

September 2010

Riverdale Temple Religious School Calendar and Curriculum

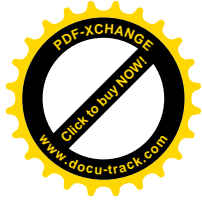
Welcome to the 5771 Riverdale Temple Religious School Year!

This year we have modified our curriculum to communicate more clearly to our children the basics of Judaism in general, and the specific commitments of Reform Judaism as the earliest religious response to the modern age.

Students who complete our entire program will understand:

- The basic concepts and values of each holiday and life-cycle ceremony and the rituals that accompany it.
- The major events of Jewish history from the Bible to today.
- The values that define modern Judaism and how they have evolved from biblical times.
- What it means to be a Reform Jew today, and how to make responsible Jewish choices about how to observe *mitzvot*.
- How to read any printed, vocalized Hebrew text, and what basic words and phrases mean.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4 Selichot Program and Service with Cantorial Intern Aviva Kolet: 7:00 pm
5	6	7	8 <i>Erev Rosh HaShanah Services, 8:00 pm</i>	9 <i>Rosh HaShanah Services, 10 am</i> <i>Family Service 1 pm</i>	10 <i>Rosh HaShanah Services, 10 am</i>	11 <i>Parshat Ha'azinu</i> <i>Shabbat Shuva</i>
12 Religious School Starts!!! 9:30—11:30 am <i>Jr. Choir 11:30</i>	13	14 First Day of Hebrew School 4—6 pm	15	16	17 <i>Erev Yom Kippur (Kol Nidre) services, 8:00 pm</i>	18 <i>Yom Kippur Services, 10 am</i> <i>Family Service 1 pm</i>
19 <i>Religious School Junior Choir Sukkah Building</i>	20	21 <i>Hebrew School</i>	22	23 <i>Sukkot Services, 10:30 am</i>	24 <i>Sukkot Study 10:30 am</i>	25 <i>Chol Ha'Moed Sukkot</i>
26 <i>Religious School OPEN HOUSE Junior Choir Pasta in the Sukkah</i>	27	28 <i>Hebrew School</i>	29	30 <i>Sh'mini Atzeret Services, 10:30 am</i> <i>Erev Simchat Torah Service 7:00 pm</i>		



Religious School Parents' Association — Please Join!

October 2010

Our goal is to make the Jewish knowledge and practice we teach in religious school an extension of your home life. One of the best ways to accomplish this is through celebrations at Riverdale Temple that involve all of our students' senses; taste, smell, sight, touch, and sound. Our Parents' Association provides valuable assistance in the planning and production of these events — open to the entire congregation and community — from our annual Latke Fry-off to our Matzah Making and much, much more. The PA also runs various fundraising projects to provide enrichment funds for special school activities. And, through the PA, the Schools Committee and staff gain valuable feedback on what works best and what parents would like to see in our religious school program.

Save Trees...and Money!

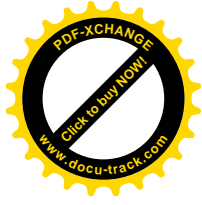
This year we are making every effort to conduct all school registration and communication with parents electronically. **If you do not use e-mail on a daily basis**, please contact me by phone to discuss the most effective way for us to keep in touch.

We urge you to register your children for school through the temple's Website:

Website:
www.riverdaletemple.org.

Please make sure we have an e-mail address you check frequently.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 <i>B'reishit</i>
3 <i>Religious School Junior Choir</i>	4	5 <i>Hebrew School</i>	6	7	8	9 <i>Noach</i>
10 Columbus Day Weekend No School	11	12 <i>Hebrew School</i>	13	14	15	16 <i>Lech L'cha</i>
17 <i>Religious School Junior Choir</i>	18	19 <i>Hebrew School</i>	20	21	22	23 <i>Vayera</i>
24 <i>Religious School Junior Choir</i>	25	26 <i>Hebrew School</i>	27	28	29	30 <i>Chayei Sarah</i>
31 <i>Religious School Junior Choir</i>						



Grades K-3: Holidays, Life-Cycle Ceremonies, Rituals and Traditions, and Hebrew Letter Recognition

November 2010

Our youngest students will be exploring the biblical and rabbinic stories behind our holidays through the creative arts; drama, music, poetry, sculpture, etc. They will learn the central values related to each holiday through experiential exercises and projects (e.g. for Sukkot — thanksgiving, hospitality, sharing). They will also practice the blessings and songs that go along with the various rituals (e.g. waving the lulav and etrog). As students are ready, Hebrew letters will be introduced into the class so that the students begin to recognize the Hebrew words for the holidays they are studying. Please remember; the most important holiday of the Jewish year is Shabbat — even more important than Yom Kippur! The best way to offer your children a “hands-on” Jewish education is by celebrating Shabbat at home (you have 52 weeks a year to experiment with what works for your family) and by

attending Shabbat services whenever you can. Students are expected to attend a number of Shabbat morning services equal to their grade in school. We hope, however, that you will consider services a pleasure rather than a requirement. Even our youngest students often have insights of great value to add to our Torah discussions, and our services are lively and participatory.

