

## **Congregation Beth Shalom Hebrew School Curriculum**

**5776/2015-2016**

*Revised August, 2015*

*Rabbi Michael Beals*

*Cantor Elisa Abrams Casuto, Education Director*

**The goal of the Congregation Beth Shalom Hebrew School is to help each child find sources of significance and enrichment in Jewish living. All activities of the school, directed toward this aim, constitute the curriculum. With a new building, including new classrooms and a new multi-media center, new and increasingly interactive ways of learning are now available to all of our children.**

A curriculum can suggest subject matter to be presented, but its value and influence on pupils depend on the teacher's interpretation and emphasis. Our purpose is to present a realistic course of study, one which will help our children achieve higher goals than the mere acquisition of information. The Hebrew school is only one force for the children to develop well-adjusted, wholesome personalities. Our curriculum is spiral-based, with children building up their skills, practice, knowledge, values and experience from year to year.

### ***Specific Aims for our Hebrew School***

- To teach our children to be participating members in constantly widening circles of Judaism – the Jewish home, the Jewish community, Israel, and the Jewish world, and to integrate this participation with their membership in the community.
- To teach our children Jewish history and literature, including the Bible, Talmud, Midrash, and other sources, as they contribute to each child's strength as Jews.
- To teach each child that Hebrew is the language of the Jewish people, encouraging them to develop a relationship with Hebrew through the reading, writing, and speaking of this language, ***focusing first on Biblical/prayer-based Hebrew, with increasing levels of modern/conversational Hebrew throughout the Hebrew School years, leading to conversational Hebrew in middle school.***
- To develop comfort and understanding of *tefillot* (Prayers/Liturgy), Torah, and full participation as Jewish adults, including the participating and leading of services, ***focusing primarily on facility and second on comprehension of the Prayers/Liturgy.***
- To have our children become menshe-like, including incorporating values such as *derech eretz* (manners), *tikkun olam* (repair of the world), and *ba'al tashhit* (care of the environment).
- To afford our children the experience of a congregation through participation in Junior Congregation and adult services; music; the observance of holidays and other Jewish occasions, and the practice of *Tzedakah* (charity).

## ***Our CBS Hebrew School Curriculum***

This curriculum divides each grade into core areas:

***Grade Focus; Specific Goals; Hebrew; Holidays, Customs,  
& Ceremonies; Prayers/Liturgy; Torah; Israel/History;  
Mitzvot; Connecting with Clergy***

### ***Grade Focus***

The Grade Focus describes the overall mission of the class and what separates it and makes it unique from grades younger and older.

### ***Specific Goals***

Specific Goals breaks down what we expect to be transmitted from teacher and school to each individual child. These specific goals are an overview of what will be taught in the following six areas: Hebrew, Holidays/Calendar, Prayers/Liturgy, Torah, Israel/History, and Mitzvot.

### ***Hebrew***

The language of the Jewish people is Hebrew. For thousands of years we have prayed in Hebrew, conversed in Hebrew, sung in Hebrew, and performed dances with Hebrew songs. Hebrew is a living language spoken daily by over 8 million people. Hebrew is the language of Israel and Israel is the eternal home of the Jewish people.

In our Hebrew School we focus more on Biblical, prayer-based Hebrew, than on conversational Hebrew. We do introduce conversational Hebrew in every grade and we focus our energies on the Prayers/Liturgy the children will hear and need to know for lifelong participation in Jewish life. We are proud that our students tell us that while travelling around the world, they make it a point to visit synagogues and were able to actively participate.

### ***Holidays, Customs, & Ceremonies***

The Jewish calendar is host to wonderful holidays, some happy times, some sad times, but all times in which we reflect on our history as a collective people. We learn of our struggles and triumphs that have brought us to this day and how our collective history is something that binds all Jewish people together.

Some school-wide or multi-grade programs include our Tu B'Shevat (Birthday of the Trees) seder, the annual visit to the Lipschultz sukkah, our Hanukkah Spectacular (organized by the Parent Association), Passover Model Seder and our our Yetziat Metzrayim, "Leaving Egypt", program. All classes focus on the High Holy Days of Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year) and Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) towards the beginning of the year and then go straight into Sukkot and the fall season. We make a concerted effort to reach children on their developmental levels, meaning we teach Hanukkah differently to Gan (K) than we do to our Kitah Vav (6<sup>th</sup>) children!

Learning about Jewish ceremonies, that include life-cycle events such as *brit milah* (ritual circumcision) and *simchat bat* (a baby girl's naming), are moments in a Jewish person's life. A goal of our program is to create connections through these ceremonies to our own family traditions.

### ***Prayers/Liturgy***

*Tefillot*, Prayers/Liturgy, are central to the Jewish learning in our Hebrew School. We want our children to grasp the meanings and intentions of each prayer, and not just recite them from memory. We begin each day with a short *Tefillah*, often led by students as young as the 2nd Grade, and we focus on Prayers/Liturgy that would be heard in an adult service. From the first morning prayer, *Modeh Ani*, in which we thank God for the fact that we woke up in a loving and safe home, through the *Misheberach* Prayer for Healing (Debbie Friedman's lovely tune), where we mention the names of our friends and loved ones that are sick or in need of prayers, we use our time learning Prayers/Liturgy that are relevant to both children and adults alike.

### ***Torah***

The Torah is the backbone of the Jewish People. It tells our story from *Beresheet*, Genesis (or literally "From the Beginning"), through the death of Moses. It is the story of our Exodus from Egypt and much, much more. We spend a few minutes each week in *Tefillah* learning about that week's *parsha*, or weekly Torah portion, and how it is relevant to both today's world and to our children. In age-appropriate ways (stories, games, activities, dramatic pieces) our children learn Bible stories, who our heroes and heroines in the Torah, and values that they can apply to their own lives.

### ***Israel/History***

Israel is the homeland of the Jewish people. From the earliest grades we teach about Israel through song, movies, food, cultural arts, and more. We utilize teachers that have been to Israel, who have lived in Israel, and even who are Israeli, to connect our youth with Israel. From our annual *Yom HaShoah* (Holocaust Remembrance Day) program to *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* (Israel Independence Day) celebration, we make Israel and Jewish history an everyday part of our Hebrew School experience.

### ***Mitzvot***

Judaism has 613 commandments, or *mitzvot*. Some of these are better known than others, including ones found in the *Aseret HaDibrot*, the Ten Commandments, such as "honor your parents" and "do not steal". Many more *mitzvot* exist, however, and we incorporate learning the *mitzvot* as part of our learning experience. Particularly as the children get older and begin to view moral issues with interest and excitement, we bring in texts that use every-day situations and show how Jewish values (*middot*) and the *mitzvot* of our faith guide not just the big-picture world that we live in but also our everyday lives. We provide multiple opportunities each year for our students and families to participate in *tikkun olam*, "repair of the world", and mitzvah projects.

***Connecting with Clergy***

At Congregation Beth Shalom we are blessed to have a dynamic, warm clergy team made up of Rabbi Michael Beals and Cantor Elisa Abrams. Throughout the school year both Rabbi Michael and Cantor Elisa visit classrooms, teach lessons to our children, and connect with families through family education, field trips, school-wide events, and more. They are integral to the development of each child's positive Jewish identity and to the overall mission of our growing Hebrew School.

