



## Intro to Judaism Curriculum

### **OVERVIEW:**

Our Introduction to Judaism® online course will give participants a strong foundation for authentic and empowered engagement in the Jewish community. This 18-session program is the perfect introduction to Jewish living, theology, texts, history, holidays, and rituals.

This course is designed for spiritual seekers, interfaith couples, individuals pursuing or considering conversion, and Jews who want a meaningful chance to reconnect with their Judaism as an adult.

### **INSTRUCTOR:**

The program is led by Rabbi Heather Miller and her teaching style is interactive and encouraging of questions. She is queer and a member of an interracial, international, interfaith family, and joyfully engages with folks of all backgrounds. Rabbi Heather Miller, known for her open, affirming, and joyful approach.

### **ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES:**

Weekly classes are augmented by Shabbat and holiday programs and additional experiential components all found on the calendar at [keepingitsacred.com/upcoming](https://keepingitsacred.com/upcoming). Come for the program, stay for the community!

### **ACCESS:**

All registrants will be emailed the access to zoom credentials the day prior to the class. Please be sure both Rabbi Miller and Molly Flanagan's email address do not go to your junk mail (this can be done by adding them to your address book).

### **CONTACT:**

For questions or reflections about the classes, syllabus, and material, contact:

[rabbimiller@keepingitsacred.com](mailto:rabbimiller@keepingitsacred.com).

For questions on registration or other technical issues, contact Molly Flanagan at

[mflanagan@keepingitsacred.com](mailto:mflanagan@keepingitsacred.com).

### **GENERAL SUPPORTIVE WEBSITES:**

1. [Jewish Women's Archive](#). JWA documents Jewish women's stories, elevates their voices, and inspires them to be agents of change. Extensive resources including an encyclopedia and curricula.
2. [MyJewishLearning.com](#). A trans-denominational website of information about Judaism. Among other terrific content, they host [Jewish&](#), a blog by Be'chol Lashon which gives voice to the racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity of Jewish identity and experience.
3. [ReformJudaism.org](#). Reform Judaism is a leading voice in the discussion of Jewish life. Find information on Jewish rituals, culture, holidays, and more. This comprehensive website for the Reform Movement of Judaism offers articles, videos, how-to's, and blogs on a variety of subjects of Jewish interest. Your first stop for Jewish information online.

### **CLASSES:**

1. [What is Judaism? Who are the Jewish People?](#)
  - Jewish Ideas (General) · Jewish Peoplehood
  - Who Is a Jew?

*This will be explored in class on 3/4 (11:30am–12:30pm PT // 2:30–3:30pm ET)*

2. [People of the Book – Sacred Jewish Texts](#)
  - Overview of Sacred Jewish Texts
  - Bible
  - Midrash
  - Talmud (Mishnah and Gemara)
  - Later Commentary, Codes, and Responsa

*This will be explored in class on 3/5 (8-9am PT // 11am-12pm ET)*

3. [Jewish Prayer and the Synagogue](#)
  - Prayer, *Keva* and *Kavanah*, Structure of *T'filah*
  - Synagogues/Tour of the Sanctuary
  - Torah Scroll
  - Ritual Garb/Prayer Garb: *Kippah*, Tallit and *Tefillin*
  - Hebrew
  - *Brachot*
  - Hazanut and the Music of Prayer



*This will be explored in class on 3/19 (12-1pm PT // 3-4pm ET)*

4. **What Do Jews Believe?**

- God and Theology
- *B'rit*/Covenant
- Chosenness
- *K'dushah*/Holiness
- Mitzvah/Mitzvot
- Halachah

*This will be explored in class on 3/19 (1-2pm PT // 4-5pm ET)*

5. **Creating a Jewish Life and Home**

- A Jewish Home
- Mezuzah
- Kashrut, Jewish Food, Cookbooks, Ethical Consumption
- Jewish Values, Ethics, and Practice (General)
- *Derech Eretz, Musar* (Personal Ethics), *Midot* (Character Traits)
- *Tzedakah*
- Social Justice/*Tikkun Olam*/Messianism
- Business Ethics

*This will be explored in class on 3/20 (12-1pm PT // 3-4 ET)*

6. **Marriage, Partnership and More**

- Lifecycle (General)
- Marriage and Partnering
- The Wedding Ceremony
- Divorce
- Love, Sex, Dating
- LGBTQIA+ Couples and Families
- Interfaith Couples/Families

