

Monday Night School



at Temple Israel of Boston

Course Catalog

Fall 5776: October 2015-January 2016

Weekly Class Schedule

Hour 1 – 6:40-7:30	
Our Whole Lives – 8 th Grade Fall Semester Class, Part 1	Mónica Gomery & Matt Lowe, with Rabbi Suzie Jacobson
Covenant – What, Why, and How: The DIY Confirmation Class (Fall Confirmation Class)	Mike Fishbein
Jewish Contemporary Art	Natalya Bernstein
Buber's <i>Way of Man</i>	R' Ronne Friedman
TIKKUN: To Take on the World!	R' Matt Soffer & Andrew Oberstein
Hour 2 - 7:40-8:30	
Our Whole Lives – 8 th Grade Fall Semester Class, Part 2	Mónica Gomery & Matt Lowe, with Rabbi Suzie Jacobson
Hot Topics Through A Jewish Lens: Using Talmud, Midrash, and other Rabbinic Writings to Examine Today's Big Issues	David Winship
A Step Towards Reconciliation: Understanding the Differing Narratives in the Israeli/Palestinian/Arab Conflict	Eric Greene
Body and Soul: Torah Yoga	Hayley Goldstein

***Also During Hour 2: The RYFTI Board Meeting (RYFTI Advisor Roberta Bergstein)

Course Identifiers



Text – While Jewish texts will appear in every MNS class, work with text-based sources will be a particularly important part of this class.



Art – Art projects are a big part of this class!



Movement – Learning through dance, yoga, or other forms of movement is a key component of this class. Wear comfortable clothing!



Social Justice – A major focus of this class will be learning about ways to pursue social justice, and/or about topics of societal concern.



Philosophy – The endeavor of Jewish Thought is at the center of this class.



Israel – The State of Israel is a major theme for this class.



Interaction – You'll hear from your classmates in every MNS class, but peer-to-peer interaction will be a purposeful part of your learning in this class.



Spirituality – Ideas about how we connect with one another, with Judaism, and with Jewish practice, including God, prayer, Jewish ritual, and more are a big part of this class.

Course Descriptions – Fall 5776: October 2015-January 2016

Our Whole Lives (OWL) – 8th Grade Fall Semester, Double Block

Monica Gomery and Matthew Lowe, with Rabbi Suzie Jacobson



Welcome to Monday Night School! Our whole community is thrilled to have you join MNS this fall. Your first year at MNS will kick off with a great experience for the 8th Grade as a whole. It's a class called Our Whole Lives (a.k.a. OWL). The 8th Grade will stay together for this class in the fall, and then you will each sign up for elective classes in advance of our winter semester.

Course Description: Being a human being is really difficult. Behaving ethically and making healthy choices is even harder. In this discussion-based course, we will create a safe environment where we can explore our identities, beliefs, and relationships. Topics include communication, boundaries and consent, ethics of violence, bullying, emotional stress, gender choices, sexual identification, stereotyping, and decision making. The goal of the class is to develop a class-community in which students can feel free to speak their minds, be themselves, and form bonds with classmates while being given the space to think about important, relevant values.

Jewish Contemporary Art

Natalya Bernstein



Contemporary art is the art of today – art that provides an opportunity to reflect on society, on the issues relevant to ourselves, and on the world around us. Trash sculptures, time-restricted portrait painting, and free-choice mixed media are some of the techniques that we will use to explore our identity as Jewish contemporaries. We will walk away with a new understanding of what can be used to make art, how art can help us state that our opinions and ideas matter, and how to use art as a means to grow our understanding of each other. The course concludes with a gallery show that the students will design, install and host. Leave all of your ideas of “art class” behind, this is unlike any art class you have taken before!

Body and Soul: Torah Yoga

Hayley Goldstein



As a people, we have spent too much time sitting hunched over books trying to comprehend the Torah with all of our minds. In this class we will be overturning the traditional yeshiva model, exploring what it means to be Jewish with our whole self. Through twisting, bending, and standing on our head we will try to gain an embodied understanding of Jewish prayers, holidays, and the weekly Torah portion.