## **Halutzim (“Pioneers”, our program for 3, 4, & 5 year olds)**

### ***Grade Focus***

The focus of Halutzim is to be an introduction to Sunday School in a bite-sized format. Meeting for two hours on Sunday, the children of Halutzim will experience Judaism through their senses (art, music, stories, dance, food) and through new friendships.

For many of our children Halutzim will be the first exposure they will have to other Jewish children. They will learn that other Jewish children often have the same ceremonial objects in their houses, including Passover seder plates and challah covers. They will “do Jewish” by creating such projects as:

- Apple & honey plates
- Model shofar
- Challah cover
- Passover seder plate
- Shabbat candles
- Cards for those in hospitals as part of a *Bikkur Holim* (care for the sick) project

### ***Specific Goals***

- Introduce Alef-Bet
- Understand the concept that Hebrew is a language different than English
- Be able to recognize the letters of certain words in Hebrew, including *Shabbat*, *ima*, *abba*, etc, and many more words by sound.
- Learn about our holidays.
- Introduce the Hebrew vocabulary through playing games.

### ***Hebrew***

By the end of the school year, the objective is to have our Halutzim children aware that Hebrew is a different language from English, that Hebrew songs are fun and engaging and that Jewish people learn and speak Hebrew. They will also know that learning Hebrew is something they can do as well.

Texts: [Jewish and Me Holiday Packets](#) (Behrman House)

[Tapooach Means Apple](#) (ARE Publishing)

This hardcover picture book introduces Hebrew letters and simple words to young children. Includes strong, colorful illustrations of 29 everyday objects and animals, labeled in Hebrew, Hebrew transliteration, and English.

Hebrew Letter Copy Packets (Behrman House)

### ***Prayers/Liturgy***

- Blessings over candles, wine, hand-washing, challah

Congregation Beth Shalom 5776/2015-2016  
Curriculum

- Blessings over food
- Modeh Ani
- Shema
- Apples Dipped in Honey
- Festival Candle Blessing
- Hanukkah Candle Blessings
- Shehechyanu
- Dayenu

***Connecting with Clergy***

*Rabbi Michael and Cantor Elisa will visit Halutzim and read stories, teach songs, and connect with our youngest learners in age-appropriate ways, strengthening the curriculum with language, practice, and kavanah (intention).*

## GAN (Kindergarten)

### ***Grade Focus***

The goal of the Gan (K) grade is to build a foundation for Jewish education and to provide a rich variety of experiences in Jewish observance: holiday hands-on-experiences, the joy of Shabbat, and special days, through songs, games, artwork, stories, tefillah (Prayers/Liturgy) and crafts. We will join the entire school in celebrating the holidays such as: performing the mitzvah of *leyahev sukkah* by visiting a sukkah, the fun of Hanukkah, Tu B'Shevat seder, the exchange of *Mishloach Manot* for Purim, a Pesach model seder, and Lag B'Omer sports day and family picnic.

### ***Specific Goals***

- Teach Jewish holidays through stories, observances, customs and appropriate blessings and Prayers/Liturgy.
- Create arts and craft projects related to each specific holiday.
- Discuss the moral lesson derived during Bible story telling time.
- Introduce Hebrew vocabulary through playing games.
- Learn all Hebrew letters.

### ***Hebrew***

Texts: [Let's Discover the Aleph-Bet](#) (Feldman, Behrman House) (as homework supplement only)

[Kadimah](#) (Lenchner, Behrman House)

Kitah Gan children learn the names and sounds of the 22 letters of the *aleph bet* by utilizing twenty-four entertaining and exciting 4-page folders. Presented in the order of *the aleph bet*, each folder introduces one letter and includes: A key Hebrew word – with an accompanying English explanation – teaching the new letter, inventive activities to reinforce the shape and sound of each letter, additional Hebrew vocabulary words beginning with the new letter, playful exercises to engage the child's artistic and creative interest, "In School or At Home"--an activity to be used in the classroom or sent home to encourage family participation, and clever riddles to entertain young audiences.

As they learn the letters of the *aleph bet*, students develop a basic Jewish vocabulary. *Bayit* teaches *bet*, *shofar* teaches *shin*. Important cultural concepts are also explained. What is kept inside the *Aron Kodesh*? What are ritual objects we use to make *Havdalah*?

Units include: Shabbat, Classroom, Animals, *Pesach* (Passover), and Jewish Life and introduce key words and core oral vocabulary through a variety of imaginative, fun-filled exercises.

By the end of the school year, the objective is to send our students into the Aleph class with a good foundation in the Hebrew language. Each child should be able to recognize and print his/her Hebrew name, recognize and know the sounds of the letters of the Aleph-Bet, follow simple directions in Hebrew, and use vocabulary that describes

familiar context: family, foods, calendar, seasons, months of the year, days of the week, numbers, weather and colors.

### ***Holidays, Customs, & Ceremonies***

Text: My First Learn and Do Jewish Holiday Book (R. Gootel, Behrman House)

Our Kitah Gan children discover the customs, foods, and blessings of each holiday. Presented in clear, simple language for beginning readers; non-readers will easily follow along when the book is read aloud. Make a Rosh Hashanah card, decorate a sukkah, design a Purim mask, and much more!

Text: [Look at Me Series 1-4](#) (Levin/Yudkoff, Behrman House)  
Let's Discover God ( Van Dusen/Thompson, Behrman House)

The *Look at Me* series of magazines introduces core Jewish concepts and values and teaches essential Kitah Gan developmental skills. Each 16-page, full-color magazine provides engaging, age-appropriate activities and illustrations that reinforce young children's counting skills, visual discrimination, and fine motor coordination. All the while students build their Jewish identities, knowledge, and values. The magazines are enjoyed in both our Hebrew School setting and then they are sent home to be shared and used by each child's family.

### ***Prayers/Liturgy***

- Blessings over candles, wine, hand-washing, challah
- Blessings over food
- Modeh Ani
- Shema
- Apples Dipped in Honey/Tapuchim U'Dvash
- Festival Candle Blessing
- Hanukkah Candle Blessings
- Shehechyanu
- Dayenu

### ***Connecting with Clergy***

*Rabbi Michael and Cantor Elisa will visit Kitah Gan and read stories, teach songs, and connect with our youngest learners in age-appropriate ways, strengthening the curriculum with language, practice, and kavanah (intention).*

## **ALEPH (1<sup>st</sup> Grade)**

### ***Grade Focus***

The goal of the Aleph grade is to continue to build a foundation for Jewish education and to provide a rich variety of experiences in Jewish observance: holiday hands-on-experiences, the joy of Shabbat, and special days, through songs, games, artwork, and crafts. We will join the entire school in celebrating the holidays such as: performing the mitzvah of *leyahev sukkah* by visiting a sukkah, the fun of Hanukkah, Tu B'Shevat seder, the exchange of *Mishloach Manot* for Purim, a Pesach model seder, and Lag B'Omer sports day and family picnic. We hope to help each child find a source of significance and enrichment in Jewish living through Jewish values: the practice of Tzedakah and Mitzvot, and a love for Israel.

