



RABBI BERNARD S. RASKAS
RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

ROSSY AND RICHARD SHALLER
HEBREW SCHOOL

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

2011-2012
5772

**Parent/Student
Handbook**



Dear Temple of Aaron Families,

Welcome back to another year of educational programming for our students here at Temple of Aaron. We are eager to get the year started and we have some wonderful new things in store this coming year including our new look honors program with electives and Family Education programming for our Pre-K thru 7th grades.

Our faculty is in place, ready to teach, and are committed to making sure that our students get the best Jewish education and strive to do their best. We are dedicated to imbuing our students with the necessary tools to become learned, interested, and concerned and caring members of the Jewish community.

Our myriad of programs for all grade levels gives our school its unique style and flavor. We invite you to participate and grow with your children through our new Family Education programming, Shabbat family programs, and through school wide celebrations and gatherings. We value your input about everything we do and are looking forward to your involvement.

Enclosed in this handbook is important information including:

- School Mission
- School Contact Information
- School Policy and Procedure
- Emergency Information
- Youth Department Information

Please share this handbook with your children so that they have an understanding of their responsibilities as students at Temple of Aaron. If you wish to speak with me please feel free to contact me to set up an appointment. I look forward to working with all of you once again this coming year.

B'shalom,

Joshua Fineblum
Director of Education

Clergy and Staff

Rabbi Alan Shavit-Lonstein
Cantor Mitchell D. Kowitz
Joshua Fineblum, Director of Education
Ken Agranoff, Executive Director
Robby Ehrlich, Youth Director
Susie Haim, Administrative Assistant

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Rabbi Bernard S. Raskas Religious School &
Rossy & Richard Shaller Hebrew School
Mission Statement

To develop adult leaders of the Jewish community by providing an outstanding religious and social Jewish preparatory program that provides students with skills, attitudes, opportunities and inspiration to participate in strong active relationships and service within the Temple of Aaron and the larger Jewish communities

Emergency Contact
Susie Haim-Administrative Assistant
651-698-8874 ext 104 (during school hours ext. 112)

Wednesday Afternoon Hebrew School Classes
Rosy & Richard Shaller School

2nd -6th grades:

Snack: 3:45PM
Class: 4:15PM
Dismissal: 6:30PM

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures:

Students gather in Stein Hall for snack beginning at 3:45PM. If you want your children to have a snack please arrive before 4:15pm. No food is allowed in the classrooms. Please meet your child/ren inside the main doors at 6:30PM for pick-up.

Wednesday Evening 7th & Honors Classes

7th-10th grades:

Dinner: 6:00PM
Class: 6:30PM
Dismissal: 8:00PM

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures:

Students gather at 6:00pm in the Fink Youth Lounge for dinner. Classes begin at 6:30PM. Dismissal is at 8:00PM and students will be dismissed to the main doors. Students may not leave the synagogue property without permission from staff.

Sunday School-Rabbi Bernard S. Raskas School

Pre-K-4; 7th -10th grades:

Class: 9:00AM
Dismissal: 12:00PM

Toddler/Parent Class: 10:00-11:45am

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures:

Students report directly to their assigned classroom; children in grades Pre-K -1st are to be escorted to and from class by their parent or an authorized older student. Students in 2nd grade and above will be dismissed and escorted to the main doors of the synagogue for pickup by parent/authorized adults at 12:00PM.

Educational Shabbat Program (ESP)

5th-6th grades:

Class: 9:00AM (please be here promptly as classes begin on time)
Dismissal: 11:30AM

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures:

Students report directly to their assigned classroom. Students will be dismissed and to the main doors of the synagogue for pickup by parent/authorized adults at 11:30AM.

