weeks, often on Sunday mornings during class. For more information or to join the School Board, contact Eileen Penner, [epenner@mayerbrown.com](mailto:epenner@mayerbrown.com), David Silver, [davidsilver@gmail.com](mailto:davidsilver@gmail.com) or Rabbi Cohen, Rabbi Cohen, [RabbiCohen@harshalom.org](mailto:RabbiCohen@harshalom.org).

## PARENT COMMITTEE

The Parent Committee, led by Lisa Lind & Jennifer Miller, supports the teachers and enriches the Religious School experience through planning special events and holiday celebrations. The Parent Committee organizes class parents and helps to find volunteers for classroom activities. The Committee also collects money for teacher gifts. For more information, contact Lisa Lind at [thelinds5@verizon.net](mailto:thelinds5@verizon.net).

## FOOD

**Snacks** – Students attending class on Tuesday afternoon may bring a snack to eat at the beginning of class. On Sunday mornings, please refrain from sending snacks, as the students are arriving from home and should have eaten at home. Grades K through 2 will have a small snack, provided by the religious school, mid-way through the day.

**Kashrut** – Har Shalom adheres to the laws of Kashrut. Please only send parve or dairy snacks.

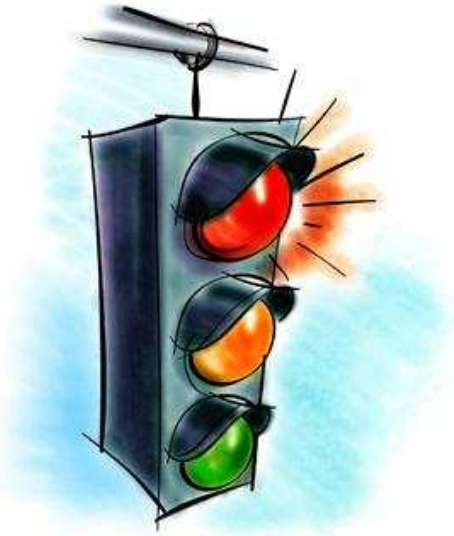
**Food Allergies** - Har Shalom Religious School is a nut-free environment. Please do not send your child with snacks containing nuts. In addition, if you send food for the class, please make sure that they are nut-free and trace nut-free.



## TZEDAKAH

Teachers collect tzedakah money each week. The money, then, is pooled together and students, at the end of the year, choose where to donate it. Tzedakah can be just a coin or two; the amount is not as important as remembering to bring it. Talk about tzedakah at home and encourage your child to use his or her own money for this mitzvah. The school tallies all the money collected. It becomes a competition between grade levels to raise the largest amount. The winning grade receives a special party at the end of the year.

## DROP OFF AND PICK UP



The Har Shalom parking lots gets very crowded during drop off and pick up. Please drive with the utmost care in the parking lot at these times. Students may be dropped off in front of the building or walked to their classroom. Students in the youngest grades typically are walked to class by their parents or an older sibling.

If you need to pick up your child early, please send a notice to the teacher alerting her or him. When you arrive at Har Shalom, please come to the Religious School office to sign your child out before going to the classroom. If somebody other than a parent or guardian is picking a child up (including an older sibling), the office needs advanced permission.

At pick-up, please either park your car and come into the building, or utilize the carpool line. Pick-up from the carpool lane takes place at the curve at the end of the parking lot. Please do not ask your child to get into the car before you get to curve at the end of the parking lot. This is a safety concern. Other drivers do not expect a child to get into a car before the curve.

## YOUTH GROUPS

Har Shalom has a vibrant Youth Program for all age groups. Encourage your child to get involved and meet other young people at Har Shalom. Many activities, especially in the younger grades, take place right after Sunday School. Contact Julie Ashin, Youth Director, 301-299-7087, ext. 236, [JAshin@HarShalom.org](mailto:JAshin@HarShalom.org) for more information

**Gesher** – Kindergarten to 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade

**Klub Kef** – 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Kadima** – 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

**USY** – 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Grade

## INCLEMENT WEATHER



Har Shalom typically follows MCPS when deciding whether to close because of inclement weather. For example, if MCPS cancels afternoon activities on a Tuesday, we will not have class. If MCPS cancels activities in their buildings on a Sunday, we will not have class. The Religious School utilizes email, WTOP radio & television announcements and the congregational web-site for announce a school closing.