Shabbat Morning

Services start at 10:30 am throughout the school year. (10:00 during the summer)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6 <i>Toldot</i>
7 <i>Religious School Junior Choir</i>	8	9 <i>Hebrew School</i>	10	11	12	13 <i>Vayetzei</i>
14 <i>Religious School Junior Choir</i>	15	16 <i>Hebrew School</i>	17	18	19	20 <i>Vayishlach</i>
21 <i>Religious School Junior Choir</i>	22	23 <i>Hebrew School</i>	24	25	26	27 <i>Vayeshev</i>
28 Thanksgiving Weekend No School	29	30 <i>Hebrew School</i>				



Chanukah Candle Lighting Ritual:

December 2010

First Night: If possible, place your “*chanukiyah*” (Chanukah Menorah) in a window. It’s also fun for each family member to have his or her own menorah. Facing the menorah, place one candle in the holder furthest to the right. Using the “*shamash*” light the candle and recite:

ברוך אתה ה' אלוהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להדליק נר של חנוכה
Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel hanuka
Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Ruler of the universe, Who has sanctified us with commandments and commanded us to kindle the Chanukah lights.

ברוך אתה ה' אלוהינו מלך העולם, שעשה נסים לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה.
Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam, she'asa nisim la'avoteinu ba'yamim ha'heim ba'z'man ha'ze
Blessed are You, Eternal, our God, Ruler of the universe, Who performed miracles for our ancestors in those days at this time

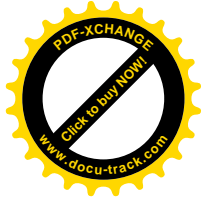
ברוך ה' אלוהינו מלך העולם, שהחינו וקימנו והגענו לזמן הזה.
Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam, she'hehiyanu v'kiy'manu v'higi'anu la'z'man ha'ze.
Blessed are You, Eternal, our God, Ruler of the universe, Who has kept us alive, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this season."

Each night candles are added to the left of the first, but lit from left to right (last added, first lit). The third blessing (*shehecheyanu*) is said only on the first night. It is customary to recite a passage which says:

“We kindle these lights for the miracles and ritual, the heroism and salvation that You performed for our ancestors in those days at this time. These lights are sacred for all 8 days of Chanukah; we do not use them but only look at them, to give thanks and praise to Your great name for the miracles and wonders and salvation.”

Many families also end their ritual lighting by singing “Maoz Tzur” (“Rock of Ages”).

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 First night of Chanukah (1 candle)	2 (2 candles)	3 (3 Candles)	4 Miketz (4 candles)
5 3rd Annual Latke Fry-Off (5 candles)	6 (6 candles)	7 Hebrew School (7 candles)	8 (8 candles)	9	10	11 Vayigash
12 Religious School Junior Choir	13	14 Hebrew School	15	16	17	18 Vayechi
19 No School	20	21 No school	22	23	24	25 Shemot
26 No School	27	28 No School	29	30	31	



Grades 4-5: Jewish Life in Home and Synagogue

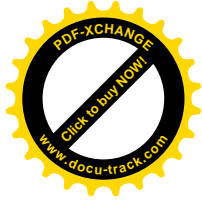
January 2011

This year, the additional day for Hebrew Studies is optional for our third graders, but is a requirement for all students in fourth grade and up who intend to celebrate a bar or bat mitzvah ceremony at Riverdale Temple — unless they are attending a Hebrew Day School (e.g. Kinneret, Heschel, Schechter) which offers them a Hebrew and Judaic studies background. (We are offering a special program for such students in 6th and 7th grade — see below). Students will learn or review the entire Hebrew alphabet and begin gaining fluency in Hebrew prayer. By the end of 5th grade students should be able to read all the passages recited during a Sabbath morning service, and all the home blessings (Shabbat Kiddush, candle blessings, etc.). They will also learn to recognize key phrases in the prayers (e.g. “ruler of the universe,” “who brought us out of the land of Egypt,” “who sanctified us,” etc.).