### ***Specific Goals***

- Review Alef-Bet
- Teach Jewish holidays through stories, observances, customs and appropriate blessings and Prayers/Liturgy.
- Create arts and craft projects related to each specific holiday.
- Discuss the moral lesson derived during Bible story telling time.
- Introduce Hebrew vocabulary through playing games.

### ***Hebrew***

Our goals for Hebrew in the Kitah Aleph (1<sup>st</sup> Grade), beyond introducing Hebrew letters and vowels, are to:

- Demonstrate that Hebrew is read from right to left
- Present single-syllable letter-vowel combinations
- Develop simple decoding skills

Text: [Shalom Aleph Bet: A Pre-Primer for Shalom Uvrachah](#) (Tarnor)

This new, sophisticated level of reading readiness instruction - letter recognition and a gentle introduction to the vowels – happens thanks to this wonderful teaching aide! In 96 full-color pages, our children become familiar with the Hebrew alphabet's letters and vowels. They practice single-syllable letter-vowel combinations and systematically practice letter-to-sound and vowel-to-sound relationships.

By the end of the school year, children will be prepared for Kitah Bet by having increased their knowledge of vocabulary and are now able to write key words in Hebrew (Shabbat, Torah, etc.). They have now been exposed to every letter and are familiar with the Aleph-Bet song.

### ***Prayers/Liturgy***

Congregation Beth Shalom 5776/2015-2016  
Curriculum

- Blessings over candles, wine, hand-washing, challah
- Blessings over food
- Modeh Ani
- Shema and V'Ahavta
- Apples Dipped in Honey/Tapuchim U'Dvash
- Festival Candle Blessing
- Hanukkah Candle Blessings
- Shehechyanu
- Dayenu
- Ma Tovu
- Barchu

Text: [Teach Me Torah - 1](#) (Weber, Behrman House)

A richly illustrated Bible program for young children, *Teach Me Torah* introduces eight classic Bible texts, from Genesis to the story of Joseph, and the Jewish values that can be drawn from them, such as taking care of God's world and asking for forgiveness. Each story is told in simple yet dramatic language and is presented in its own four-page, full-color folder. The back page of the folder includes an "Ask at Home" section with discussion questions based on the Biblical story or Jewish value for students to explore with their parents. For example, the *Rebecca* folder, which introduces the value of showing kindness, invites parents and students to explore the question, "What does kindness look like to you?"

**Set One Stories and Values:**

- |                       |                             |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. God and Creation   | Taking Care of the World    |
| 2. Adam and Eve       | Accepting Responsibility    |
| 3. Noah               | Doing the Right Thing       |
| 4. The Tower of Babel | Remembering to be Humble    |
| 5. Abraham            | Standing up for Others      |
| 6. Rebecca            | Showing Kindness            |
| 7. Jacob and Esau     | Keeping Peace in the Family |
| 8. Joseph             | Asking for Forgiveness      |

### ***Holidays, Customs, & Ceremonies***

The essential concepts and observances of each holiday are taught through story, song, arts & crafts, and appropriate prayer. The Hebrew vocabulary is introduced. The children have an opportunity to participate in school and synagogue observances and celebrations of each holiday.

### ***Connecting with Clergy***

***Rabbi Michael and Cantor Elisa will visit Kitah Aleph and read stories, teach songs, and connect with our youngest learners in age-appropriate ways, strengthening the curriculum with language, practice, and kavanah (intention). In addition, Cantor Elisa will work with and assist the classroom leadership team by teaching songs for communal Jewish observance (holidays, programs), songs related to the founding and history of Israel, vocabulary building texts, summer camp songs and modern compositions (Debbie Friedman, Craig Taubman, SAFAM, etc.), plus historical reference songs (Ladino, Yiddish) and holiday songs for home and shul use.***

## **BET (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade)**

### ***Grade Focus***

The goal of Kitah Bet (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade) is to continue to reinforce the foundation of Jewish education and to provide a rich variety of experiences in Jewish observance: stories, dance, computers, songs, games, artwork, and crafts. We will join the entire school in celebrating the holidays as: performing the mitzvah of *leshev b'sukkah* by visiting a sukkah, the fun of Hanukkah, Tu B'Shevat seder, the exchange of mishloach manot for Purim, a Pesach model seder, and Lag B'Omer sports day and family picnic. We hope to help each child find a source of significance and enrichment in Jewish living through Jewish values.

### ***Specific Goals***

- Lead parts of the Friday night Kabbalat Shabbat service at their Consecration Shabbat service
- Identify and decode all Hebrew letters and vowels in print
- Become familiar with common vocabulary such as descriptive words for the family, the home, classroom objects, the weather, holidays, colors, body parts, numbers 1-10, Jewish calendar
- Know question words such as what, when, where, why, who, and how
- Know simple prepositions such as in, on, at, under, beside, etc.

### ***Hebrew***

Text: [Shalom U'Vrachah The New Hebrew Primer \(Print Edition\)](#)  
(Tarnor/Levy)

The aim of the Bet Class curriculum is to foster a joy in reading and writing in Hebrew. Decoding skills are taught from key cultural words and concepts, plus:

- Visual discrimination practice (bet vs. vet, shin vs. sin, etc.)
- Similar letter-sound and vowel-sound drills
- Exercises for individual reading practice

In Kitah Bet our Hebrew focus is on decoding skills from key cultural words and concepts. Students learn the letters *kuf* and *tzadee* from the word *tzedakah*; they learn *tet* from *tallit* and *zayin* from *mezuzah*. Through meaningful words we teach decoding skills and we focus on vowels sounds systematically taught through small, manageable increments. We teach look-alike and sound-alike letters separately to avoid confusion and maximize our learning time.

## ***Holidays, Customs, & Ceremonies***

The story of each holiday is presented alongside the rituals, symbols, traditions, and legends that have grown around it. Students also learn the blessings and key vocabulary and songs for each holiday.

Text: [The Jewish Holiday Treasure Trail](#) (Patz, Behrman House)

Students will explore the Jewish holidays as they travel through time and space with Israeli youngsters and the prophet Elijah, along the way encountering people and places as old as the Bible and as new as modern Israel.

Students will participate in a Consecration ceremony at which time they will be presented with their new Siddur, the cover of which will be designed by their parents (or grandparents).

## ***Prayers/Liturgy***

Text: [Siddur Sim Shalom Weekdays](#) (Rabbi Avram Israel Reisner)

- Blessings over candles, wine, hand-washing, challah
- Blessings over food
- Modeh Ani
- Shema and V'Ahavta
- Apples Dipped in Honey/Tapuchim U'Dvash
- Festival Candle Blessing
- Hanukkah Candle Blessings
- Shehechyanu
- Dayenu
- Ma Tovu
- Barchu
- Adon Olam
- Ma Nishtana

## ***Torah – Bible***

Text: [Teach Me Torah - 2](#) (Weber, Behrman House)

A richly illustrated Bible program for young children, *Teach Me Torah* introduces eight classic Bible texts, from Exodus to the Book of Esther, and the Jewish values that can be drawn from them, such as taking care of God's world and asking for forgiveness. Each story is told in simple yet dramatic language and is presented in its own four-page, full-color folder. The back page of the folder includes an "Ask at Home" section with discussion questions based on the Biblical story or Jewish value for students to explore with their parents. For example, the *David and Goliath* folder, which introduces the value of being brave, invites parents and students to explore the questions, "Who is the bravest person you know? Why?"

