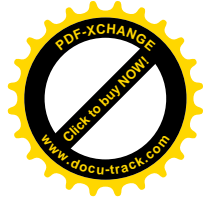




Table of Contents



Getting to Know You	2
University Synagogue Religious School’s Mission	3
Expected Student Learning Outcomes	4
Religious School Schedule 5772 – 2011-2012	5
General Information	
Religious School Office Hours	
Updated Religious School Calendar	
Family Shabbat and Celebrations	8
Religious School Policies	9
Religious School Rules	
Discipline	
Procedure for Arriving at Religious School Late	
Procedure for Leaving Religious School Early	
Students with Special Needs	
Academic & Attendance Standards	
Safety & Emergency Procedures	
University Synagogue Religious School – Exciting Opportunities	12
Hebrew Enrichment	
Overnight Retreats	
Family Shabbat Experiences	
Tuesday Study Hall	
B’nei Mitzvah	14
Youth and Teen Programming	15
Goals for University Synagogue Religious School 5772 – 2011-2012	17



Getting to Know You

Hear from Tami Weisman, your Religious School Director



Shalom! I am thrilled to join the University Synagogue community as the Director of Religious School! I am a Southern California native and grew up in Fountain Valley, where my parents and brother still reside. I graduated from University of California, Santa Barbara in 2004 with a Bachelors of Arts in Religious Studies and subsequently, moved to Los Angeles to work for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). At AIPAC, a huge passion of mine was confirmed, my love for Israel, and I felt a need to immerse myself in Israeli culture. So, I left Los Angeles to join Project Otzma. As a part of Otzma, I volunteered in a variety of cities and in numerous capacities in Israel. I met Jews from all over the world and realized the richness and diversity of the Jewish People. For the first time, I recognized how closely connected my family is to Israel and how our communities, Israel and the Diaspora, are inextricably linked. When I returned to California, I pursued my passion for the Jewish Community and held the position of Youth Director at the Bureau of Jewish Education in Orange County. This experience showed me where all of my passions could merge seamlessly- in the field of Jewish Education and decided to make it my life's work.

I entered the Rhea Hirsch School of Jewish Education at Hebrew Union College- Jewish Institute of Religion in 2007, ready to sharpen my skills as a Jewish Educator and learn best practices in the field. As soon as I arrived in Jerusalem for my first year of study, I met my husband, Greg. We celebrated our two-year anniversary last May.

After three full years of study, I graduated from the Rhea Hirsch School of Education with a Masters of Arts in Jewish Education in May 2010. I am privileged to continue my work with the wonderful community here at University Synagogue. After a summer spent preparing new programs for the school year, connecting with nature and Judaism at URJ Camp Newman, and learning from last year's experience, I feel renewed and ready to begin school once again and join in your family's lifelong Jewish journey through Religious School, Tichon, and beyond.



University Synagogue Religious School's Mission

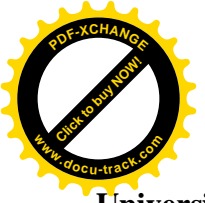
University Synagogue Religious School is committed to providing a quality educational experience at all grade levels. We believe that acquiring a positive Jewish identity through a Jewish education that appeals to all of the senses is the ultimate goal of our students. Content areas for students in grades K through 7 include:

- *Chagim*: Shabbat & Holidays
- *Am Yisrael*: Jewish Identity
- *K'lal Yisrael*: Community & History
- *Eretz Yisrael*: Land of Israel
- *Talmud Torah*: Jewish Literature
- *Ivrit u-T'filah*: Hebrew & Prayer

These subject areas provide the roots of your child's education and Jewish identity. **When we tend to these roots – nurturing them and allowing them to grow and develop, your child can have a strong Jewish identity**, embedded in a deep understanding of what Judaism is all about.

We at University Synagogue believe that the purpose of Religious School is:

1. To instill a sense of pride in a child's Jewish heritage and an appreciation of the beauty of Jewish tradition as guided by the principles of Reform Judaism.
2. To teach Judaism and Jewish living as guided by the principles of Reform Judaism for the next generation and develop an understanding of where each individual fits into the community.
3. To teach the *how* and *why* of Judaism in order to create a positive Jewish identity that makes for a long-lasting and meaningful connection to Judaism.
4. To acquire Hebrew skills in order to understand and make personal meaning from prayers, to participate in prayer services around the world, and to connect with others in Jewish settings across the globe.
5. To foster a love of the land and dream of Israel as a Jewish country with democratic ideals.
6. To promote a sense of commonality and connection with Jews around the world.



Expected Student Learning Outcomes



University Synagogue Religious School graduates of the 12th grade will

Be knowledgeable Jews who can:

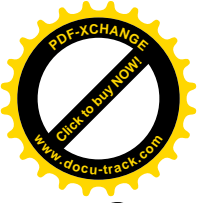
- Participate in and lead Shabbat services in Hebrew
- Understand the meaning of the Shabbat prayers and holiday blessings
- Share moments and identify figures of significance in Jewish history
- Identify biblical characters and explain how their stories impact our lives
- Relate to God in myriad ways
- Explain the Jewish life cycle and rituals
- Read and recognize Hebrew prayers and words
- Connect to Israel in meaningful ways
- Lead holiday blessings at home
- Share lessons from Torah in a d'var Torah

Connect to Jewish life through:

- *Tikkun Olam* – making the world a better place
- A growing commitment to Jews around the world
- Making life decisions that are shaped by Jewish ethics and values
- Developing a life-long relationship with God
- Being proud and active members of the University Synagogue community
- Celebration of Jewish holidays
- A desire to visit Israel, go to Jewish camps, and participate in youth group programming
- Israeli dance and Jewish songs
- Taking pride and having fun being Jewish
- Express their Jewish opinions on issues of moral and ethical concern

Be advocates for *derech erez* by:

- Showing care and compassion for humanity
- Honoring their parents
- Giving tzedakah
- Pursuing peace
- Valuing friendship
- Respecting teachers and classmates
- Working at home and school to protect and save the environment



Religious School Schedule 5772 – 2011-2012

CGeneral InformationB

Religious School hours are as follows:

- **Sundays, 9:00am-Noon, Gan through Mechinah (grades K-7)**
 - **T'filah** (prayer services)
 - § T'filah for Gan through Gimel (grades K-3): 10:45-11:05am
 - § T'filah for Dalet through Mechinah (grades 4-7): 10:10-10:40am
 - **Hafsakah (snack/break):** Each class will have *hafsakah* for 10 minutes.
 - § Gan through Gimel (grades K-3) students are asked to bring in snack on a rotating basis. Each teacher will set up the class schedule.
 - § Dalet through Mechinah (grades 4-7) students have the opportunity to buy snack. All proceeds go to tzedakah. Snacks range from 50¢ to \$1.50

- **Tuesdays, 4:00-6:00pm, Dalet through Mechinah (grades 4-7)**
 - **Hafsakah (snack/break):** Students will have the opportunity to purchase snacks (proceeds to go *tzedakah*) before Religious School begins, and at *hafsakah* time.
 - **Students in the Mechinah class will join the Tichon program on Monday evenings starting in January, 2012.** *At that time, Mechinah students will no longer attend Religious School on Tuesdays. Families will be reminded and notified before this change takes place.*

Tichon (high school program) hours are as follows:

- **Mondays, 6:00-8:00pm, grades 8-12**
 - Dinner will be served from 6:00-6:30pm.
 - Students have the opportunity to choose their course of study – class length will be approximately 90 minutes, including a 10 minute *hafsakah* (break).

⌘ Religious School Office Hours»

The Religious School office is open Sunday through Friday during the school year. Below are our office hours:

- Sunday 8:00am-12:30pm
- Monday 11:00am-8:00pm
- Tuesday 10:00am-6:00pm
- Wednesday 9:00am-5:00pm
- Thursday- closed
- Friday 9:00am-3:00pm

(Phone: 310.472.1255

: Email: Tami Weisman, Director of Religious School: tweisman@unisyn.org
Rose Aguero, Religious School Assistant: raguero@unisyn.org

Ê Fax: 310.476.3237



2011-2012 – 5772 Religious School Calendar

Religious School sessions are on the following days, unless otherwise noted in the calendar below

Gan – Gimel (Kindergarten through 3rd grade):
Sundays, 9:00am-Noon

Dalet – Vav (4th through 6th grades):
Sundays, 9:00am-Noon *and*
Tuesdays, 4:00-6:00pm

Mechinah (7th grade):
Sundays, 9:00am-Noon *and*
Tuesdays, 4:00-6:00pm (September-December)
Mondays, 6:00-8:00pm (January-May) with dinner

Tichon (8th grade and up):
Mondays, 6:00-8:00pm – dinner included

September

Sunday	11	9:00-Noon	First Day of Religious School with Parents and All-School Fair
Monday	12	6:00-8:00pm	First Day of Tichon
Tuesday	13	4:00-6:00pm	First Tuesday of Religious School
Friday	23	TBD	Mechinah Shabbat Experience

October

Sunday	9		No Religious School (Day after Yom Kippur)
Tuesday	11	4:00-6:00pm	Sukkot Celebration
Wednesday	19	5:30, 6:00pm	Pizza Dinner and Simchat Torah services and Consecration (for Gan and all new RS students in Alef through Gimel)

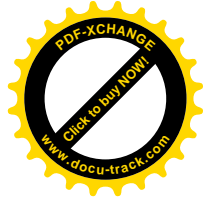
November

Friday	4	6:30pm	Family Shabbat service with Vav & Mechinah (6th & 7th) classes
Sunday	6	9:00-Noon	Fall Back- Turn your clocks back an hour!
Sunday	20	9:00-Noon	All School Family Day Off site @ Underwood Farms
Sunday	27		No Religious School- Thanksgiving Break
Monday	28	6:00-8:00pm	Tichon resumes
Tuesday	29	4:00-6:00pm	Religious School resumes (4-7 th grade)

December

Friday	2-4	3:00pm	Jewish Federation Father-Son Retreat, It's a Guy Thing, for 8 th /9 th students @ Brandeis-Bardin Institute (optional)
Friday	3	6:30pm	Family Shabbat services with Dalet, Hei (4th & 5th) classes
Sunday	11	11:30-12:00pm	Pre-Hanukkah Celebration

T Winter Break: Sunday, December 18 through Saturday, January 7T



Sunday	8	9:00-Noon	Religious School Resumes
Monday	9	6:00-8:00pm	Tichon Resumes with Mechinah Class (7 th grade) in attendance
Sunday	15	9:00-Noon	No Religious School in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Monday	16	6:00-8:00pm	No Tichon in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Tuesday	17	4:00-6:00pm	Tuesday RS resumes (4 th -6 th grade)
Sunday	22	9:00-Noon	Vav Class (6th grade) B'nei Mitzvah Meeting
Sunday	29	8:00-8:45am	Faculty Meeting