Sunday Religious School Teachers

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| Toddler/Parent (<i>Ganon</i>) | Marjorie Schneider |
| Pre-K (<i>Gan</i>) | Barbara Weil |
| Kindergarten/ 1 (<i>Alef</i>) | Reenie Gitlin |
| Grade 2 (<i>Bet</i>) | Heather Grams |
| Grade 3 (<i>Gimmel</i>) | Shari Lowenthal |
| Grade 4 (<i>Dalet</i>) | Deborah Jopp |

Specialists: (Toddler through 4th Grade)

| | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| Art (<i>Amanut</i>) | Anita White |
| Music (<i>Shira</i>) | Cantor Stephen Abelson |
| Services (Tefillah) | Hazzan Mitchell Kowitz |

Wednesday Hebrew School Teachers: 5th –6th Grade

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Grade 5/6 (<i>Hay/Vav</i>) | Wendy Oskey |
| Tutor | Larry Eisenstadt |
| Shira/Tefillah | Cantor Stephen Abelson |

Saturday 5th & 6th Shabbat School Program:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| 5 th Grade (<i>Hay</i>) | Wendy Kane |
| 6 th Grade (<i>Vav</i>) | Lindsay Berg |

Wednesday Hebrew School 7th Grade

Rabbi Shavit-Lonstein
Hazzan Mitchell Kowitz
Joshua Fineblum, Director of Education

Wednesday Hebrew School Honors 7th-10th Grade

Cantor Stephen Abelson, Lindsay Berg,
Andrea Golden Fineblum, Wendy Beth Gahm, Charlie Goodman,
Shari Lowenthal, Eddie Winthrop

Sunday Religious School 7th-10th Grade Confirmation

| | |
|---|--|
| 7 th Grade (<i>Zayin</i>) | Robby Erlich Eddie Winthrop |
| 8 th Grade (<i>Chet</i>) | Rachel Winthrop |
| 9 th Grade (<i>Tet</i>) | Wendy Oskey |
| 10 th Grade (<i>Nachshonim</i>) | Ernie Gulner Rabbi Alan Shavit-Lonstein Joshua Fineblum, Director of Education Lindsay Berg, Confirmation Coordinator |

Grade Level Curricula

We are dedicated to providing Jewish education that will spark the love of learning and appreciation for the traditions of Judaism. It is our strong belief that Jewish Education is a lifelong process that starts in pre-school and continues through High School and beyond.

In preparation for a lifetime of active synagogue participation our students study a variety of viewpoints and perspectives on important religious issues while always representing Conservative Judaism and its principles. The curriculum includes age appropriate instruction in Hebrew Prayer, *Tanach* (Hebrew bible), and other Jewish Texts, Israel, Holidays, God, and various other Judaic topics. Our curriculum presents topics at levels of increasing difficulty as a child progresses through each grade.

The Elementary school curriculum is also integrated with music, tefillah, and art and incorporates meaningful family and grade level programs to enhance the classroom curriculum. Middle school and high school curriculum is enriched by special projects including field trips, speakers, and interactive program. This year we are also adding a Family Education component to our curriculum.

Toddler (*Ganon*), Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten (*Gan*)

We use these early years to introduce our students to the school and to making them comfortable in the synagogue and excited about Jewish learning. The curriculum emphasizes Jewish holidays and rituals, and introduces students to blessings and some prayers (tefillot). The curriculum is enhanced with lots of music, songs, art projects, & fun activities. Students also participate in special programming for our elementary grades and their families.

1st Grade (*Kitah Alef*)

The curriculum is based on the theme of discovering our wonderful Jewish traditions through Bible and holiday stories, exploring age appropriate concepts about God, a continuation of studying prayers (tefillot) and the blessing (brachot) we recite to communicate with God in everyday life. Students are introduced to the Hebrew aleph-bet and begin learning the sounds these letters make. The curriculum is integrated with lots of music, songs, art projects, & fun activities. Students also participate in special programming for our elementary grades and their families.

2nd Grade (*Kitah Bet*)

Second graders begin their formal study of Hebrew and Judaic education. Children now begin to participate twice a week in our program in preparation for understanding more in looking toward becoming a B'nai Mitzvah. Students continue to build upon the prayers (tefillot) from previous years. Our overall objective is to begin providing students with a love of the *Siddur*, Hebrew language, *Tanach*, Israel, Jewish ritual and a basic understanding of God. Students begin an in-depth exploration of holidays, an in depth look at Jewish symbols and the core concepts of *Mitzvot*. Second graders also enjoy art, music and participate in special school/family programs focused on building community.