Congregation Beth Shalom 5776/2015-2016  
Curriculum

**Set Two Stories and Values:**

- |                                  |                              |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Miriam and Moses              | Protecting Life              |
| 2. Moses and Pharaoh             | Trusting in God              |
| 3. The Israelites and God's Laws | Serving God                  |
| 4. Ruth and Naomi                | Feeding the Hungry           |
| 5. David and Goliath             | Being Brave                  |
| 6. Solomon                       | Seeking Wisdom               |
| 7. Jonah                         | Caring about Others          |
| 8. Esther                        | Loyalty to the Jewish People |

***Connecting with Clergy***

*Rabbi Michael and Cantor Elisa will visit Kitah Bet and read stories, teach songs, and connect with our youngest learners in age-appropriate ways, strengthening the curriculum with language, practice, and kavanah (intention). In addition, Cantor Elisa will work with and assist the classroom leadership team by teaching songs for communal Jewish observance (holidays, programs), songs related to the founding and history of Israel, vocabulary building texts, summer camp songs and modern compositions (Debbie Friedman, Craig Taubman, SAFAM, etc.), plus historical reference songs (Ladino, Yiddish) and Holiday songs for home and shul use.*

## **GIMMEL (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade)**

### ***Grade Focus***

The goal of Kitah Gimmel (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade) is to expand the children's knowledge of Hebrew in three key areas: language skills, reading skills, and writing skills. We use a specific curricular text that allows us to teach the writing of Hebrew in an effective and fun way. We continue to work on Prayers/Liturgy that we *daven* during weekday and Shabbat services and reinforce learning from previous years. Vocabulary in Kitah Gimmel is also increasingly holiday-focused. Bible stories that focus on Jewish ethics and Jewish law are also covered in detail.

### ***Specific Goals***

- Read Hebrew confidently with vowels
- Know the vocabulary words drawn from textbooks and other readings
- Use the vocabulary words in present tense when writing and speaking
- Tell simple stories from pictures
- Continue to learn proper grammar (e.g., plural/singular, masculine/feminine, and pronouns)
- Incorporate modern language component into an integrated Hebrew program of prayer literacy
- Read familiar Prayers/Liturgy and blessings from the Siddur
- Begin to write with ease in cursive
- We emphasize Judaism as a religion of ethics and morality, based on traditions and texts.
- Give the gift of being proud owners of our collective heritage to our children.

### ***Hebrew***

Text: Zman Likro 1: Time to Read Hebrew (Orna Lenchner, Ph.D)

This text begins the systematic teaching of Hebrew through decoding. The first ten lessons include structured Reading Pages for practice and evaluation, as well as creative worksheets for reinforcement. The children are also given a dictionary to help with translations! This text allows the children and teachers to:

- Identify consonants and vowels using Key Words.
- Learn Key Words that represent important and familiar Jewish concepts.
- Learn drill words drawn from blessings, Prayers/Liturgy, and traditional texts.
- Use Hebrew root words (*shoreshim*) to aid in comprehension.
- Use a variety of strategies to engage all types of learners.

### ***Holidays, Customs, & Ceremonies***

Text: My Jewish Year (Fisher, Behrman House)

Excitement of holiday celebration is a focus in Kitah Gimmel. The breathless search for the *afikoman* on Passover, the delight of dressing up in costume for Purim, and the awe inspired by the sounding of the shofar... all of the rich traditions and tales of the holidays are captured! Each holiday is presented alongside the rituals, symbols, traditions, and

Congregation Beth Shalom 5776/2015-2016  
Curriculum

legends that have grown around it. Students also learn the blessings and key vocabulary for each holiday, including *Rosh Hashanah*, *Yom Kippur*, *Sukkot*, *Simhat Torah*, *Shabbat*, *Hanukkah*, *Tu B'Shevat*, *Purim*, *Passover*, *Yom HaShoah*, *Yom Ha'Atzmaut*, and *Shavuot*.

### ***Prayer/Liturgy***

Text: [Siddur Sim Shalom Weekdays](#) (Rabbi Avram Israel Reisner)

- Blessings over candles, wine, hand-washing, challah
- Blessings over food
- Modeh Ani
- Shema and V'Ahavta
- Apples Dipped in Honey/Tapuchim U'Dvash
- Festival Candle Blessing
- Hanukkah Candle Blessings
- Shehechyanu
- Dayenu
- Ma Tovu
- Barchu
- Adon Olam
- Ma Nishtana
- Havdallah
- Ein Keloheinu
- Lecha Dodi (first two and last two verses)
- Shalom Aleichem
- Mi Chamocha
- V'Shamru
- Kadesh Urchatz
- Avinu Malkeinu

### ***Israel***

Text : [Yisrael Artzaynu: Our Homeland, our Home](#) (Florsheim, Behrman House)

### ***Torah***

Text: [Let's Learn Bible](#) – (Meilich, Ktav)

A combination of the Bible and later Jewish life and experience approached through the systems of values and ethics that are taught by the individual story, event, or personality. We emphasize Judaism as a religion of ethics and morality, based on traditions and texts.

### ***Connecting with Clergy***

***Rabbi Michael and Cantor Elisa will visit Kitah Gimmel and connect with our learners in age-appropriate ways, strengthening the curriculum with language, practice, and kavanah (intention). In addition, Cantor Elisa will work with and assist the classroom leadership team by teaching songs for communal Jewish observance (holidays, programs), songs related to the founding and history of Israel, vocabulary building texts, summer camp songs and modern compositions (Debbie Friedman, Craig Taubman, SAFAM, etc.), plus historical reference songs (Ladino, Yiddish) and Holiday songs for home and shul use.***

## DALET (4<sup>th</sup> Grade)

### ***Grade Focus***

The goal of Kitah Dalet (4<sup>th</sup> Grade) is to begin seeing the Torah as a guiding text, one that teaches through each week's Torah portion (*Parsha*) how we can live our lives as ethical beings. We expand the children's knowledge of Hebrew in three key areas: language skills, reading skills, and writing skills. The solid foundation of Hebrew developed in earlier grades allows children in Kitah Dalet to expand their knowledge into new areas, including reading contemporary Hebrew comic books, the leading of *tefillot* (Prayers/Liturgy), and more.

### ***Specific Goals***

- Discussion of major events, issues, and laws in weekly Torah portion and the reinforcement of key Hebrew words or phrases in the portion
- Read Hebrew with vowels with fluency
- Know vocabulary words drawn from textbooks and other readings
- Read familiar Prayers/Liturgy and blessings from the Siddur, adding to those studied in earlier grades

### ***Hebrew***

Text: Zman Likro 2: Time to Read Hebrew (Orna Lenchner, Ph.D.)