The Judaics portion of the class will focus on rituals in home and the synagogue. Students will learn about sacred objects (e.g. mezuzah, tefillin, Torah, megillah, bimah, etc.) and prayers and rituals associated with them. Particular attention will be paid to the Sabbath and both its home and synagogue rituals and services. The class will also introduce students to the structure of individual Hebrew prayers, and the structure of the worship service as a whole.

Regular Shabbat Service attendance is extremely helpful!

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 <i>Vaera</i>
2 No School	3	4 No School	5	6	7	8 <i>Bo</i>
9 <i>Religious School Junior Choir</i>	10	11 <i>Hebrew School</i>	12	13	14	15 <i>B'Shalach</i>
16 No School MLK Weekend	17 <i>Martin Luther King Jr. Day</i>	18 <i>Hebrew School</i>	19	20 <i>T"U B'Shevat</i>	21	22 <i>Yitra</i>
23 <i>Religious School Junior Choir</i>	24	25 <i>Hebrew School</i>	26	27	28	29 <i>Mishpatim</i>
30 <i>Religious School Junior Choir</i>	31					



6th & 7th Grade: *Mitzvah and Tikkun Olam (Commandment and Repairing the World)*

November 2010

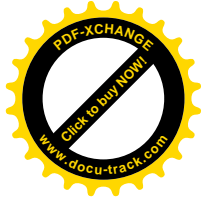
This program is new to Riverdale Temple and a requirement for all students wishing to celebrate a bar or bat mitzvah ceremony as a member of our congregation. The program will involve each student selecting a community service project to perform throughout the year. The instructor will assist the students in choosing and setting up their individual projects. Once all the students have planned their initiatives, the class will exam the Jewish values and commandments being observed in the course of performing community service. They will study relevant texts from our tradition, and discuss how they are fulfilling these moral and ethical obligations. In addition to gaining a much broader perspective of what it means to observe a “mitzvah,” the students will also examine how their community efforts affect themselves. **We guarantee** that all the students will discover transformations taking place in their own lives and perspectives as they reach out to assist others in our community.

All students preparing to observe a bar or bat mitzvah ceremony will begin receiving individual tutoring at least six months prior to their date. Students who do not attend a Hebrew day school must have at least two years of Hebrew instruction at Riverdale Temple or its equivalent elsewhere before they can begin individual instruction.

The *Mitzvah and Tikkun Olam* class will take place on Sunday mornings.

Hebrew instruction will be offered on Tuesday afternoons.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5 <i>Terumah</i>
6 <i>Religious School Junior Choir</i>	7	8 <i>Hebrew School</i>	9	10	11	12 <i>T'tzaveh</i>
13 <i>Religious School Junior Choir</i>	14	15 <i>Hebrew School</i>	16	17	18	19 <i>Ki Tissa</i>
20 No School	21	22 No School	23	24	25	26 <i>Vayakhel</i>
27 No School	28					



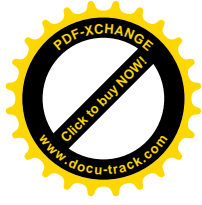
Bar and Bat Mitzvah at Riverdale Temple

March 2011

Traditionally, any Jewish male becomes a “bar mitzvah” upon reaching the age of thirteen, with or without any ceremony acknowledging that status. The title, “Bar Mitzvah” technically means that the young man is now responsible for fulfilling the commandments on his own, and that any failure to do so no longer implicates his parents. This, in turn, makes the thirteen year old male eligible to participate in the entire range of Jewish practice, including being counted in a “minyan” (a group of ten men), conducting services, reading from the Torah, and serving as a witness.

Reform Judaism originally (over 200 years ago) rejected the idea of Bar Mitzvah entirely. After the industrial revolution thirteen no longer seemed to be a realistic age to consider young men adults. Also, their concept of being “commanded” had evolved. Furthermore, Reform Judaism assumed equality as a bedrock principle, and felt that both boys and girls should celebrate a coming of age ceremony, together, at an appropriate time in their lives, and in the Jewish year. Thus, Confirmation was invented. (Please see the month of June for further details on Confirmation. Bar/Bat Mitzvah continued on the next page...)