February

Friday	4	6:30pm	Family Shabbat with Bet & Gimel (2 & 3rd) classes
Friday	17-20		Etgar Trip (8th/9th Grade)
Sunday	20	9:00 –Noon	No Religious School in observance of President's Weekend
Monday	21	6:00-8:00pm	No Tichon in observance of Presidents' Weekend
Sunday	26	9:00-Noon	All-School Family Day

March

Friday	2-6		L'taken Conference in Washington, D.C. for Confirmation
Friday	2	6:30pm	Family Shabbat Services with Gan & Aleph (K & 1st) classes
Sunday	11	9:00-Noon	Spring Forward: Set your clocks ahead 1 hour
Sunday	11	11:00am	Purim Assembly and Pandemonium Carnival
Sunday	20		No Religious School due to LA Marathon

R Spring Break: Sunday, April 1 through Saturday, April 14 R

April

Sunday	15	9:00-Noon	Religious School Resumes
Sunday	22	8:00am	Faculty Meeting
Sunday	22	11:00am	Dalet Class (4th grade) Family B'nei Mitzvah Meeting
Fri-Sunday	27-29	3:30pm	Religious School Retreat for 4-7th Dalet through Mechinah
Sunday	29	9:00-Noon	Religious School Classes for Gan through Mechinah (Classes will be in session for students who did not attend the retreat.)

May

Friday	4	6:30pm	Tichon Shabbat Graduation Service
Sunday	6	9:00-Noon	All School Family Day: Big Sunday
Sunday	13	9:00-10:30am	Early Dismissal for Mother's Day
Monday	14	6:00-8:00pm	Closing Day of Tichon
Sunday	20	9:00-Noon	Closing Day of Religious School
Sunday	20	11:15am	Closing Day Assembly
Sunday	27	10:00am	Confirmation Shavuot Service & Brunch



Family Shabbat & Celebrations

Shabbat is a wonderful time for you to spend together with your family. At Family Shabbat, you'll experience a family service and *shep naches* (be proud/joyful) when your child takes a role in leading services.

Join us on the first Shabbat of every month for Family Shabbat services. These special evenings are truly a part of our curriculum, as they enable students to put what they are learning in classes to practice, and they give you the opportunity to both pray with your child(ren), and serve as a role model for your child(ren).

Below is the calendar for Family Shabbat Services and Celebrations throughout the 5772 – 2011-2012 school year. Please be sure to mark your calendars now so you can be at your child's Shabbat service. You will receive an invitation reminder prior to your child's Shabbat service. Please mark the date and reserve this special family time.

5772 – 2011-2012 Family Shabbat & Celebration Calendar

Simchat Torah Celebration: Wednesday, October 19 (6:30pm) – Consecration for Gan (Kindergarten) and *all new* students in Alef – Gimel (1st through 3rd grade)

Shabbat: November 4 (6:30pm) - Vav & Mechinah (6th & 7th grade) participation

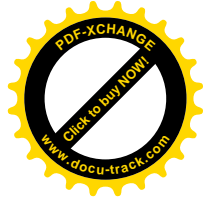
Shabbat: December 2 (6:30pm) – Dalet & Hei (4th & 5th grade) participation

Shabbat: February 3 (6:30pm) – Bet & Gimel (2nd & 3rd grade) participation

Shabbat: March 2 (6:30pm) – Gan & Aleph (K & 1st grade) participation

Shabbat: May 4 (6:30pm) - Tichon Graduation Service (12th grade) participation

Shavuot: Sunday, May 27 (10:00am) – Confirmation for 10th graders (open to the entire community)



Religious School Policies

Religious School Rules

1. Remember that University Synagogue is a *beit k'nesset* – a *house* of gathering. Treat it with the same *kavod* (honor/respect) you would treat your own home. Respect synagogue property, and treat prayer spaces (sanctuary and chapel) with a special *kavod* (honor/respect).
2. Walk walk walk. Walking through the hallways, stairs, and parking lot ensure your own safety and the safety of others.
3. *Hafsakah* is the only time for snacking and drinking. The sanctuary and chapel must remain food-free. Eating is only permitted in the classrooms during class celebrations. Otherwise, all eating and drinking will take place in Klein or the hallways.
4. Remember the general rules of *derech erez* (literally “the way of the land” or “appropriate behavior and good character”):
 - a. If something does not belong to you, do not touch it without permission.
 - b. Words can hurt! Only say to others what you might like to hear them say to you.

Promptness

Arriving on time is important! Please make certain children are in class and read for school in a timely manner. Late arrival to class is often a contributing factor to difficulties in class. Also, please pick up children promptly, particularly in the evening. Remember, local construction has compounded traffic while commuting to and from Religious School.

Procedure for Arriving at Religious School Late

If for some reason your child(ren) is/are late for Religious School, please park your car, and walk your child(ren) to his/her/their classroom. For safety reasons, students should not be walking unattended in the parking lot.

Procedure for Leaving Religious School Early

Students leaving school early must be picked up in the Education Office. Students will not be released to the parking lot before dismissal time.

- If you must pick up your child(ren) early, please come to the Education Office and we will send for the student(s). Or, if you send a note in advance, we can have the student waiting for you in the School Office.
- Students will not be released without a note or phone call from the parent/guardian.
- Students leaving early may not meet drivers in the parking lot for safety reasons.