This second volume of the two-volume Z'man Likro primer program contains the final ten Hebrew decoding lessons. Once they have completed volume two, students will be prepared for any Hebrew program. This text includes structured reading pages for practice and evaluation, as well as creative worksheets for reinforcement, plus an expanded dictionary.

- Identify consonants and vowels using Key Words.
- Learn Key Words that represent important and familiar Jewish concepts.
- Learn drill words drawn from blessings, Prayers/Liturgy, and traditional texts.
- Use Hebrew root words (Shoreshim) to aid in comprehension.
- Use a variety of strategies to engage all types of learners.

### ***Holidays, Customs, & Ceremonies***

Text: [The Book of Jewish Holidays](#) – Kozodoy

Feasts and festivals mark the Jewish year and Kitah Dalet is all about exploring and learning about them! Modern customs and celebrations are presented alongside each holiday's history and ancient traditions. Bible stories and *Midrashim* illuminate the meaning of the holiday and special attention will be given to how holidays build core Jewish values.

### ***Prayer/ Liturgy***

Text: [Siddur Sim Shalom Weekdays](#) (Rabbi Avram Israel Reisner)

Text: [Hineni Packets \(Behrman House\)](#)

- Blessings over candles, wine, hand-washing, challah
- Blessings over food
- Modeh Ani
- Shema and V'Ahavta
- Apples Dipped in Honey/Tapuchim U'Dvash
- Festival Candle Blessing
- Hanukkah Candle Blessings
- Shehechyanu
- Dayenu
- Ma Tovu
- Barchu
- Adon Olam
- Ma Nishtana
- Havdallah
- Ein Keloheinu
- Lecha Dodi (first two and last two verses)
- Shalom Aleichem
- Mi Chamocha
- V'Shamru
- Kadesh Urchatz
- Avinu Malkeinu
- Oseh Shalom
- Mizmor Shir
- Tzadik Katamar
- Friday Night Kiddush
- Festival Kiddush (first line)

### ***Torah***

Text: The Ten Commandments (N. Karkowsky, Behrman House)

Kitah Dalet children explore the moral lessons of the Ten Commandments with timeless stories from the Bible, Talmud, and Jewish folklore with this wonderful text as a guide. It is presented in child-friendly, everyday English, with each commandment accompanied by hands-on activities to help students integrate the lessons into their own lives. Dramatic classroom experiment demonstrations are also included with each chapter.

Text: [Manga Midrash – Compassion: Eliezer and Rebecca at the Well](#) (Gevertz, Behrman House)

This booklet presents Genesis 24:10-27, the story of the search for a wife for our patriarch Isaac and how Rebecca proved herself to be a suitable mate, matriarch, and leader of the Jewish people. Students' understanding is developed through a series of

motivating activities and by a rabbinic *midrash* that illuminates the Biblical story. Before creating their own *midrash*, students explore questions and ideas such as: Why was it important that the future matriarch of Israel show compassion to animals as well as to people? How can putting yourself in another person's place help you become a more compassionate person?

Manga Midrash explores the meaning and values of selected Biblical and rabbinic texts. Each booklet uses manga, a cutting-edge, illustrated storytelling technique developed in Japan, to present a Bible story, a rabbinic midrash exploring that story, and a related Jewish value. Powered by manga's dynamic and motivating format, students actively participate in the tradition of interpreting sacred text while discussing Jewish values.

Every Manga Midrash booklet includes these exciting features: **Bible Classics:** A faithful age-appropriate translation of the original text illustrated with a powerful graphical telling of the story. **Standing in Their Shoes:** Probing questions that ask students to answer as the Biblical characters might. **Rabbinic Midrash: Our Sages Teach Us** A dynamic retelling of a traditional midrash based on the Bible story. **Creating Midrash: What Were the Sages Thinking?** An activity in which students can reflect on the meaning of the midrash. **My Modern Midrash: Our Generation Speaks** A lively story-starter, to be completed by students. **Creating Midrash: What Do You Think?** A tool to help students plan their own unique ending to the midrashic story starter. **Be a Jewish Leader-in-Training** A closing, values-based activity to help students demonstrate their learning.

Text: [Manga Midrash – Courage: Moses, the Israelites, and the Golden Calf \(G. Gevertz, Behrman House\)](#)

This booklet presents Exodus 32:1-14, the story of the Golden Calf. The children's understanding is developed through a series of motivating activities and by a rabbinic *midrash* that illuminates the Biblical story. Before creating their own *midrash*, students explore questions such as: Why did Moses' brother Aaron agree to make the Golden Calf? How did Moses show courage? Did the rabbis consider Aaron cowardly or courageous? How can ordinary people show courage?

### ***Israel/History***

Text: [Welcome to Israel!](#) – Rivlin/Gevirtz

- “**My Hebrew Dictionary**” Key Hebrew words in Hebrew and English translation
- “**Living Jewish Values**” Mitzvot associated with the chapter content
- “**It's a Fact**” and “**Did You Know?**” Intriguing information about Israel
- “**Map It Out**” Map-reading activities that develop students' knowledge of Israel's geography

Children are presented with the miracle of the Jewish state with a sense of wonder, humor, and pizzazz! We introduce students to Israel's history, geography, political, commercial, and cultural life. Israel's struggle to coexist peacefully with its neighbors is presented in a thoughtful and age-appropriate way. Children also learn about Israelis

their own age: what they do for fun, their favorite sports and foods, and what their schools are like. We use full-color photos, maps, and whimsical illustrations help make the excitement of Israel come alive. Best of all, we develop children's love for Israel and makes them want to visit the country – for real!

### ***Connecting with Clergy***

***Rabbi Michael and Cantor Elisa will visit Kitah Dalet and connect with our learners in age-appropriate ways, strengthening the curriculum with language, practice, and kavanah (intention). In addition, Cantor Elisa will work with and assist the classroom leadership team by teaching songs for communal Jewish observance (holidays, programs), songs related to the founding and history of Israel, vocabulary building texts, summer camp songs and modern compositions (Debbie Friedman, Craig Taubman, SAFAM, etc.), plus historical reference songs (Ladino, Yiddish) and Holiday songs for home and shul use.***

## **HEY (5<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

### ***Grade Focus***

The goal of Kitah Hey (5<sup>th</sup> Grade) is to make Judaism increasingly relevant to their daily lives. We strengthen and increase their Hebrew vocabulary and teach our collective history, from ancient to modern American Jewry. The Shabbat service is a major focus, particularly the Torah Service, *aliyot*, and additional Prayers/Liturgy that focus on Shabbat morning as we begin to bring focus upon the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Experience.