3rd Grade (*Kitah Gimme*)

The third grade curriculum emphasizes God and spirituality through the continuing study of prayers (*tefillot*), holidays and rituals. Study of the *Tanach* is formally introduced, as is the history of Israel. Students continue their intense study of Hebrew to build on their decoding proficiency and Hebrew vocabulary in order to more thoroughly understand the meaning of prayers in the *Siddur*. Third graders also enjoy art, music and participate in special school/family programs focused on building community. 3rd grade students also have the opportunity to participate in a community-wide Shabbaton.

4th Grade (*Kitah Dalet*)

Students in fourth grade continue the study of *tefillot* (prayer). They continue learning key *Siddur* vocabulary and gain a further understanding of the content and rituals associated with these *tefillot*. They continue to work on writing Hebrew and begin learning how to chant the service to participate in *Shabbat* services. The fourth grade curriculum continues to explore the *Tanach* and more emphasis is placed on learning about Israel's history, politics, commercial and cultural life. Fourth graders also enjoy art, music and participate in special school/family programs focused on building community. 4th grade students also have the opportunity to participate in a community-wide Shabbaton.

5th Grade (*Kitah Hey*)

Fifth grade students begin the preparation of becoming a *B'nai Mitzvah*. Curriculum is focused on learning the *Shabbat Shacharit* Service during our Educational Shabbat Program (ESP). Hebrew classes are designed to compliment our *Shabbat* program through challenging students to think critically about prayer meaning and discovering how to find personal meaning through prayer. Discussion of Jewish practice is also explored within the Jewish world, daily and holiday rituals and history. Study of the *Tanach* offers the opportunity to question and discuss biblical text through reviewing weekly *Midrash* and finding age appropriate meaning. In recognition of the intense *B'nai Mitzvah* training students will be completing for the next 3 years, students receive their own *Siddur* with a personally designed cover created by their parent(s). At the end of 5th grade, students successfully participating in our program receive their silver *Kipah*. 5th grader students also have the opportunity to participate in a community-wide 5th/6th grade Shabbaton.

6th Grade (*Kitah Vav*)

Sixth grade students continue their preparation to become a *B'nai Mitzvah*. The Hebrew curriculum emphasizes the *Shabbat Torah* service and preparing students to understand the lessons to be learned in both the weekly *Torah* and *Haftarah parshiot*. Hebrew proficiency is mastered through key prayers in the *Torah* service & additional prayers in the *Shabbat* morning service; emphasis is also on understanding the meaning of these prayers and the traditions followed when davening. History of the Jewish people from Ancient Israel to 1880s America fosters discussion about the evolution of our Jewish heritage. During *ESP* students learn the blessings before and after the *Haftarah*, *Haftarah* troupe, *Torah* blessings, and explore understanding the weekly *parshiot* chanted in both the *Torah* and *Haftarah*. Proficiency in Jewish Studies is rewarded with the honor of a Greenie Beanie at the end of the school year. 6th grader students also have the opportunity to participate in a community-wide 5th/6th grade Shabbaton.

7th Grade (*Kitah Zayin*)

Being they are entrenched in studying to become a B'nai Mitzvah we gear our curriculum to complement that time of their lives. Throughout the year the students will gain an understanding of Midot and Mitzvot (values and commandments) within Judaism. There is also an emphasis on the connection between their Torah portion and community organizations through the Torah U'Mitzvot project. As students are in the midst of experiencing a Jewish Life Cycle event, students will learn about other key lifecycle events and the importance of passing on traditions from one generation to the next. On Wednesday evenings these students also have the opportunity to study with Rabbi Shavit-Lonstein, Hazzan Mitchell Kowitz, and Education Director Joshua Fineblum in a B'nai Mitzvah Seminar. They will also have a chance to choose from some electives including: Teen Choir, Actionable Judaism, The Jewish Artisan, Heroes of Judaism, and Judaism and the media. 7th graders will also have the chance to participate in the 7th/8th grade Shabbaton.

