Melton
B’nai Torah
Congregation

2020-2021
Fall/Winter Class Schedule
Welcome to THE FLORENCE MELTON SCHOOL OF ADULT JEWISH LEARNING in the 21st Century!

We have a fabulous year of classes being taught in the mornings, afternoons and evenings by your favorite Melton teachers. You don’t have to be concerned about locations because all of the classes are being taught wherever you are! Classes will be meeting on ZOOM until otherwise determined. Yes, so much of the magic of Melton is found in the classroom, where we study together, but we are so fortunate to live in a time where we have options that keep us all safe and still interacting in a warm way.

In this brochure, you will find all of the classes listed by day of the week, start date, time of day and the name of the teacher along with the full description of the class. Every class is 90 minutes long except for the Ethics and Crossroads class on Monday nights (7:00 to 9:15 pm). All Melton classes require advance registration and tuition fees. Cost per class (includes text book): 6-week classes: $179; 10-week Scholars classes: $295; 25-week class (Year 2): $560. To register, please visit: www.events.org/MeltonBocaRaton.

Please feel free to contact me at melton@bnai-torah.org with any questions or concerns!

Penina Bredoff Melton Site Director
BEGINNING OCTOBER 12, 2020:

**Shemot 2 (Exodus) – Revelation and Revolution**

Mondays, 9:30 am  |  10 weeks  |  Instructor: Dr. Sandra Lilienthal

This course follows the development of the emerging Jewish nation from their awe-inspiring encounter at Mount Sinai through the building of the tabernacle in the wilderness. The high points of divine revelation in “Ten Commandments,” “Encountering God,” and “Face to Face with God” are sharply contrasted with the low points of the “Golden Calf: Revolt or Reversion.” The text addresses some of the specific laws and regulations that were to become part of Jewish living as well as the meaning, purpose, and relevance to our lives today.

**Exploring A Forgotten World: A Social History of Medieval Jewry as Revealed in the Cairo Genizah**

Mondays, 2:00 pm  |  10 weeks  |  Instructor: Rabbi Dr. Leon Weissberg

This ancient-era version of reality TV gives you a front-row seat to the drama, gossip, legal transactions, and other daily intrigues – straight from the Middle Ages. This course brings to life an exotic era in Jewish history, revealing the inner thoughts of real-life characters and exploring the daily interactions and behaviors of Jewish men, women and families living along the Mediterranean more than 1,000 years ago. All of this has been uncovered through the discovery of a collection of worn-out scraps, text fragments and documents from ancient times. Come along for a journey of intrigue and adventure!

**NEW! Devarim (Deuteronomy) – The Grand Finale**

Mondays, 7:00 pm  |  10 weeks  |  Instructor: Dr. Sandra Lilienthal

In our study of the fifth book of the Torah, we join Moses in his final address to nation, standing just beyond the land of Canaan, a land that he himself will never enter. There Moses recalls Israel’s past, reiterates laws that he had communicated to the people at Mount Sinai, and emphasizes that observance of these laws is essential for the well-being of the people in the land they are about to possess. Many timeless themes are explored, lessons from the past that illuminate the present as well as the future.
BEGINNING OCTOBER 12, 2020 (cont.):

Crossroads of Jewish History & The Ethics of Jewish Living
Mondays, 7:00 pm  |  25 weeks  |  Instructors: Rabbi Dr. Leon Weissberg & Rabbi Baruch Plotkin

CROSSROADS OF JEWISH HISTORY – This course merges the concepts of history and memory in order to better understand how each has shaped Judaism today. With an emphasis on reclaiming the richness of Jewish history, the chronological exploration investigates significant crossroads where Jews took major decisions that shaped our shared identity and destiny.

THE ETHICS OF JEWISH LIVING – How do Jewish teachings shed light on contemporary issues such as the environment, inter-personal relationships, end-of-life decisions, and stem-cell research? This course explores the wisdom of ancient and modern rabbis, scholars and thinkers, offering multiple Jewish approaches to conducting our lives in the communal and private spheres.