### ***Specific Goals***

- Understand directions given in Hebrew
- Be able to lead a Shabbat morning Torah service and the concluding Prayers/Liturgy
- Read Hebrew easily with vowels
- Be able to form written or verbal answers to questions
- Continue to learn proper grammar including singular/plural, masculine/ feminine, pronouns, adjectives, and present/past tense
- Read familiar Prayers/Liturgy and blessing from the Siddur, adding to those studied in earlier grades
- Be able to perform home ritual observances, i.e. Passover seder, Havdalah, Kabbalat Shabbat meal

### ***Hebrew Language***

Text: Kol Yisrael I (Behrman House)

In Kol Yisrael I students meet Batya and Ben, their young guides for the series. Along with Doug, their talking fish, Batya and Ben leap off the page and come to life on your student's computers in a fun-filled learning adventure that keeps students moving and motivated. Students go back and forth from textbook to online games and exercises, learning the blessings and prayers that help them comfortably participate in Jewish rituals such as reciting Shabbat and holiday blessings, and singing the Mah Nishtanah.

### ***Holidays, Customs, & Ceremonies***

Text: [Rediscovering the Jewish Holidays](#) (Cardin/Gevirtz Behrman House)

A rich and innovative book that captivates our children and provides a wonderful antidote for adolescent skepticism! Children not only share in the treasures of Judaism but also enrich our tradition by making their own contributions to modern Jewish life.

Using the holidays as a springboard, the text focuses students on Judaism's core truths and values—which have endured for thousands of years—while helping them understand the dynamic nature of our tradition—which inspires each new generation to make its own sacred contributions. For just as our ancient sages created Prayers/Liturgy and rituals based on those who came before them – giving us Elijah's Cup for Passover and the

Amidah prayer – so, too, do modern Jews continue to create new traditions, such as Miriam's Cup and Prayers/Liturgy for the modern State of Israel.

Each chapter presents a key holiday, including background information, the details of observance, and the following features: ***What Do You Think?*** Thought-provoking questions that foster creativity and challenge students to use their critical-thinking skills; ***Taking Action*** Jewish values, such as Tzedakah, Shalom, and Feeding the Hungry extend the message of the holiday. Students plan concrete actions they can take to incorporate the values into their lives; ***One People, Many Customs*** Interesting facts about customs in different Jewish communities help students appreciate our tradition of diversity; ***A Tradition of Innovation*** Portraits of the many ways in which our tradition has evolved – and continues to evolve – inspire their perceptions of *liberal* Judaism as *authentic* Judaism; ***Light Bulbs: Sharing Your Bright Ideas*** Students imagine they are members of a synagogue committee (for example, the ritual, membership, or social justice committees) where they are asked to address challenges such as how to increase congregants' involvement in tzedakah projects and prayer services; ***Back to the Sources*** Quotes from sacred texts, presented in Hebrew and English, illuminate the spirit and meaning of the holiday; ***Honoring and Creating Jewish Tradition*** The final activity in each chapter helps students reflect on what they have learned and consider contributions they can make to enrich our people and tradition.

Students will focus on a deeper understanding of the themes of each holiday, rather than just on the customs. We will link holidays with real-world issues; i.e. we still face decisions about assimilation, as in the Hanukkah story; and the Passover message of freedom emphasizes that there are still many in the world today who are not free.

### ***Prayer***

Text: [Siddur Sim Shalom Weekdays](#) (Rabbi Avram Israel Reisner)

The central ideas of each prayer are studied with emphasis on vocabulary and root words (*shoreshim*). Beyond just being able to *read* the *tefillot* (“Prayers/Liturgy”) we will give children in-dept understanding of the history and meaning of the language.

- Blessings over candles, wine, hand-washing, challah
- Blessings over food
- Modeh Ani
- Shema and V’Ahavta
- Apples Dipped in Honey/Tapuchim U’Dvash
- Festival Candle Blessing
- Hanukkah Candle Blessings
- Shehechyanu
- Dayenu
- Ma Tovu
- Barchu
- Adon Olam

Congregation Beth Shalom 5776/2015-2016  
Curriculum

- Ma Nishtana
- Havdallah
- Ein Keloheinu
- Lecha Dodi (first two and last two verses)
- Shalom Aleichem
- Mi Chamocha
- V'Shamru
- Kadesh Urchatz
- Avinu Malkeinu
- Oseh Shalom
- Mizmor Shir
- Tzadik Katamar
- Friday Night Kiddush
- Festival Kiddush (first line)
- Birchot HaShachar
- Kaddish Shalem
- Hatzi Kaddish
- Aleinu
- Mi Shebeirach (Debbie Friedman)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph of Shema
- Pesach blessings during Seder

Text: [Hineni Packets \(Behrman House\)](#)

### ***Torah***

Text: [Explorer's Bible Vol. 1: From Creation to Exodus \(S. Blumenthal, Behrman House\)](#)

In Kitah Hey we engage our children in authentic, dynamic Bible study.

They can now explore the Bible as Jews have done for centuries – by pondering, personalizing, and wrestling with the text. Combining faithful but accessible translations with thematic connections between the narratives and student's daily lives, critical-thinking exercises, and a sense of wonder, *The Explorer's Bible* transform the classroom into a lively Bible study group.

This text allows true-to-text translation, retains the structure and tone of the Hebrew while providing students with comprehensible and age-appropriate language, opportunities for students to participate in Biblical dialogue by reviewing classic interpretations of text and creating midrashim of their own, connections between text and core Jewish values help students to personalize the Bible's lessons, analyses of key Hebrew words and phrases allow students to connect intimately with Biblical text, contemporary design conveys the dignity of Biblical text while engaging students with

lush illustrations and more than fifty full-color photographs, and explanatory notes and connections to Biblical archaeology bring the text to life for students.

Text: [Manga Midrash – Leadership: Jacob and Esau](#) (G. Gevertz, Behrman House)

This booklet presents Genesis 25:20-33, the story of Jacob and Esau's birth and youthful sibling rivalry. Students' understanding is developed through a series of motivating activities and by a rabbinic midrash that illuminates the Biblical story. Before creating their own midrash, students explore questions such as: What makes a person worthy of a privileged or leadership role? How can one develop the skills that a role of honor or leadership requires?

Text: [Manga Midrash – The Value of Life: Pharaoh's Daughter and Miriam Saves Moses](#) (G. Gevertz, Behrman House)

The Value of Life presents Exodus 1:15-17 and 22, and 2:1-10, the story of how Pharaoh's daughter came to adopt young Moses with the help of his sister Miriam. Students will develop a rich understanding of Judaism's emphasis on the value of preserving life, using a series of motivating activities and a rabbinic midrash illuminating the Biblical teaching.

### ***Israel/History***

Text: [History of the Jewish People Vol. 1: Ancient Israel to 1880's America](#) (Sarna & Krasner, Behrman House)

Developed and written by two esteemed scholars, Jonathan D. Sarna and Jonathan B. Krasner, Kitah Hey uses this dynamic presentation of Jewish history to learn about our earliest ancestors in the Land of Israel and our dispersion in the Diaspora through the Jewish experience in America in the 1880's. We consider how their lives compare with the lives of our ancestors, how each generation adapts Judaism to its time and place, and how the decisions of previous generations influence our own lives and decisions. History comes alive through a dynamic array of famous personalities, diverse source material, clear and concise charts, engaging activities, thought-provoking questions, and exciting graphics, including 16 maps and more than 115 full-color historical and contemporary images.