Students with Special Needs

We at the Religious School take seriously the success of each and every child. We have a resource room for students with special needs, and employ *Madrichim* (leaders) who are able to assist the classroom teachers in meeting the needs of each and every student in the classroom. If your child(ren) has special needs, please notify the Director of Religious School so that we can work on a plan to best accommodate your child(ren).



Discipline

Each teacher, along with his/her students, will determine a class “brit” (covenant) that illustrates proper behavior, and outlines fair consequences for unacceptable behavior. If attempts to resolve difficult behavior have been attempted, and a student still exhibits such unacceptable behavior, he/she will be escorted to the Director of Religious School’s Office. The following procedure will then be followed:

1. The first time a student is referred to the Director of Religious School, she will discuss the problem and seek a solution with the student.
2. The second time a student is referred, the Director of Religious School will call home and attempt to find a solution with the parent(s).
3. The third time a meeting with the parent(s), Director of Religious School, and (possibly) teacher will be arranged.

If all above attempts to correct the unacceptable behavior fail, it may be necessary to schedule a meeting with parent(s), Director of Religious School, Rabbi, Cantor, and/or Synagogue and/or School volunteer leadership.

Academic & Attendance Standards

University Synagogue Religious School is committed to providing a quality educational experience at all grade levels. We believe that acquiring a positive Jewish identity through a Jewish education that appeals to all of the senses is the ultimate goal of our students. The Religious School faculty knows that our students’ learning will be achieved by means of viable instructional methods, a variety of appropriate educational tools (texts, materials, audio-visual, etc.), and student and parental motivation. We believe that a solid curriculum, well qualified teachers, strong Family Learning, and a continuous evaluation process will allow us to reach and then to exceed our goals.

Regular class attendance and a commitment to learning are also necessary for a student to be able to reach our goals. Irregular attendance will cause a variety of negative factors:

- When a student misses class often, he/she inevitably will fall behind the peer group. The student may begin to experience failure in classwork and strained social connections to other students and teacher. As a result, many such students become frustrated and may generate discipline problems in the classroom.
- If promoted with their peers, these students usually continue to fail at each successive grade level, because they lack appropriate skills which new material builds upon. Under those circumstances, teachers will be faced with classes in which there are too many ability levels. Thus, their effectiveness will be weakened.
- Students who miss class regularly have more difficulties socializing because their peers have developed relationships in their absence.

Therefore, a student must maintain classroom level ability at all times. Written student evaluations are sent home twice a year at the end of each semester. Teachers will contact parents when a student begins to fall behind the rest of the class. If a student’s academic performance falls below class level, or if a student is absent from class 25% or more, his/her parents will be asked to take steps to see that the student returns to class level ability through private tutoring. Lists of approved tutors will be provided by the Religious School. Family members may tutor the student(s), if it is certain that our curriculum and classroom teacher’s requirements are followed. Classroom teachers and the Director of Religious School will monitor progress carefully and they will maintain contact with the family.



If academic performance does not improve within a reasonable period of time or if attendance falls 50% or less, a student's parents will be required to hire a private tutor among those whom the Religious School recommends. The tutor will be required to follow our curriculum and maintain regular contact with the classroom teacher and the Director of Religious School to assure us that the student is staying on track. Tutors will also be required to submit regular written reports to the Religious School, including material covered and the progress level achieved by the student. Students who are unable to work with a private tutor will have to attend each session of a selected ulpan to make up the work from the school year.

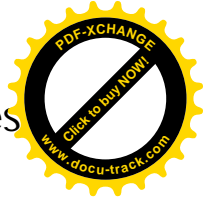
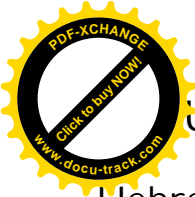
If any of the above does not occur, the student(s) will not advance to the next grade level, and the student(s) will be retained at the lower grade level during the next academic year, or until the student-working with an approved tutor-merits being advanced to the next grade level.

It should be noted that our Bar/Bat Mitzvah policy states that a student must complete or be actively attending with the intention of completing the *Mechinah*/7th grade. Therefore, it is possible that a student, who is not in compliance with our attendance and achievement policy, would have his/her Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration date placed in jeopardy.

We never want to demoralize students or keep them back due to busy schedules or family issues. Please be in touch with Tami if you are concerned about your child(ren)'s attendance or their engagement in class. (tweisman@unisvn.org or 310.472.1255 x. 122)

Safety & Emergency Procedures

Each member of the University Synagogue staff and Religious School faculty receives a copy of our safety and emergency procedures. In the case of injury or emergency, we follow a careful protocol which prioritizes the health and safety of our students. In the event of an emergency, you will be properly notified and upon arriving at the synagogue will receive instructions on how to proceed to pick up your child(ren).



University Synagogue Religious School – Exciting Opportunities

Hebrew Enrichment

Hebrew Enrichment is available for students who need extra help with Hebrew, and those who are excelling in Hebrew studies. Students who need help with Hebrew will receive one-on-one mini-lessons, while those who are advanced with their Hebrew skills will have the chance to learn Modern Hebrew, play Hebrew games, and work on projects in Hebrew. All students in Hebrew Enrichment will have the opportunity to learn “*Ivrit b’Ivrit*” – or Hebrew in Hebrew. Throughout the year students will study various types of holiday food, learn recipes, traditions, and more all in Hebrew. These lessons will culminate with the Enrichment students actually cooking the food – all while conversing in Hebrew!

All students in Dalet through Mechinah (4th-7th grade) will have a Hebrew Assessment in the fall and spring. The assessment will help track student progress throughout the year, and will indicate if a student needs private Hebrew help or should be participating in our Hebrew Enrichment programs.