A Step Towards Reconciliation: Understanding the Differing Narratives in the Israeli/Palestinian/ Arab Conflict

Eric Greene



From a simple dispute between individuals to an intractable war between peoples and nations, virtually every conflict consists of at least two differing and often opposing narratives. To the Israelis, the 1948 War is commonly referred to as the War of Independence, the result of which led to the birth of the modern Jewish state of Israel. To the Palestinians and their Arab brethren, the 1948 war resulted in what is commonly referred to as the Nakba (Arabic for the catastrophe), the flight of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from their homes. Differing narratives exist throughout the history of the conflict and continue to exist today. This class will examine the multiple narratives starting with Jewish immigration into Palestine in the late 19th century, all the way up to the failure of the Oslo Accords, and into the present phase of the conflict. Students are not expected to have background knowledge on the conflict, only a sincere desire to learn and an open mind.

Covenant - What, Why, and How: The DIY Confirmation Class

Mike Fishbein



What does it mean to live in covenant today? How do we understand things like faith, peoplehood, law, tradition, divinity, nationhood, community, justice, and more? How do we relate with, and derive meaning from, our connections to these things? The Confirmation year at Temple Israel is an exploration of covenant in our lives. Launch into your exploration with a class that you, the 10th grade Confirmation students, will steer. Some potential topics that have been suggested by members of this class include:

- Comparative Judaism
- Judaism in the World – Current Events
- Understanding the State of Israel, and How to Talk About Israel
- Jewish Culture – Arts, Food, Music, etc
- Social/Emotional Topics and Issues – “OWL Revisited”
- Pursuing Justice as Jews – Sharing Our Societal Concerns

TIKKUN: To Take on the World! – Winner of a RAC 2015 Fain Social Action Award

Rabbi Matt Soffer and Andrew Oberstein



This class is more than a course of learning – it's a course of action. We will learn how to powerfully pursue social justice in our society, acquiring the tools and the know-how to repair civic brokenness; we will discover how this has everything to do with Judaism; most importantly, we will ACT to make things better when, on the TIKKUN Lobby Day, we "pray with our feet" and go to the State House to make our voices heard!

Please note: attendance to our TIKKUN Lobby Day Event on Beacon Hill is an expectation of the class, and will require missing a day of school. We will be happy to communicate with your school!

Buber's *The Way of Man*

Rabbi Ronne Friedman



In this course, we'll use Martin Buber's writing as a path to delve into Jewish mysticism and philosophy. We will read the Hasidic stories that Buber collected and see how he interprets them and finds deep meaning about theology and interpersonal relationships. Our goal will be to increase our level of sophisticated thinking about Jewish mysticism generally and Hasidism specifically. We will also aim to clarify our own beliefs about relationships between people and people, people and God, and people and the world, and to consider how these beliefs impact how we act in the world. By the end of the class, students will be able to interpret Hasidic stories and extrapolate meaning for our lives in the present day; students will also have the option of writing their own philosophical stories in the Hasidic tradition.

Hot Topics Through A Jewish Lens: Using Talmud, Midrash, and other Rabbinic Writings to Examine Today's Big Issues

David Winship



Do you want to learn how to debate and argue with the best of them? Do you want to learn how to find facts to support and deepen your opinion? Do you want to become a public speaking force to be reckoned with? Then this is the class for you! In this class we will look at both modern journalism and rabbinic sources to gain a better understanding of our modern world and its issues. Students will develop their own opinions and will debate with their classmates, with the teacher, and with ancient texts. By the end of this class students will be strong public speakers, strong readers of text, and have a real sense of where they stand on the issues defining their generation.

A Spring 5776 Preview: Planned and Anticipated Courses

The courses and topics listed below are tentative – some changes prior to the MNS Spring Semester are likely.

Teenagers in Lvov

Cantor Becky Khitrik

Do you want to revolutionize Klezmer Music? Do you want to be a part of the baddest musical ensemble at TI? In Teenagers in Lvov, you will get to combine and perform your favorite genres of music! All musicians are welcome. Are you a violinist? Great! A singer? We'll take you! A rapper? Even better!

Jewish Innovations

Rabbi Rachel Silverman

Judaism has always influenced the world around us. But do you know how many of the norms in our day-to-day lives come directly from Judaism? We'll look at Jewish innovations like Shabbat (ie. the weekend!), monotheism (only believing in one God), going to school, etc., as well as really important concepts that our society hasn't picked up but probably should, like sitting *shiva*.

There will be food, discussion, learning, and laughing. I hope you'll join us!

Power, Privilege, and Jews, Oh My!