Focus includes:

- The Early Israelites
- The Age of Hellenism
- Roman Domination of Judea
- Rabbinic Judaism
- Judaism and Christianity
- Babylonia
- Sephardic and Ashkenazi
- Medieval Europe
- The Sephardic Diaspora
- The Polish Kehillah and German Enlightenment

Congregation Beth Shalom 5776/2015-2016  
Curriculum

- Revolution and Emancipation
- Judaism and the Modern World
- The Rise of Anti-Semitism
- U.S. Jewry, 1820-1890

***Connecting with Clergy***

***Rabbi Michael and Cantor Elisa will visit Kitah Hey and connect with our learners in age-appropriate ways, strengthening the curriculum with language, practice, and kavanah (intention). In addition, Cantor Elisa will work with and assist the classroom leadership team by teaching songs for communal Jewish observance (holidays, programs), songs related to the founding and history of Israel, vocabulary building texts, summer camp songs and modern compositions (Debbie Friedman, Craig Taubman, SAFAM, etc.), plus historical reference songs (Ladino, Yiddish) and Holiday songs for home and shul use. Rabbi Michael will also join them on their field trip!***

## VAV (6<sup>th</sup> Grade)

### ***Grade Focus***

The goal of Kitah Vav (6<sup>th</sup> Grade) is to round out each child's primary grade Jewish education by focusing on learning remaining Prayers/Liturgy in the Shabbat and weekday *tefillot*, to continue making Judaism relevant to their daily lives, and to continue to show that Judaism is not just a religion of our past but a faith that guides our moral actions and thoughts. Kitah Vav youth lead many services in our Hebrew School and work with our youngest learners during *tefillah* to help them follow along. Their Hebrew skills are now both Biblical and conversational and they model their knowledge through activities, through play and sport, and through holiday programming. With great efforts being placed towards maximum preparation for their B'nei Mitzvah, before working for a year with a CBS tutor, Kitah Vav youth learn together things they will all have to know for their "big day", including Torah and Haftarah trope, blessings, and *nusach* (melodies).

### ***Specific Goals***

- Understand directions given in Hebrew
- Read Hebrew easily with vowels
- Provide written or verbal answers to questions drawn from Hebrew texts
- Continue to learn proper grammar including plural/singular, masculine feminine, pronouns, adjectives, and present/past tense, prefixes, suffixes, root word.
- Learn Haftarah trope
- Will be able to write short simple Hebrew sentences
- Will know possessives and reflective verbs as well prepositions
- Will be able to explain the significance of each Jewish holiday

### ***Hebrew***

Text: [Kol Yisrael 2](#) (Behrman House)

Hebrew in Kitah Vav is all about expanding our children's ability to read and understand modern Hebrew. The second book in a three-year series, Shalom Ivrit 2 is built on the theme of Jewish values. Students learn Hebrew as a living language through engaging short stories, folktales, and midrashim. In the process, they explore key Jewish values, such as self-respect, friendship, and humility. Students acquire 151 new words and develop their language and comprehension skills. Basic grammar-including present tense verb endings, possessives, and root letters-is presented sequentially and clearly, increasing familiarity with Hebrew word structure and syntax as an integral part of language acquisition. A variety of comprehension activities-including puzzles, cloze technique (sentence completion), true and false, and word/picture matches-reinforce instruction and provide practice, as do additional stories, poems, dialogues, and riddles.

Shalom Ivrit is a graded, sequential curriculum. Its goal is to teach students to read and comprehend modern Hebrew language. It keeps grammar rules to a minimum, and presents them clearly and simply, through the language experience itself. At the earliest levels, the story lines are short and rhythmic. Vocabulary is controlled, useful for every

day, and often accompanied by pictorial representations.

### Holidays, Customs, & Ceremonies

The special Synagogue Prayers/Liturgy for each holiday will be discussed and studied, along with the study of the process of the Jewish calendar. A special unit on Bar/Bat Mitzvah teaching the significance of the ceremony, and the history, significance, and use of the Tallit and Tefillin.

Text: [The Bar and Bat Mitzvah Manual](#) (L. B. Howard, S. M. Bob)

Preparing b'nai mitzvah students and their families for that momentous life-cycle event, the bar/bat mitzvah, is a great task, one we dive into in Kitah Vav! This manual-tool is divided into six training sessions, called workshops, each devoted to a separate topic such as planning a mitzvah project, writing a D'var Torah, hosting a meaningful party, and what it means to live as a Jewish adult.

Workshop 1: What Is a Bar and Bat Mitzvah?

Workshop 2: The Torah Connection

Workshop 3: Finding the Sacred in the Bar and Bat Mitzvah Ceremony

Workshop 4: A Lifetime of Mitzvot

Workshop 5: Let's Celebrate!

Workshop 6: Living as a Jewish Adult

- **The Real World** presents actual case studies of teens who transformed Jewish values and mitzvot into action.
- **Teen Talk** offers activities to engage teenage participants alone or in groups, for example, how to choose a mitzvah project that is personal and relevant.
- **Parent's Perspective** invites adults to reflect on what their child's bar or bat mitzvah means to them.
- **Focus on Text** presents the b'nai mitzvah ceremony through the lens of Jewish values, and grounds it in Jewish tradition.

### *Prayer/ Liturgy*

- Trope
- Ma Nishtana
- Havdallah
- Ein Keloheinu
- Lecha Dodi (first two and last two verses)
- Shalom Aleichem
- Mi Chamocha
- V'Shamru
- Kadesh Urchatz
- Avinu Malkeinu
- Oseh Shalom
- Mizmor Shir

Congregation Beth Shalom 5776/2015-2016  
Curriculum

- Tzadik Katamar
- Friday Night Kiddush
- Festival Kiddush (first line)
- Birchot HaShachar
- Kaddish Shalem
- Hatzi Kaddish
- Aleinu
- Mi Shebeirach (Debbie Friedman)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph of Shema
- Pesach blessings during Seder
- Avot and Gevurot
- Torah Service- Ein Kamocha, Vay'hi Binsoa, Shema, Lecha Adonai, Bei Ana Racheitz, Mizmor L'David, Ashrei

Text: [Hineni Packets](#) (Behrman House)

### ***History***

Text: [History of the Jewish People Vol. 2: The Birth of Zionism to Our Time](#)  
(Sarna & Krasner, Behrman House)

Developed and written by two esteemed scholars, Jonathan D. Sarna and Jonathan B. Krasner, *Kitah Vav* uses this text to present a rich presentation of Jewish history from the turmoil and strife of Russia in the 1880's to the great migration to the United States, the creation of the modern State of Israel, modern American Jewish life, and life in the Diaspora. Each chapter helps students consider how their lives compare with the lives of our ancestors, how each generation adapts Judaism to its time and place, and how the decisions of previous generations influence our own lives and decisions.

The *History of the Jewish People, Volume 2* brings these times alive through a dynamic array of famous personalities, diverse source material, clear and concise charts, engaging activities, thought-provoking questions, and exciting graphics, including maps and more than 80 full-color historical and contemporary images.