Overnight Retreats

Shabbat in the Shul is an exciting Friday Night Erev Shabbat experience in the synagogue for our Mechinah (7th) classes. The **Father-Son retreat** is open to all father and son pairs in the 8th and 9th grades. We are holding our **Religious School Retreat** for all students in Dalet through Mechinah (grades 4-7) in April. The **Religious School retreat** will be an opportunity for these students to spend Shabbat with Rabbi Feinstein, Tami Weisman, Rabbi Simonds, and a special team of Religious School faculty and Madrichim. This retreat is being put together by our staff and is solely for University Synagogue RS students! *This retreat is mandatory and a participation fee for the retreat is included in the tuition for students in Dalet through Mechinah.*

Keep your eyes peeled for more information about these exciting events. As always – if you would like more information, or have any questions, please contact Tami at tweisman@unisyn.org or 310.472.1255.

Below is a listing of the retreat dates. You can also find them within the Religious School calendar.

- September 22, 2011: Mechinah Erev Shabbat Experience
- December 2-4, 2011: Father-Son Retreat (It’s a Guy Thing!) at Brandeis Bardin Institute
- April 27-29, 2012: Dalet through Mechinah *required* retreat at Brandeis Bardin Institute (Camp Alonim)

HaSharim and Family Shabbat Experiences

As part of our Joshua Project, we are hoping to re-energize our Family Shabbat services. If you would like to be involved in the Joshua Project transformation process, please let Tami know ASAP (tweisman@unisyn.org or 310-472-1255).

Some important notes about HaSharim and the Family Shabbat services this year include:

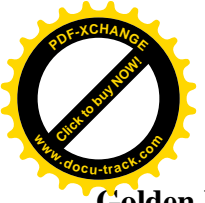
- Family Shabbat services begin **at 6:30pm.**
- HaSharim is now open to students in Dalet (4th grade) and up – including our post b’nei mitzvah students!
- HaSharim welcomes student musicians – if you play an instrument, you can play with HaSharim!

Contact Cantor Jay at cantorjay@unisyn.org

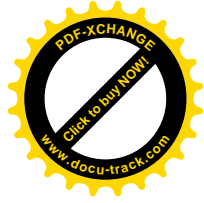


Tuesday Study Hall

Some of our students arrive before Religious School begins at 4:00pm. We are able to offer a FREE study hall for these students beginning at 3:00pm. All students arriving to the Synagogue before school hours should report to Klein Hall. Students should bring homework or reading. A faculty member will be monitoring the study hall: able to give homework help and overseeing student activity.



B'nei Mitzvah



Golden Kippah

Golden Kippah is a program meant to enhance a bar/bat mitzvah student's connection to the Jewish people and to God. The program is based on the ten obligations that our rabbis said were so valuable that their worth could not be measured:

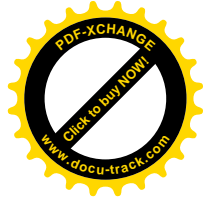
1. Honoring one's father and mother
2. Acts of Love and Kindness
3. Pursuit of knowledge and wisdom
4. Hospitality to strangers
5. Visiting the sick
6. Celebrating with bride and groom
7. Consoling the bereaved
8. Praying with sincerity
9. Making peace where there is strife
10. Studying Torah

Golden Kippah program participants must complete a series of mitzvot, write reflections on their various experiences, and remain in good standing in the Religious School. Once completing the program, students receive a golden kippah at their bar/bat mitzvah. Golden Kippah recipients participate in and help to lead Family High Holy Day services. **This special program is only available at University Synagogue!** If you are interested in participating, email Tami at tweisman@unisyn.org.

****New to Golden Kippah:** Are you and your teen too busy to finish the requirements before bar/bat mitzvah? Don't worry! Students are now able to qualify for their golden kippah anytime after their bar/bat mitzvah! We will award your child with a golden kippah at a Family Shabbat service after they complete the requirements.**

B'nei Mitzvah Community Service Projects

Not sure where to volunteer for your bar/bat mitzvah community service project? Do you want to make sure that you're working towards something that you are truly passionate about? See Tami for community service ideas!



Youth and Teen Programming

Ongoing Teen Programs at the Synagogue

Madrachim Team

The Hebrew word *madrich* means leader or counselor. It is derived from the word *derech*, which means path or way. At University Synagogue, our post b'nei mitzvah students have the opportunity to learn about leadership as they guide younger students along their Jewish educational path. *Madrachim* at University Synagogue can work with specific grades, specialists, or in the Education Office. In addition to “classroom time,” *Madrachim* will have an orientation and five meetings throughout the year to reflect on their work experiences, and learn Jewish lessons of leadership. If you have a teen who is interested in becoming a *madrich*, please contact Tami ASAP. (tweisman@unisyn.org or 310.472.1255)

Tichon

In Hebrew, *Tichon* means “high school.” What a perfect match for the Monday night post-b'nei mitzvah program. *Tichon* is a time for University Synagogue teens to meet with each other and further their connection to Judaism through a variety of classes. *Tichon* runs on Monday evenings, from 6:00-8:00pm. Students will choose their class preferences at the first session, on Monday, September 12. Last year *Tichon* was proud to offer new courses such as: American Jewish History through Music, Parshat Ha-Shavuah – and In-Depth Torah Study, and Looks, Love, and Life, a Guide for Teenagers on Making Jewish Decisions about their Bodies and Relationships.