8th Grade Honors & Religious School (*Kitah Chet*)

The eighth grade curriculum guides students through Jewish roots and traditions that exist in spite of a history of sacrifices, sorrows, and struggles. Through the study of the Holocaust and Comparative Judaism students will better understand what it means to hold true to your beliefs and values and to attain knowledge that will help them in the future. During Wednesday Honors students will have the chance to choose from many different electives including: Jewish Music, Teen Choir, Judaism and the Media, The Jewish Lens, Actionable Judaism, The Jewish Artisan, and Heroes of Judaism. 8th graders will also have the chance to participate in the 7th/8th grade Shabbaton.

9th Grade Honors & Religious School (*Kitah Tet*)

As 9th graders are developing into adults, students explore their own personal values and define how to live a Jewish life at home, school, Temple of Aaron, and in the community at large. Our focus on Sundays is Social Action and furthering our knowledge of *Tzedakah* and *Gimilut Chasadim* through action. This curriculum includes speakers from outside organizations as well as field trips to some local organizations to better understand what they do and how we can help. During Wednesday Honors students will have the chance to choose from many different electives including: Bubby's Kitchen, Jewish Music, Teen Choir, Judaism and the Media, The Jewish Lens, Actionable Judaism, The Jewish Artisan, and Heroes of Judaism.

10th Grade Honors and Confirmation (*Nachshonim*)

Rabbi Shavit-Lonstein, Ernie Gulner, Joshua Fineblum, and other teachers focus on providing students with a broad understanding of the value of studying/analyzing ancient texts, and learning about the varying Jewish viewpoints. In addition, students are exposed to other Jewish organizations and communities that are not familiar to them. Field trips are taken to the *mikvah*, Jewish funeral home, other synagogues and churches. The highlight of the year is a trip to NYC where students experience the origins of American Jewry. During Wednesday Honors students will have the chance to choose from many different electives including: Bubby's Kitchen, Jewish Music, Teen Choir, Judaism and the Media, The Jewish Lens, Actionable Judaism, The Jewish Artisan, and Heroes of Judaism. The confirmation service and ceremony will take place during Erev Shavuot and in the culmination of the formal part of these teen's Jewish education.

School Policies

Academic Expectations:

Temple of Aaron is committed to providing every child a quality Jewish education. This quality depends on the cooperative effort of teacher, administration, parent and student. Our school provides most of the materials needed for students to engage in learning, however, students must come prepared to every lesson with the required homework, positive attitude, and other materials assigned by the teacher. Students need to fully complete all work on time and participate in class. These give teachers insight into student progress. Please make it a practice to check on your child's work and supervise the completion and return of all homework assignments.

Progress Reports:

Progress Reports will be sent home for your children twice a year. Student evaluations are based on the objectives of each course. In addition, we will communicate on a regular basis via email regarding curriculum topics and discussions. Teachers as well as the Director of Education are always available to address individual needs or questions.

Student Attendance Requirements:

Students must attend 80% of their classes in order to advance a grade level. Teachers will call a student's home when a student has missed more than 2 consecutive sessions or when a student's attendance is less than 80%. Special circumstances should be discussed with the Director Education.

Students' Dress, Appearance & Kipot:

Students are expected to maintain a neat, clean appearance at all times. Spaghetti straps, midriff shirts, tank tops, hats, and "short" shorts should not be worn to school. Pajama-like clothing is also not appropriate for Religious School. *Kipot* are worn by all boys and girls while in the Synagogue. For your convenience, *Kipot* can be borrowed from the boxes throughout the synagogue or can be purchased from the Gift Shop. On Shabbat appropriate attire should be worn as well.

Tzedakah (Charity):

Giving *Tzedakah* is a *mitzvah*, commandment. That being said, students may contribute any amount they choose as often as they choose. Please give *tzedakah* to your teacher at the beginning of each class or to the office.

Electronics, Toys & Miscellaneous Equipment:

The use of cell phones and other electronic equipment in any form (texting, calls etc.) is forbidden during school time unless it is part of the class curriculum. If the parents need to communicate with children, please contact the school office and we will deliver the message. No rollerblades, bats, balls, electronic games, CD players, radios, toys or other similar equipment is permitted at school. Please leave all of these materials at home.