NEW! Members of the Tribe: What is the Overarching Purpose of Living Jewishly?
Mondays, 7:00 pm  |  6 weeks  |  Instructor: Rabbi David Steinhardt

Together, we’ll examine aspects of what might be considered the Jewish mission, a blend of practices that distinguish us as Jews, and what to do with this idea of being called the “Chosen People.” Prepare to explore how Big Jewish Ideas and lessons from our history serve to enrich our actions as individuals and as a people.

BEGINNING NOVEMBER 30, 2020:

NEW! OMG, Can You Believe?!: Seek Answers to the BIG Questions Around GOD and GOD’s Relationship to Humankind
Mondays, 7:00 pm  |  6 weeks  |  Instructor: Rabbi David Steinhardt

Take for yourself a Divine moment to uncover and consider many different understandings of God expressed by Jewish thinkers, past and present. This course will give you the tools to continue asking deep questions, probing your own beliefs and rethinking the “God-questions” that confront us throughout our lives.
BEGINNING JANUARY 11, 2021:

**Jewish Denominations: Challenges of Modernity**
Mondays, 9:30 am | 10 weeks | Instructor: Dr. Sandra Lilienthal

This course examines Jewish identity and religious expression against the backdrop of dramatic political and social change. Students gain extensive insights into the historical and ideological developments of the major movements, and explore the impact of gender, assimilation, Israel, and post-denominationalism on the movements and the Jewish people.

**The Star & the Crescent: A History of Jewish-Muslim Relations**
Mondays, 2:00 pm | 10 weeks | Instructor: Rabbi Dr. Leon Weissberg

Jews and Muslims have co-existed, both peacefully and contentiously, for more than a millennium. What do they have in common? What are the sources of tension and conflict? During the first thousand years after the founding of Islam, it was better to be Jewish in a Muslim country than in a Christian country. Only after that period did the relationship between Jews and Muslims deteriorate, particularly in the Middle East. Elsewhere, Jews and Muslims continue to find ways to coexist peacefully and often productively. This course will examine the longstanding relationship between Judaism and Islam broadening our understanding and challenging our assumptions.

**Exploring A Forgotten World: A Social History of Medieval Jewry as Revealed in the Cairo Genizah**
Mondays, 7:00 pm | 10 weeks | Instructor: Marion Hirschmann

This ancient-era version of reality TV gives you a front-row seat to the drama, gossip, legal transactions, and other daily intrigues – straight from the Middle Ages. This course brings to life an exotic era in Jewish history, revealing the inner thoughts of real-life characters and exploring the daily interactions and behaviors of Jewish men, women and families living along the Mediterranean more than 1,000 years ago. All of this has been uncovered through the discovery of a collection of worn-out scraps, text fragments and documents from ancient times. Come along for a journey of intrigue and adventure!
BEGINNING FEBRUARY 1, 2021:

**NEW! Soul’s Cycles: A Ride Through the Chapters of Life - Life’s Celebrations in Tandem with Jewish Meaning**

Mondays, 7:00 pm | 6 weeks | Instructor: Dr. Sandra Lilienthal

In this course, we’ll say “L’Chaim!” to Jewish markers of time, rites of passage, and celebratory rituals. En route to the finish line, this six-week course will navigate the winding roads of childhood and adulthood rituals, and how we understand them as Jews today. Our time together is certain to bring soul to life’s big moments.

BEGINNING MARCH 15, 2021:

**Loss, Love and Wisdom: Seeking Jewish Wisdom on Death to Help in Coping with Heartbreak and Loss**

Mondays, 7:00 pm | 6 weeks | Instructor: Dr. Sandra Lilienthal

Study and discuss how Judaism helps us make sense of and deal with illness and death as we tackle some of life’s biggest questions such as Why is there suffering in the world? And what does Judaism say about life after death? Together, we’ll seek understanding of time-tested Jewish frameworks and rituals that serve to guide us when we need a path for grieving or a road to healing.
**BEGINNING OCTOBER 13, 2020:**

**Bereshit 1 (Genesis): From Adam to Abraham - The First 20 Generations**

Tuesdays, 10:45 am | 10 weeks | Instructor: Marion Hirschmann

The stories take us from the universal tales of the creation of the world, the flood, and the Tower of Babel to the foundational tales of Abraham and Sarah, and the beginnings of the Jewish people. The themes of family and faith, honor and dishonor, passion and power provide a rich exploration of our people and ourselves.