Purimshpiel	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>Riverdale Temple is famous for its hilarious Purimshpiel, written by Helen Krim, with the Book of Esther “adjusted” to a different well-known body of music each year.</p> <p>All ages are encouraged to participate. Watch for notices of rehearsal times. Purimshpiel enjoys an audience second only to the High Holy Days in size — because the cast works so closely together to produce an event that both entertains and amuses the entire congregation on a variety of levels!</p>			1	2	3	4	5 <i>Pekudei</i>
	6 <i>Religious School Junior Choir</i>	7	8 <i>Hebrew School</i>	9	10	11	12 <i>Vayikra</i>
	13 <i>Religious School Junior Choir</i>	14	15 <i>Hebrew School</i>	16	17	18	19 <i>Tzav</i> Erev Purim Purimshpiel!
	20 Purim <i>Family Purim Celebration</i>	21	22 <i>Hebrew School</i>	23	24	25	26 <i>Sh'mini</i>
	27 <i>Religious School Junior Choir</i>	28	29 <i>Hebrew School</i>	30	31		

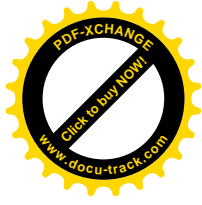


Junior Choir

April 2011

Under the direction of Aviva Kolet, our Cantorial Intern, our Junior Choir will be open to every religious school student, and will meet immediately following religious school on Sunday mornings at 11:30 am. Our students will learn not only special music to add to our Kabbalat Shabbat services on the first Friday evening of every month, but some of the most popular music of our regular Shabbat services as well. We look forward to every student participating in our Junior Choir so that they will learn all the music we love to sing during services, and add to our joy as we witness them leading us in worship. **And don't forget — this year there will be an Adult Volunteer Choir as well. Watch for rehearsal times!!!!**

<p>(bar/bat mitzvah continued....) Bar Mitzvah returned to Reform Judaism in full force during the post-war period of the late 50s and early 60s. It was soon joined by Bat Mitzvah, an innovation of the Reconstructionist movement.</p> <p>Riverdale Temple delights in celebrating both our B'nai Mitzvah and our Confirmants. B'nai Mitzvah students are required to participate in our 6th and 7th grade Tikkun Olam program (see January), and acquire the skills necessary to conduct worship services and chant from the Torah. Families attend a special meeting for prospective B'nai Mitzvah during the spring of their children's fifth grade year. B'nai Mitzvah are asked to attend at least 13 Sabbath morning services the year of their ceremony.</p>	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1	2 <i>Tazria</i>
	3 <i>Religious School Junior Choir</i>	4	5 <i>Hebrew School</i>	6	7	8	9 <i>Metzora</i>
	10 <i>Religious School Junior Choir</i>	11	12 <i>Hebrew School</i>	13	14	15	16 <i>Acharei Mot</i>
	17 Passover Family Celebration	18 Erev Pesach First Seder	19 Pesach Service 10:30 am (no school) Second Seder	20 Pesach Study 10:30 am	21	22	23 <i>Chol Hamo'ed Pesach</i>
24 No school	25 Pesach Service 10:30 am (Yizkor)	26 Pesach Study 10:30 am (no school)	27	28	29	30 <i>Kedoshim</i>	



High School and Youth Group Program

May 2011

All post-b'nai mitzvah members of Riverdale Temple are eligible to participate in our High School and Youth Group program. This program combines social activities with Jewish studies that are relevant to the actual life experiences of our teenagers. "Real-time" ethical issues will be discussed in the context of rabbinic opinions and modern Jewish life. The group will also plan social events of their choice (e.g. bowling, apple-picking, etc.) which will be supervised by the High School/Youth Group advisor.

Students who participate in the High School program for a minimum of two years will be eligible to celebrate Confirmation at the end of tenth grade. Students who continue through their senior year will celebrate their graduation during the Confirmation Service — this year, on Friday, June 3rd.

L'ag B'Omer
 The period between the second day of Passover and Shavuot is called "The Omer," based on instructions in the Torah to bring an "omer" or measure of grain as an offering each day during that time. Legends exist that a plague or a period of oppression took place in early rabbinic times. Thus, Jews observe a semi-mourning state during the Omer. According to tradition, however, the source of sadness was relieved on the 33rd day of the Omer. The Hebrew letters "lamed" and "gimmer" represent the number 33. Thus, L'ag B'Omer became a traditional day of festivities — the only day during the Omer, for example, when weddings are permitted.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Community Holocaust Memorial Day Observance	2	3 <i>Hebrew School</i>	4	5	6	7 <i>Emor</i>
8 <i>Religious School Junior Choir Student Sponsorship Breakfast</i>	9	10 <i>Hebrew School Israel Independence Day celebration</i>	11	12	13	14 <i>B'har</i>
15 <i>Religious School Junior Choir</i>	16	17 <i>Hebrew School</i>	18	19	20	21 <i>B'Chukotai</i>
22 L'ag B'Omer End of School Year festivities	23	24	25	26	27	28 <i>BaMidbar</i>
29	30	31				