School Office Phone Number During School Hours: 651-698-8874 ext 112

Discipline:

We strive to create an environment in which positive behaviors are encouraged and reinforced. At the point when a child's behavior becomes too disruptive or destructive enough to impede their learning or the learning of other children, the teacher, parents and administration will take steps to make the learning experience possible for all students. To help foster the positive educational climate in our school we will adhere to a discipline plan that will afford each of our students the opportunity to manage their own behavior.

If a student does not follow the guidelines then the following actions should occur:

1st Offense:

The teacher shall give the students a warning (the first time a disruption occurs)

2nd Offense:

The teacher shall ask the student to leave the classroom and report to the Director of Education. The teacher and Director of Education shall meet with the student and contact his/her parent. The parents may join future classes to help ensure the proper learning environment exists.

3rd Offense:

If the student is cited for a disruption for a third time the parent(s) will be called for parent(s) meeting with the teacher, Director of Education and Rabbi to discuss possible alternatives.

Phone Calls:

Unless there are special circumstances, students will not be permitted to use the school office telephone. Please confirm your child's after school plans and transportation arrangements before your child comes to school. Parents are welcome to call the office at anytime, we will be happy to transfer a message to your child.

Kashrut:

Only food in unopened packages and which bears a clearly indicated kosher marking may be brought into the school. Please respond to written requests for classroom party treats with these rules in mind. These rules will be adhered to when serving all snacks and meals for our youth. If you are unsure please ask the Director of Education.

Visitors:

Parents are invited to visit any class at any time; however, we require that they inform the Director of Education and teacher in advance of a visit and that they check in with the school office upon arrival at school. Any non-parent wishing to visit class must obtain advance permission from the Director of Education and teacher.

Inclement Weather/ School Closings:

Should we need to cancel classes due to inclement weather, we will make the appropriate decision by the evening prior (if possible) to the morning in question. If district 197 is closed then we are as well. We will send out an emergency blast to all families, set up a message on the main number of Temple of Aaron, and put a message on the website.

Emergency Procedures/Plans:

We have emergency situation procedures in place for fire and evacuation drills. If you wish to view these plans, they are available in the office and part of our teacher handbook.



TEMPLE OF AARON YOUTH^{BLVD}

Welcome back to another exciting year for the Temple of Aaron youth department. We provide informal experiential learning through fun, innovative and social activities for all ages. Each of our youth groups offers age-appropriate events and activities, which are overseen by our Youth Director Robby Erlich and advisors. Don't delay! Sign up today by handing in a membership form to the youth department so you can be informed of our events and be a part of the fun!

Chaverim (Grades 3-4)

This young group meets 5-8 times a year after Religious School at 12 Noon. We have some cool, new, amazing events planned and we are looking forward to a wonderful year, so don't miss out on the fun! Look for information about the 4th and 3rd Grade Community Shabbatonim coming this winter!



B'resheet (Grades 5-6)

B'resheet offers social opportunities 8-10 times throughout the year. We have planned some amazing events this year and are looking forward to great time. Most activities occur after Religious School on Sunday, with a few special events throughout the year on a Saturday night. Look for information about 5th/6th grade Community Shabbaton coming soon!



Kadima (Grades 7-8)

Kadima offers social opportunities much like our USY group. Events occur at least once a month and create an opportunity for our youth to get together and socialize. There are also chances to meet 7th and 8th graders from other synagogues in the Twin Cities and beyond. Look for our 7th/8th grade retreat coming this year as well.



USY (United Synagogue Youth) Grades 9-12

Our USY chapter offers Jewish teens the opportunity to develop lasting friendships with other Jewish teens from Temple of Aaron, *Emtza* region, and across the USA. USY offers a variety of programs on social, community service, and Israel awareness. USY members may participate in all Temple of Aaron USY chapter events, all regional events including conventions, USY Basketball League, and other programs. This year promises to be another spectacular one filled with fun and memorable experiences!



Benefits of Membership

- Discover the leader inside!
- Connect with Jewish friends!
- Inspire greatness!
- Have fun with other group members!
- Attend amazing events!
- Meet friends you will have for a lifetime!