**BEGINNING JANUARY 12, 2021:**

**NEW! Devarim (Deuteronomy) – The Grand Finale**

Tuesdays, 10:45 am | 10 weeks | Instructor: Rabbi David Steinhardt

In our study of the fifth book of the Torah, we join Moses in his final address to nation, standing just beyond the land of Canaan, a land that he himself will never enter. There Moses recalls Israel’s past, reiterates laws that he had communicated to the people at Mount Sinai, and emphasizes that observance of these laws is essential for the well-being of the people in the land they are about to possess. Many timeless themes are explored, lessons from the past that illuminate the present as well as the future.
BEGINNING OCTOBER 14, 2020:

**Social Justice: The Heart of Judaism in Theory and Practice**

Wednesdays, 7:00 pm | 10 weeks | Instructor: Rabbi David Englander

This new Melton course will draw from text and history to explore how social justice work goes beyond addressing short-term needs and looks at structural causes of injustice today. Topics include issues related to poverty, immigration and environmental degradation. Participants will be encouraged to identify issues that are particular to their own communities and that they would like to explore in greater depth.
BEGINNING OCTOBER 15, 2020:

NEW! Devarim (Deuteronomy) – The Grand Finale
Thursdays, 10:45 am | 10 weeks | Instructor: Marion Hirschmann

In our study of the fifth book of the Torah, we join Moses in his final address to nation, standing just beyond the land of Canaan, a land that he himself will never enter. There Moses recalls Israel’s past, reiterates laws that he had communicated to the people at Mount Sinai, and emphasizes that observance of these laws is essential for the well-being of the people in the land they are about to possess. Many timeless themes are explored, lessons from the past that illuminate the present as well as the future.

Israeli Literature as a Window to Israeli Society
Thursdays, 12:45 pm | 10 weeks | Instructor: Marion Hirschmann

This course offers a fresh and fascinating examination of Israeli society since the birth of the State in 1948. Participants encounter an Israeli society that is original, contemporary, honest and proud. Reflections of the mythic Israel are matched by poetry and prose that is challenging and self-critical, and both offer profound insight into the Israeli national psyche.

BEGINNING JANUARY 14, 2021:

NEW! Members of the Tribe: What is the overarching purpose of living Jewishly?
Thursdays, 10:45 am | 6 weeks | Instructor: Marion Hirschmann

Together, we’ll examine aspects of what might be considered the Jewish mission, a blend of practices that distinguish us as Jews, and what to do with this idea of being called the “Chosen People.” Prepare to explore how Big Jewish Ideas and lessons from our history serve to enrich our actions as individuals and as a people.
BEGINNING FEBRUARY 25, 2021:

NEW! OMG, Can You Believe?!: Seek Answers to the BIG Questions Around GOD and GOD’s Relationship to Humankind

Thursdays, 10:45 am | 6 weeks | Instructor: Marion Hirschmann

Take for yourself a Divine moment to uncover and consider many different understandings of God expressed by Jewish thinkers, past and present. This course will give you the tools to continue asking deep questions, probing your own beliefs and rethinking the “God-questions” that confront us throughout our lives.

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Seek the wisdom within our tradition, it’s traveled long and far to tell you something. Seek because it’s in your nature to question. It’s how your soul attains fulfillment. Seek without being sure what you’ll find. Trust that it will be worth the work you put in. Seek and become the change you wish to see. The wisdom you acquire will ripple out from you. For those who seek a more meaningful Jewish life—never stop seeking!