JR UNITY

JR UNITY is our junior youth group for 5th-8th graders. JR UNITY is an opportunity for middle-school students to spend time together socially and to make our world a better place. JR UNITY is open to all 5th-8th grade students - there is no fee to join. Come to one of our events and let us know what you want to do this year!

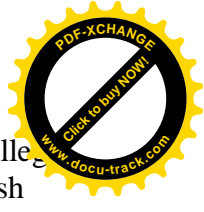
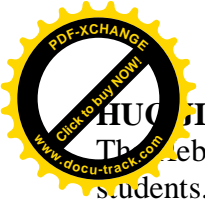
UNITY

Start the year off on the right foot by joining UNITY. Our Synagogue's Senior Youth Group (9th-12th grade) is complete with a dynamic leadership team and enthusiastic members who are seeking to create fun and exciting programs for the synagogue youth. From Havdalah on the beach, creative Shabbat services, laser tag and sleep over, regional wide weekend events at Camp Hess Kramer to a limo scavenger hunt around Los Angeles, UNITY covers all of your social, cultural and religious needs. UNITY also takes social action seriously as we are creating opportunities to help clean up the environment and fight the genocide in Sudan. Come join UNITY and be a part of life-changing group.

Special Teen Opportunities

Camp Newman

Union for Reform Judaism's (URJ) camping institute has provided a positive reinforcement for Jewish growth and development. The creation of a Jewish living experience in a natural community setting has touched the minds, spirits and souls of several generations. The moment campers reach our gates, they enter a very special world where everyone feels a sense of connection, community and *mishpachah* (family). The individual spirit is nourished in a physically, psychologically and emotionally safe environment. This unique setting, combined with fun, friendships and a lifetime of positive memories, enables us to foster Judaism in a magnificent manner: which has inspired hundreds of young people to become Rabbis, Educators, Cantors, Jewish professionals and lay leaders in Congregations and Jewish organizations. See <http://www.campnewmanswig.org/index.asp> for more information. Scholarships are available – speak to Tami privately.



HUC-JIR Leadership Programs for High School Students

The Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion sponsors exciting events for high school and college students. Our dynamic study weekends provide hundreds of young people opportunities for deeper Jewish learning in a progressive Jewish environment. Participants will have the opportunity to study at the historic Cincinnati campus or the exciting Los Angeles campus of HUC-JIR. For more information, check out the website at <http://www.huc.edu/youth/>. Please see Tami for a nomination to attend either of these weekends.

March of the Living

March of the Living is an international educational program that brings Jewish teens from all over the world to Poland on *Yom Hashoah* (Holocaust Memorial Day), to march from Auschwitz to Birkenau, the largest concentration camp complex built during World War II, and then to Israel to observe *Yom HaZikaron* (Israel Memorial Day) and *Yom Ha'Atzma'ut* (Israel Independence Day). The goal of the March of the Living is for these young people to learn the lessons of the Holocaust and to lead the Jewish people into the future vowing Never Again. Each year the Los Angeles Bureau for Jewish Education sends a special delegation of Los Angeles high school students on this powerful trip. The University Synagogue Sisterhood offers a special scholarship for this program. Keep your eyes open for more information as it becomes available. See <http://www.motl.org/> for more information.

NFTY in Israel – Summer Trips

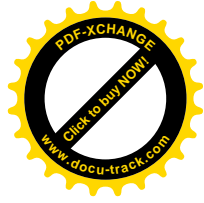
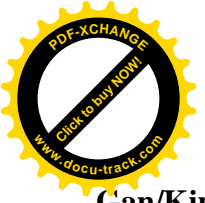
Hike, climb, discover, and explore with new friends from across the continent. Return home with endless personal accomplishments, meaningful memories and stories you'll never forget. For 50 years, thousands of families have chosen NFTY for more than a promise of a thrilling summer. NFTY programs have transformed more than 27,000 young people by turning a spark of interest into a summer of exciting challenges, wonderful new friends, and a lifelong involvement with Judaism. More than 350 synagogues, 19 youth regions, numerous Jewish camps, Jewish Federations and communities annually turn to NFTY to provide the ultimate teen travel experience. Each bar/bat mitzvah student at University Synagogue will receive a \$250 gift certificate for this program. See <http://www.nftyisrael.org/summer/> for more information. Scholarships are available – speak to Tami privately.

Eisendrath International Exchange (EIE) – NFTY High School in Israel

For the Reform teen looking for the ultimate in life experience, the Eisendrath International Exchange High School in Israel is the time of a lifetime. For over 40 years, the Reform Movement has been sending youth to Israel, with this four-month accredited high school nestled in the Judean mountains serving as the premiere program. Our students live together, learn together and grow together as a community while they explore four thousand years of Jewish history, learn Hebrew, and come to know Israel as their second home. Go on EIE and hook up with your history, your land and your people! See <http://www.nftyisrael.org/eie/> for more information. Scholarships are available – speak to Tami privately.

Taglit-birthright israel

Taglit-birthright israel provides a gift of first time, peer group, educational trips to Israel for Jewish young adults ages 18 to 26 from around the world. See www.birthrightisrael.org for more information. No scholarship needed – this incredible opportunity is free!



Goals for University Synagogue Religious School

Gan/Kindergarten:

At the end of their Gan year, students will...