Emilia Diamant

The path of the Jews in America has been twisty and turny. We've gone through eras of being treated as the other, to rising through the ranks and achieving acceptance from the larger community. What role do we have, as American Jews, in identifying systems of power that keep others oppressed, and prevents them from reaching the level of power and prestige that Jews have in America today? Spend some time learning about our history, but mostly focusing on the present and future.

Rad(ical) Art Beit Midrash

Suzie Jacobson

Radical =

1. relating to or affecting the fundamental nature of something • characterized by departure from tradition; innovative or progressive:
2. advocating or based on thorough or complete political or social reform
3. of or relating to the root of something
4. An exclamation! e.g., "You are going to be in Suzie's class? Radical!"

Let's hang out and make radical art about the Torah (see above definitions of radical). We will be using different visual modalities (Suzie is open to suggestions). Be prepared to make a mess, have fun and study Torah together. Talent is optional, Passion is everything.

Other Anticipated Spring Semester Topics Include:

- Feminism
- Gender
- Jewish Atheism
- Mussar
- Food, Food Systems, and Food Justice

...from Teachers Such As:

- Rav Claudia
- Brigid Goggin
- Matt Lowe

The 5776 Monday Night School Staff

(alephbetical order)

Roberta Bergstein, TI Education Coordinator	
	<p>Roberta graduated from Brandeis University in 2014 with a B.A. in Psychology and Health, Science, Society & Policy. Last year, she worked at the Joseph Smith Community Health Center in Allston as a Patient Navigator helping non-English speaking patients 'navigate' their way through the complicated health care system. She also worked at Temple Israel part-time as the RYFTI Advisor. Roberta loves to play tennis and looks forward to challenging Marc Davis (RYFTI alum) at a special RYFTI event. This year, Roberta is very excited to continue her work with RYFTI as she has taken on a new full-time position at Temple Israel as the Education Coordinator.</p>
Natalya Bernstein	
	<p>Natalya Bernstein graduated from the Massachusetts College of Art and Design, majoring in Art Education. Though this fall will be her first time teaching at MNS, she has been on the staff of the TI Religious School for five years. She is so excited to combine her passions for art and art education, and for Jewish education, to bring a contemporary art course to MNS. When she is not teaching, Natalya manages Boston Art & Framing on Beacon Hill and works passionately in her studio.</p>
Mike Fishbein, TI Director of Teen Education	
	<p>Mike has been part of the TI staff since 2009, and has served as coordinator of the Riverway Project and of Ohel Tzedek, as a Monday Night School teacher, as RYFTI Advisor, and, since July 2012, as Director of Teen Education. Before his work at TI, Mike spent five years as a high school Biology teacher and two years as the manager of a Beacon Hill restaurant. Mike holds a degree in Biology from Drew University. He is a graduate of Me'ah and completed GBIO's regional organizer training with Metro IAF. Mike is originally from New Jersey (exit 7A). A long time ago, he had a 16-year career as a competitive swimmer; he also attempted pole vaulting and water polo. He loves to cook (and to eat!), read, and travel, and he loves Jamaica Plain, where he lives with his wife, Rebecca, and twin four-year-old sons, Benjamin and Ezra.</p>
Rabbi Ronne Friedman, TI Senior Rabbi	
	<p>Temple Israel's Senior Rabbi since 1999, Ronne Friedman is a native of Washington, D.C. He graduated with a B.A. with distinction in English Literature from Lafayette College in 1969, and received his Masters of Arts in Hebrew Literature from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, from which he was ordained, in 1975. He was awarded a Doctorate (honoris causa) from the same institution in 2000. For the past 15 years, he has been the host of a monthly television show, Jewish Perspective, which airs on Boston's WHDH (Boston's NBC affiliate). Rabbi Friedman has been actively and passionately engaged in the work of Jewish Education, the pursuit of Social Justice, the resettlement of Southeast Asian and Soviet Jewish immigrants, efforts to establish Equal Marriage in Massachusetts and to ensure the full inclusion of GLBTQ Jews and their families in the larger Jewish and secular community and the establishment of Interfaith Dialogue. He has been married to Irene (Neumann) Friedman since 1972 and they are the parents of two sons, Zachary and Jesse (z'l).</p>