## FACULTY

Kindergarten – Lori Miller

First Grade – Jessica Railey

Second Grade – Devon Wohl

Third Grade – Rachel Blatt & Naomi Beroukhim

Fourth Grade – Mary Jane Winokur & Aaron Barnett

Fifth Grade – Channa Fedrick & Miriam Green

Sixth Grade – Rabbi Raskin, Etan Weiss, Michael Stein & Fylis Peckham

Seventh Grade – Benny Levy, Ben Hoult, Batia Cross, Marlene Sandberg

Keshet – Rabbi Cohen, Rabbi Raskin & Danny Meisterman

Post Confirmation – Rabbi Raskin & Rabbi Cohen

Art – Stefie Jo Heideman

Music – Eitan Goodman

Technology – Lori Miller

Tutors – Madeline Shere, Steven Sachs, Alice Strasser, Toby Zlotnicki

## Har Shalom Religious School Calendar 5772/2011-2012

Month	Day	Date	Time	Event
August	Tues.	30	6-8 pm	Opening Teacher Meeting & Dinner
September	Sun.	11	9am-noon	First Day of Religious School
	Sun.	11	9-10 am	Back to School Assembly & Activities Fair
	Sun.	11	6-8 pm	Keshet Begins
	Tues.	13	4:15-6:15 pm	Tuesday Classes Begin
October	Sun.	9	** No School **	Day After Yom Kippur
	Tues.	18	5:15 & 6:30 pm	Pizza in the Hut - Two Seatings
	Sun.	23	11 am – 12 pm	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Sifreinu
	Sun.	30	** No School **	Staff Professional Development
November	Sun.	6	11 am – 12 pm	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Sifreinu
	Sun.	13	9 am – 12 pm	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Sifreinu & Family Education
	Tues.	15	6:30 – 8 pm	Religious School Staff Meeting
	Sun.	27	** No School **	Thanksgiving Weekend
December	Sun.	4	11 am – 12 pm	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Sifreinu
	Sun.	11	12pm – 2 pm	Religious School Staff Meeting
	Tues.	20	** No School **	First Candle for Hanukkah
	Sun.	25	** No School **	Winter Break
	Tues.	27	** No School **	Winter Break
January	Sun.	1	** No School **	New Year's Day
	Tues.	3	4:15 to 6:15 pm	Religious School Resumes
	Sun.	8	9 am to noon	K, 1, 2 Family Education – Parents Invited
	Sun.	15	** No School **	MLK Weekend
	Tues.	17	6:30 – 8 pm	Religious School Staff Meeting
	Sun.	29	9 am – 12 pm	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Holocaust Museum Trip
February	Sun.	5	** No Keshet **	Super Bowl
	Sun.	12	10 am – 12 pm	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Hagigat HaSiddur Workshop
	Tues.	14	** No School **	Primary Elections
	Sun.	19	** No School **	Presidents Weekend
	Sun.	26	12 pm – 2 pm	Parent Teacher Conferences
	Tues.	28	6:30 – 8 pm	Parent Teacher Conferences
March	Sun.	4	9 am – 12 pm	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Sifreinu & Family Education
	Sun.	4	12:15 pm – 2: 15 pm	Religious School Staff Meeting
	Sun.	18	9 am – 12 pm	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Hagigat HaSiddur Ceremony
	Sun.	25	10:30 am – 12 pm	Model Seder – K, 1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grades
	Tues.	27	4:30 pm – 5:15 pm	Model Seder – 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Grades
	Tues.	27	5:30 pm – 6:15 pm	Model Seder – 5 <sup>th</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup> Grades
April	Sun.	1	** No School **	Spring Break
	Tues.	3	** No School **	Spring Break
	Sun.	8	** No School **	Pesah
	Tues.	10	** No School **	Pesah
	Sun.	15	9 am – 12 pm	K, 1, & 2 Family Education
	Tues.	17	6:30 to 8 pm	Religious School Staff Meeting
	Sun.	22	11 am – 12 pm	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Sifreinu
May	Sun.	6	9 am – 12 pm	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Sifreinu & Family Education
	Sun.	13	** No School **	Mother's Day
	Sun.	20	12 pm – 2 pm	Religious School Staff Meeting
	Sun.	27	** No School **	Memorial Day Weekend / Shavuot
	Tues.	29	4:15 to 6:15 pm	Religious School – Last Tuesday Class
June	Sun.	3	9 am to noon	Religious School - Last Sunday Class