- Gain familiarity with and a knowledge of Jewish holidays, symbols, and concepts.
- Be able to locate and identify key synagogue objects and explain various roles of people in the synagogue community.
- Know key Torah stories from the book of Genesis and how they relate to their lives.
- Apply the Jewish values found in Torah and holidays to their own lives.
- Be able to identify Hebrew letters and their sounds.
- Chant the following prayers, and know when they are to be recited:
 - *Motzi*
 - *Kiddush (Borei P'ri Ha-gafen)*
 - *Sh'ma*
 - Shabbat candles
 - *Hanukkah* candles
 - *Shehecheyanu*

Alef/1st grade:

At the end of their Alef year, students will...

- Be able to recount the stories and identify the symbols of each major Jewish holiday.
- Understand that the Torah is told/read in a cycle and express how those stories relate to their lives.
- Connect with the land of Israel.
- Begin to discuss ideas about God.
- Recognize Hebrew letters and their sounds.
- Understand and recite the order of the prayers for Shabbat evening (candles, *Kiddush*, *Motzi*)
- Be able to recite the *Barchu* and the *Shema*.

Bet/2nd grade:

At the end of their Bet year, students will...

- Explore Jewish value concepts and apply them to their own actions.
- Gain personal meaning from study of values, family, and holidays. Consider what values to practice. (i.e. covenant, *g'milut chasadim*, *derech eretz*, *lashon hara*, *kavod*, *teva*, *pikuach nefesh*, etc.)
- Begin to explore Hebrew writing/sound making/word building.
- Be able to retell the story behind each Jewish holiday.
- Identify differences between American and Israeli food through cooking traditional Israeli treats.
- Chant the following prayers, and know when they are to be recited:
 - *Borei P'ri ha-eitz*
 - *Borei p'ri ha-adamah*
 - Passover blessings and four questions (*Mah Nishtanah*)

Gimel/3rd grade:

At the end of their Gimel year, students will...

- Develop Hebrew speaking and reading skills.
- Relate the importance of Hebrew as the language of Israel, the Jews, some prayer, and Torah.
- Identify Jewish values in practice and explain personal choices in "Jewish" terms.
- Apply holiday knowledge to personal holiday practice.
- Discuss holiday celebration in a modern context.
- Recognize Hebrew vowels and their sounds.



Retell the story of the founding of Israel and explain its significance in their lives.

Ask and discuss big questions about God

- Understand that our concepts of God are constantly developing and changing.
- Recognize that Judaism acknowledges a multitude of theological ideas under the umbrella of “there is one God.”

Dalet/4th grade:

At the end of their Dalet year, students will...

- Decipher Torah narrative according to patterns and clues in the text.
- Synthesize Torah and value knowledge to express how one can emulate Torah, and how/why one would or would not want to do so.
- Locate important historical sites in Israel, and explain their biblical significance.
- Understand that Jewish values are part of our rich Jewish heritage, woven into folk tales and biblical stories.
- Create a personal code of ethics incorporating Jewish values as a guide to ethical living.
- Chant/recite the following prayers:
 - *Barchu*
 - *Shema* and *V’Ahavta*
 - *Mi Chamochah*
- Be able to recognize and define key Hebrew word roots
 - Bet-resh-chaf
 - Mem-lamed-chaf
 - Shin-mem-ayin
 - Tzadi-vav-hei
 - Kuf-dalet-shin
- Be able to explain that the *Barchu* is a call and response prayer that readies individuals both to pray and to belong to a prayer community.
- Demonstrate and explain the reasoning behind any prayer choreography in the *Barchu*, *Sh’ma*, and *V’Ahavta*.
- Understand that *Yotzer Or* is a prayer about creation that we read only in the morning service.
- Explain the metaphor of “light” in the *Yotzer Or*, and determine individually which metaphor has the most personal meaning.
- Interpret the idea of love in *Ahavah Rabah* and analyze ways to show love to others, and feel loved.
- Recall that giving the Torah to the Jewish people is one of the ways that God shows love to the Jews.
- Identify the *Shema* as the most important prayer in the prayer service and explain its significance.
- Discuss how the *Shema* and *V’Ahavta* move us from God’s love to actions, and demonstrate how to “live” that God is one.
- Understand that the *Mi Chamochah* is about the redemption of Israel, and name where the prayer came from.
- Rank the prayers learned in order of personal importance, and explain the list.
- Explore their personal connection to prayer through written journals.

Hei/5th grade:

At the end of their Hei year, students will...

- Become familiar with Jewish lifecycle and explain Jewish milestones and their personal meaning.
- Combine knowledge of Torah narrative with creativity and imagination to delve into deeper meaning/rabbinic understanding.



Understand that Jews around the world have different holiday food traditions and practice preparing various holiday foods.

- Gain understanding and appreciation of major cities and areas in Israel.
- Be able to locate major cities and areas in Israel on a map.
- Articulate social issues that Israel as a country and Jewish state faces and discuss ways to address these issues.
- Chant/recite the following prayers:
 - *Kiddush*
 - *Yotzer Or*
 - *Ahavah Rabah*
 - *Avot V'Imahot*
 - *G'vurot*
 - *K'dushah*
- Be able to recognize and define key Hebrew word roots
 - Bet-resh-alef
 - Alef-hei-bet
 - Ayin-mem-dalet
 - Pay-lamed-lamed
 - Alef-lamed
 - Chet-samech-dalet
 - Zayin-chaf-resh
 - Yud-shin-ayin
 - Kuf-dalet-shin
 - Kaf-vet-dalet
 - Nun-fay-shin
 - Ayin-sin-hei
- Demonstrate and explain the reasoning behind any prayer choreography in the *Avot V'Imahot*, *G'vurot*, and *K'dushah*.
- Understand that the *Amidah* is a series of prayers that work in a certain order.
- Explain that in the *Amidah* we praise God, ask God for things, and thank God.
- Interpret that through the *Avot V'Imahot*, we remember our ancestors and connect to God through our families.
- Weigh the value of *hesed* described in the the *Avot V'Imahot*.
- Identify the *G'vurot* as a prayer where we value God's power.
- Demonstrate ways we can be like God, according to the *G'vurot*.
- Explain that the *K'dushah* is in many ways the climax of a service.
- Remember that some of the *K'dushah* relates experiences that our prophets had with God.
- Discuss how God's holiness becomes real through our own holy actions.
- Evaluate how each student is holy, and how he/she can perform holy acts.