- East European Jewry, 1881 – 1914
- The Great Migration
- Jewish Nationalism and Zionism
- World War I
- At Home in the U.S., 1920-1940
- The British Mandate
- Europe Between the Wars
- The Holocaust
- The Birth of the Modern State of Israel
- "Making It" in America, 1945 – 1965
- The Diaspora Consolidates
- Israel in Our Time

- American Jewry Today

### ***Holidays, Customs, & Ceremonies***

Texts: [Time of Our Lives: A Jewish Teen’s Guide to the Jewish Life Cycle](#) (N. Cardin, S. Blumenthal, Behrman House)

*Is it true that I was born for a reason? Am I really an adult when I become a bat mitzvah? How should I act around someone whose grandmother just died?*

*The Time of Our Lives* is an unforgettable journey along the path of the Jewish life cycle, as your students have never traveled it before. While exploring how Jewish life cycle events help us mark and celebrate the milestones in our lives, young teens will consider how we each contribute to the modern evolution and enrichment of these celebrations.

The text serves as a guidebook to the major milestones along the paths of the Jewish life cycle: **Historical vignettes and excerpts from sacred texts** help students trace the origins of each celebration, while learning how it began and has evolved through the generations; **Real-life peer stories** show how young teens play an active role in Jewish community celebrations; and **Family interviews**, interactive classroom experiences, and challenging questions encourage students to imagine how they can help develop new celebrations and further enrich our tradition.

Each chapter of *The Time of Our Lives* contains the following special features, designed to engage the creativity and curiosity of readers: **Fast Forward:** *Teens reflect on the future as they envision what their own life cycle events will be like: What qualities would I like my children to possess? What will my life be like in twenty years? What would I like to accomplish during my lifetime?* **Step by Step:** *Provides a clearly sequenced summary—a how-to manual—of each life cycle event.* **Be a Give-Your-Best Guest:** *To-do checklists help readers become gracious guests at the celebrations of friends and family. What can I bring? What should I say?* **From Generation to Generation:** *Provides opportunities for families to share memories of past life cycle events and dreams for those to come.* **What Do You Think?:** *Thought-provoking questions challenge teens to think critically. What's the best way to celebrate my bar mitzvah? Do I believe that each person has a destined partner?* **Back to the Sources:** *Connects modern celebrations to sacred texts and ancient sources.* **Spark of a New Tradition:** *Modern customs and practices help young people visualize how they can contribute to new Jewish life cycle events and to modern Jewish life.*

### ***Bible***

Text [Explorer’s Bible II: From Sinai to the Nation of Israel](#)

Congregation Beth Shalom 5776/2015-2016  
Curriculum

Kitah Vav students continue to explore the Bible as Jews have done for centuries – by pondering, personalizing, and wrestling with the text. Combining faithful but accessible translations with thematic connections between the narratives and student’s daily lives, critical-thinking exercises, and a sense of wonder, *The Explorer’s Bible* transform the classroom into a lively Bible study group.

This text allows true-to-text translation, retains the structure and tone of the Hebrew while providing students with comprehensible and age-appropriate language, opportunities for students to participate in Biblical dialogue by reviewing classic interpretations of text and creating midrashim of their own, connections between text and core Jewish values help students to personalize the Bible’s lessons, and analyses of key Hebrew words and phrases. Explanatory notes and connections to Biblical archaeology bring the text to life for students.

*The Explorer’s Bible II* begins after the death of Moses and covers the period of judges, kings, and prophets.

### ***Connecting with Clergy***

***Rabbi Michael and Cantor Elisa will visit Kitah Vav and connect with our learners in age-appropriate ways, strengthening the curriculum with language, practice, and kavanah (intention). In addition, Cantor Elisa will work with and assist the classroom leadership team by teaching songs for communal Jewish observance (holidays, programs), songs related to the founding and history of Israel, vocabulary building texts, summer camp songs and modern compositions (Debbie Friedman, Craig Taubman, SAFAM, etc.), plus historical reference songs (Ladino, Yiddish) and Holiday songs for home and shul use. Rabbi Michael will also join them on their field trip!***

## **KEHILLAH (7<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

### ***Grade Focus***

Kehillah means Community. It is our hope that the 7<sup>th</sup> graders from both a Hebrew School and Albert Einstein will form a community, and also be part of our greater Synagogue community.

### ***Specific Goals***

- Our expressed mission is to create positive Jewish learning opportunities for 7<sup>th</sup> grader youth!
- To understand that B'nai Mitzvah is not the end of Jewish learning. B'nai Mitzvah is a marker in the path of life-long Jewish learning
- To create relationships between our 7<sup>th</sup> grade youth and the clergy of our synagogue
- To continue to show that Hebrew is a living language, one spoken by millions of people, one that can be found in a variety of mediums, including popular Israeli music and modern Jewish life.
- To encourage greater critical thinking and deeper understanding of Jewish history and ethics and its relevance to their own lives.
- 

### ***Hebrew***

7<sup>th</sup> Graders: Independent B'nai Mitzvah Tutoring under the supervision of Cantor Elisa

### ***Holidays, Customs, & Ceremonies/Torah/Mitzvot***

“I’ll take Holidays and Customs for \$200, Alex.” One of the most popular aspects of the Kehillah class is “Jewpardy.” Kehillah students learn about various topics while playing a game in the format of the gameshow, “Jeopardy.”

### ***Israel/History***

Text [Challenge and Change: History of Jews in America Book II](#) (Dr. Shelley Kapnek Rosenberg (Behrman House))

Developed by the Feinstein Center for American Jewish History, this text begins with American Jewish history from the Civil War (1850) and ends with the role Americans played in Israel’s War of Independence (1948). It focuses on themes of growth and change -- as America developed in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the American Jewish community grew and changed with it.

### ***Bible***

Congregation Beth Shalom 5776/2015-2016  
Curriculum

Text [The Prophets: Speaking Out For Justice](#) (Gila Gevirtz, Behrman House)

This text explores the lives of seven prophets and Jewish values they exemplify.

Stories based on Biblical texts bring each prophet vividly to life, while narrative provides historical context for considering the challenges faced by the prophet in their own day. Connections to modern-day events and people are explored as well, helping students discover the relevance for today in the ancient messages of our Biblical ancestors. Questions throughout the text address students directly.

### ***Prayer/ Liturgy***

Kehillah students will lead the Synagogue Sunday morning minyan once each month. This will strengthen the students' tefillah skills and be a sign of their transition to Jewish adulthood.

### ***Current Events***

In this course Rabbi Michael Beals discusses sensitive issues with seventh grader youth. Four key over-arching areas (Body, Health and Medicine; Civil and Political Issues; Citizens of the Planet; and Sexuality) will be explored. These "Hot Topics" include Jewish views on abortion, euthanasia, school violence, cloning, the death penalty, and more include a comprehensive overview of each topic, as well as intriguing scenarios highlighting how Jewish responses to these issues have changed over time. Text study passages, overviews of both traditional and modern Jewish views and attitudes, and listings of related values (*middot*) and commandments (*mitzvot*) for each topic promote discussion and understanding of Judaism's approach to grappling with some of today's most highly charged subjects.