*This will be explored in class on 3/20 (1-2pm PT // 4-5pm ET)*

## 7. Birth, Childhood, and Jewish Education

- General
- *B'rit Milah*, Simchat Bat, Baby Namings
- Fertility
- Surrogacy
- Family Planning, Contraception
- Genetic Testing
- Pregnancy Loss: Stillbirth/Miscarriage/Terminating a Pregnancy
- Adoption and Fostering
- Parenting through a Jewish Lens
- Jewish Education
- Jewish Camping
- *B'nei Mitzvah*
- Confirmation
- “It Takes a Village”—The Role of Community

*This will be explored in class on 3/23 (10:30-11:30am PT // 1:30-2:30pm ET)*

## 8. Illness, Death, and Mourning

- Healing/Illness
- Health and Wellness, including Mental health, Substance Abuse, Addiction & Recovery
- Hospice/Medical Ethics Related to End of Life Care
- Ethical Wills
- Funerals/Rituals/Mourning
- Aging
- Organ and Tissue Donation
- Afterlife

*This will be explored in class on 3/23 (11:30am-12:30pm PT // 2:30-3:30pm ET)*

## 9. The Jewish Calendar and Shabbat

- The Jewish Calendar (general)
- Rosh Chodesh
- Shabbat



- Film and Television

*This will be explored in class on 3/23 (12:30-1:30pm PT // 3:30-4:30pm ET)*

#### 10. [The Yamim Nora-im \(High Holidays\); The Days of Awe](#)

- General
- Sin and Forgiveness
- Elul and *Selichot*
- Film and Television
- Music

*This will be explored in class on 3/24 (9-10am PT // 12-1pm ET)*

#### 11. [The Three Festivals: Passover \(Pesach\), Shavuot, Sukkot](#) · Pesach (Passover)

- Shavuot
- Sukkot/Sh'mini Atzeret/Simchat Torah
- Film and Television
- Texts
- Passover Haggadot

*This will be explored in class on 4/14 (9-10am PT // 12-1pm ET)*

#### 12. [Other Jewish Holidays: Hanukkah, Purim, and "Minor" Holidays](#)

- Hanukkah
- The Hanukkah/Christmas season conversation
- Tu B'Shvat
- Purim
- Tishah B'Av
- Film and Television

*This will be explored in class on 4/17 (10-11:30 a.m. PT // 1-2:30pm ET)*

#### 13. [From Creation to the Enlightenment \(the Jewish historical experience\)](#)

- Jewish History

*This will be explored in class on 4/17 (10-11:30 a.m. PT // 1-2:30 p.m. ET) &*

4/20 (10:30-12 p.m. PT // 1:30-3p.m. ET)

14. [The Shoah \(Holocaust\), Anti-Semitism, and Jewish Responses to Evil](#)

- Anti-Semitism
- The Shoah (Holocaust)
- Yom HaShoah

*This will be explored in class on 4/20 (10:30-12 p.m. PT // 1:30-3p.m. ET)*

15. [Israel and Zionism](#)

- Zionism
- The Modern State of Israel (Politics, Culture, History)
- Yom HaZikaron and Yom HaAtzmaut
- Film and Television
- Am Yisrael, Eretz Yisrael, Medinat Yisrael

*This will be explored in class on 4/21 (9-10:30 a.m. PT // 12-1:30p.m. ET)*

16. [The North American Jewish Experience; Tapestry of the Jewish People \(Understanding Jewish Diversity\)](#)

- Reform Judaism and Other Jewish Denominations
- North American Jewish Communities – Demographics, History, Culture
- Jews of Color
- Interfaith Jewish Families
- Global Jewish Communities
- Yiddish
- Ladino

*This will be explored in class on 4/21 (9-10:30 a.m. PT // 12-1:30p.m. ET) &  
4/22 (9-10:30 a.m. PT // 12-1:30p.m. ET)*

17. [Becoming Part of the Jewish Family and the Jewish People,](#)

- Conversion, and *Shalom Bayit*

*This will be explored in class on 4/22 (9-10:30 a.m. PT // 12-1:30p.m. ET)*



18. [Next Steps -- Becoming Part of the Jewish Community](#)

*This will be explored in class on 4/27 (10:30-11:30 a.m. PT // 1:30-2:30p.m. ET)*

*This Union for Reform Judaism-designed program is supported by the National Center to Encourage Judaism that funds programs that welcome people new to Judaism.*