Vav/6th grade:

At the end of their Vav year, students will...

- Identify various prophets and their messages.
- Evaluate personal and societal actions regarding prophetic messages: what are we doing "right," what can we do better?
- Understand key characters in American Jewish history and evaluate their contribution to the Jewish community and American society.
- Be able to identify the various religions and cultures represented in Israel and explain how their presence impacts the country.



Connect the biblical past of Israel to modern-day Israel.

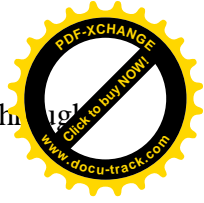
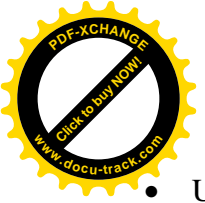
Further cultivate a relationship with the state of Israel.

- Evaluate and discuss challenges in Israel (i.e. environmental, land, religious, etc.)
- Know history of Israel and express personal opinion regarding controversial moments in Israel's founding and development.
- Chant/recite the following prayers:
 - Torah Service – blessings for before and after Torah and Haftarah readings
 - *Aleinu*
 - Mourners' *Kaddish*
 - *Havdalah* blessings
- Be able to recognize and define key Hebrew word roots
 - Yud-reshe-hei
 - Resh-tzadi-hei
 - Dalet-vet-reshe
 - Shin-chet-hei
 - Nun-taf-nun
 - Ayin-lamed-hei
 - Bet-chet-reshe
 - Alef-mem-reshe
 - Alef-mem-nun
 - Chet-zayin-kuf
 - Hei-yud-hei
- Demonstrate and explain the reasoning behind any prayer choreography in the *Aleinu* and Mourner's *Kaddish*.
- Understand that the Torah is a source of life and strength for Jews.
- Explain why reading the Torah is like going "up."
- Recognize that through reciting the Torah blessings Jews re-experience the moment that the Torah was given to Israel.
- Judge how the Torah is a gift to the Jewish people.
- Explain why reading the Haftarah parallels reading the Torah.
- Know that *Aleinu* is a summarizing theological statement at the end of our services.
- Describe how *Aleinu* acknowledges what God has done for us.
- Evaluate the idea of chosenness, as explained in the *Aleinu*
- Analyze our responsibility to do *tikkun olam* (heal the world) as it is expressed in the *Aleinu*.
- Identify why the Mourner's *Kaddish* is a prayer to comfort those in mourning.
- State that the Mourner's *Kaddish* is a prayer both in Aramaic and Hebrew.
- Describe why the Mourner's *Kaddish* can bring communities together.
- Understand that *Havdalah* is the ceremony that transitions us from Shabbat to the rest of the week.
- Explain the various symbols we use in the *Havdalah* service.
- Discuss what it means to be holy and ordinary.

Mechinah/7th grade:

At the end of their Mechinah year, students will...

- Identify challenging issues in holiday practice.
- Explain personal meaning behind celebrating various holidays.
- Develop leadership skills in communal participation:
 - Leading *t'filah* (both in and out of the Religious School)
 - Performing hands-on *tikkun olam* (healing the world) projects



- Assessing a variety of charitable agencies and deciding where to donate funds collected through the Religious School tzedakah fund.

- Understand and relate personal responsibility in making the world a better place.
- Identify major events in Holocaust history.
- Review all prayers already learned for meaning and fluency.
- Identify key historical figures both in Jewish history and in the founding of the state of Israel.
- Name and summarize a number of the books of Writings.
- Be able to debate big questions about God, faith, and the afterlife.
- Read basic modern Hebrew conversations.
- Practice Hebrew reading through reading Hebrew children's books.
- Feel a part of the Tichon (high school) program, and build community with post b'nei mitzvah students.

Tichon/high school:

At the end of the Tichon experience, students will...

- Have a *chevre* (social friend group) of other Jews.
- Feel a connection to Judaism.
- Develop a deeper understanding of a variety of topics including God, Torah, morals and ethics, and history.
- Have a positive Jewish identity and be able to express their personal practice and beliefs.
- Explore their "core selves" as they relate to their Jewish world around them.

Goals for Shira (Music):

- To foster a sense of enjoyment, appreciation, pride of Jewish music.
- To connect to Judaism through Jewish music.
- To be "literate" in music of the Reform movement and camps.
- To increase students' interest in Hebrew and Judaica studies.
- To connect students to Judaism and the Jewish narrative through different senses and modalities of learning than the typical classroom.

Goals for Rikud (Dance):

- To teach students basic body movement skills.
- To give students a sense of community and community involvement.
- To connect students to Israel.
- To appeal to different learning styles in the student community.
- To connect students to Judaism and the Jewish narrative through different senses and modalities of learning than the typical classroom.
- To demonstrate for students that Israel is a diverse nation.
- To teach world and Jewish history through an alternative modality of learning.