Brigid Goggin, TI Director of Educational Administration	
	Brigid Goggin has been at Temple Israel since 2014. She previously worked with Rabbi Zecher and Cantor Einhorn, and is now an official part of the Education Team as the Director of Educational Administration. Brigid is originally from Oklahoma, and went to college in Arkansas, where she studied Anthropology, with a focus on Jewish identity in the South. After graduation, Brigid moved to Boston and served as an AmeriCorps volunteer for two years with a literacy non-profit. Wanting to find a way to combine her interests in religion, identity, and education, she then went to Harvard Divinity School for her Masters in Theological Studies, which all led her here to TI! Brigid could talk all day long about storytelling, rituals, modern European history, and identity in America. Or if that's too boring, she also loves music, movies, food, and cats.
Hayley Goldstein	
	Hayley is a passionate Jewish Educator and has taught in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Colorado, and now Boston for over 4 years. She is committed to helping teens and adults have meaningful Jewish experiences that are engaging spiritually, physically, and emotionally. She is a certified Yoga Instructor, puppeteer, and poet. On her free time Hayley enjoys biking, hiking, painting, cooking, and hanging out with her Garfield-like cat, Yossi.
Monica Gomery	
	Mónica is a fifth year rabbinical student at Hebrew College. This summer, she is a T'ruah Rabbinical Student Fellow in Human Rights. Her interests include poetry, niggunim, Talmud study, social justice, and pastoral care. She has served as the rabbinic intern at Congregation Ruach Ami in Santiago, Chile, as well as at Hebrew Senior Life in Dedham, MA, where she served as a student chaplain for the elderly. While in rabbinical school, she has been blessed to work as a Jewish educator for children, teens and adults at a number of institutions, including our own Monday Night School, as well as Keshet, the Jewish Farm School, Eden Village Camp, and Nehar Shalom Community Synagogue. She has studied at Yeshivat Hadar, the Adamah Jewish Environmental Fellowship, and the Drisha Institute Artists Beit Midrash. Prior to rabbinical school, Mónica studied creative writing at Goddard College, and worked as a community organizer and translator/interpreter, focusing mainly on issues of immigrants' rights and economic justice.
Eric Greene	
	Eric Greene is currently working towards his MA at Brandeis University in Near Eastern Judaic Studies and Conflict Resolution. He had his first taste of coexistence working at a small zoo in Israel's Arava desert staffed by arabs, Jews, and other international wanderers. In summer of 2014, he was a delegate at the Muslim Jewish Conference in Vienna where he met Jews and Muslims from around the world who share a similar vision for a peaceful and sustainable future. This summer, he worked with Roots/Shorashim/Judur located in the Gush Etzion region of the West Bank. The project is a local grassroots collaboration of Palestinians and Israelis dedicated to changing the climate of fear and suspicion of the "other" and forging a better future together. He is a musician, educator, traveler, and passionate Jew, and lives happily with his wife Dalia in Brighton.
Rabbi Suzie Jacobson, TI Director of Education	
	Rabbi Suzie Jacobson is over the moon to be the newest Rabbi and Education Director at Temple Israel. Before receiving rabbinic ordination and an MA in Jewish education from Hebrew College, she served in numerous roles at TI including: Rabbinic Intern, Community Organizer, Curriculum Writer, and educator in the Religious School and teen program. She has also served as education director at Temple Beth Zion in Brookline, curriculum director at BBYO's teen summer program "Kallah," and curriculum consultant and trainer for Keshet, a national organization working for full inclusion of LGBT Jews in Jewish life. Rabbi Jacobson is passionate about ensuring that our community is inclusive and just, that our educational programs allow students to bring their whole selves, and that our prayer is meaningful, authentic and full of immense joy.

Cantor Becky Khitrik, Temple Beth Zion	
	Cantor Becky Khitrik was ordained in 2014 at Hebrew College (Newton Centre, MA). Originally from Washington, D.C., she holds a bachelor of the arts degree in music and religious studies from Macalester College (St. Paul, MN), a certificate of study from the Zoltán Kodály Institute (Keszthely, Hungary), a master’s degree of the arts in religion from the Yale Institute of Sacred Music (New Haven, CT), and a master’s degree in Jewish Studies from Hebrew College. Cantor Becky maintains an active performance career as a klezmer clarinetist. She has performed with the Boston-based group Klezwoods, the international band, the Lithuanian Empire, and many other established musicians. She has created and led special klezmer-inspired Shabbat services for Temple Emanu-El (Providence, RI), Temple Ahavat Achim (Gloucester), KlezKanada, and Yale University.
Rabbi Claudia Kreiman (Rav Claudia), Temple Beth Zion	
	Rabbi Claudia Kreiman is TBZ’s associate Rabbi and has been with us since September 2007. She grew up in Santiago, Chile. Her father was a Rabbi who served many different communities in Chile and elsewhere. At age 18 she moved with her family to Argentina. In 1996, she moved to Israel and entered the Rabbinical School of the Schechter Institute for Jewish Studies, the Israeli Conservative Seminary, where she was ordained in 2002. After ordination, Rav Claudia became the Rabbi for NOAM, the Masorti-Conservative Youth Movement in Israel. Rav Claudia was a Rikma Fellow, an educational organization that seeks to breathe new fire into Jewish life in Israel by building original communities and strengthening existing ones through training and support of leadership. She was also a Rabbinic Fellow of B’nei Jeshurun, New York. In addition, she helped to build Hokhmat Halev, a spiritual community for secular Israelis in Ramat Hasharon, Israel.
Matthew Lowe	
	Matthew Lowe is a 2nd year graduate student in Counseling Psychology. He came to Boston in 2007 for Divinity School, and has been teaching Jewish philosophy and theology to Jewish teens ever since. Matthew is especially interested in promoting personal reflection on experiences of meaning, relationships, and sometimes God. Outside of school and work, he enjoys reading, writing, hula-hooping, improvisational rock music, cartoons, and walking around Boston.
Andrew Oberstein, TI Coordinator for Social Justice & Young Adult Engagement	
	Andrew Oberstein is originally from Los Angeles, California. He moved to Boston in 2005 to study Musical Theater at Emerson College. His work in the Jewish community began when he was living in New York, as Program Director for a Jewish arts camp at the 92nd Street Y. In 2011, he moved back to Boston to work as a stage actor and fell in love with Boston’s young, vibrant Jewish scene. After finding a home for himself at Temple Israel and in Boston’s other Jewish learning communities, he is incredibly excited to serve as the Coordinator of Social Justice and Young Adult Engagement at Temple Israel. Andrew is a member of Actors Equity Association and enjoys going to the Coolidge Corner movie theatre and wandering around the Museum of Fine Arts. He is enthusiastic to meet new people, learn, and contribute to the Temple Israel community. His enthusiasm for Jewish life, open-mindedness, and curiosity uniquely position him to serve as the Coordinator of the Riverway Project and Social Justice Programs at Temple Israel.
Rabbi Rachel Silverman, Congregation Kehillath Israel	
	Rabbi Rachel Silverman joined the KI clergy team in 2011. Ordained from the Jewish Theological Seminary, she serves as KI’s Rabbi for Congregational Learning, striving to help KI’s community members, young and old, grow and reach their learning potential. Rabbi Silverman created the “Real Men Marry Rabbis” t-shirt that hangs in the National Museum of American Jewish History. She Teaches in the Eser program, reaching dozens of Brookline area young adults annually.

Rabbi Matt Soffer, TI Director of The Riverway Project and Ohel Tzedek



Rabbi Matthew V. Soffer was ordained as a graduate of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 2010. Rabbi Soffer has had extensive experience in youth work, both within the synagogue and as a long-time staff member of the URJ Camp Joseph and Betty Harlam and NFTY's Kutz Camp. Prior to beginning rabbinical school, he served as an Eisendrath Legislative Assistant Fellow at the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism in Washington, D.C., and worked as the advisor to the North American Board of NFTY. The topic of his Rabbinic Thesis, "Listening for Laughter: Sensing Humor in the Babylonian Talmud," is a wonderful window on his character and style.

David Winship



David Winship grew up at Temple Israel and even attended Monday Night School not so many years ago! He graduated from Brandeis University with a B.A. in Philosophy with a focus in Ethics and now is working towards a rabbinical degree from Hebrew College in Newton. David loves spending time outside, often paddling down the Charles in his canoe with a fishing line trailing behind him. David's love of Judaism was largely inspired by our rich tradition of stories and has led him to becoming a *maggid*, a Jewish storyteller. David is excited to be returning to this community and to share his love of Judaism, ethics, and stories with our community.