

**Beth El Congregation Religious School**  
Old Furnace Road ♦ P.O. Box 845 ♦ Harrisonburg, VA ♦ 22803

August 2021/ Elul 5781

Dear Parents and Students:

Welcome to the 2021-22 Religious School year. We are looking forward to the start of In Person Religious School later this month. The first day of religious school is **Sunday, August 29<sup>th</sup>**. We will have a **family meeting for all students and parents on August 29<sup>th</sup> *in the field behind Beth El* at 9:30 am.**

Please complete one Religious School Application **per household** at <https://forms.gle/QezymKadEFV39ZhXA>. Please submit a signed Brit Kavod (attached) for **each student** you enroll. Forms are also on the Beth El website at <http://bethel-harrisonburg.org/religious-school>.

Family Meeting Agenda (detailed on the following pages):

1. Health and Safety Protocols
2. Daily Schedule
3. Religious School Calendar
4. Family Involvement, Snack, and Holiday Sign Up
5. Teacher Introductions
6. Brit Kavod
7. Homework
8. Tzedakah
9. Attendance
10. Communications, Assessment & Conferences

**Tuition:** Tuition for religious school is as follows: the cost is \$200 per student for Beth El members (a portion is subsidized by the congregation). We would love for all families to become members of Beth El. It is a requirement to join at least two years prior to your child's b'nai mitzvah. The cost for non-members is \$500 per student. You may pay tuition on the first day of in-person class by sending a check in with your student, or you may contact our treasurer, Ron Rubin, about alternate ways to make payments. Ron will be happy to work with you on any questions or accommodations needed regarding tuition or membership dues payments; please contact him at [rubinrj@jmu.edu](mailto:rubinrj@jmu.edu). *For those of you who pay dues at this time of year, please plan to submit your dues check as well or contact Ron directly.*

**Curriculum:** The curriculum is focused on developing the skills to study *Torah*; engaging in the work of *Avodah* to find sacred connections to God, community, and self; and to perform acts of *G'milut Chasadim* to make the world a better, holier place. Alef and Bet students use primers to learn the basics of the Hebrew alphabet and how to sound out words. The Hebrew curriculum for Gimmel and Dalet follows the Behrman House Hineni series and the Gates of Prayer siddur which teaches Hebrew through prayer.

**Questions:** If you have any questions prior to our first meeting or at any time during the school year, please do not hesitate to contact Liz Webb or Dara Hall. Rabbi Kurtz-Lendner is also available. (contact info below)

To all of you who are raising children in these challenging times, we are grateful and thrilled that you continue to be involved in our community, and we look forward to seeing you in person.

L'Shalom,  
Liz & Dara

Liz Webb (email: [liz.matusow@gmail.com](mailto:liz.matusow@gmail.com) or call/text: 323-717-2876)  
Dara Hall (email: [halldm@jmu.edu](mailto:halldm@jmu.edu) or call/text: 540-908-0515)  
Rabbi Jeffrey Kurtz-Lendner (email: [rabbijkl@bethel-harrisonburg.org](mailto:rabbijkl@bethel-harrisonburg.org) or call 540-908-4488)

## Family Meeting Agenda

### August 29, 2021 - 9:30am - Beth El (grassy field)

The meeting will take place in two parts. During the first part, parents will be joined by board member(s) for a discussion of COVID-related safety and logistical protocols, while students complete a craft in an adjacent outdoor area. Students will rejoin parents for the second part of the meeting, to discuss Religious School goals & expectations (e.g., Brit Kavod).

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#### 1. Health and Safety Protocols

- Mandatory mask wearing & distancing (3 feet)
- Building entry restricted to teachers/students only; doors locked after drop-off
- Regular sanitizing and hand washing
- Reduced time, increased spacing, and outdoors when possible for snacks & whole-school activities
- Individual supply bags for art projects in Alef
- Staying home when sick

#### 2. Daily Schedule

The regular **Sunday schedule** is as follows (subject to change):

9:15- 9:30	Drop off students <b>in parking lot</b>
9:30-10:40	Hebrew
10:45-11:15	Snack / Social Time and Weekly Rabbi Zoom
11:20-12:30	Judaica
12:30	Pick-up students <b>in parking lot</b>

Please make sure your children arrive on time having had breakfast. Please send students with a (full) water bottle. Other snacks & beverages are not permitted. *School starts promptly at 9:30 am. Doors will open by 9:15 each morning and close at 9:35. Parents must text Liz or Dara if they will arrive later.*

#### 3. Religious School Calendar (review dates & activities)

#### 4. Family Involvement, Snack, and Holiday Sign Up

Snack has always been an important part of the social experience for our students, and family participation in our holidays is a joyous way to bring our community together. We will discuss what parent/family volunteering and participation is going to look like, as well as plans for snack/social time.

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#### 5. Teacher Introductions

Classes are broken up by classroom and grade level; however, students will be placed in classes based on both age and ability. Classes and teachers are assigned on the first day of school. Rabbi Kurtz-Lendner will participate virtually while he is remote. Religious School continues to be overseen by Liz Webb and Dara Hall. Together, we will work to provide an enriching and positive educational experience for our students and families.

#### 6. Brit Kavod (expectations, responsibilities, and goals/values)

#### 7. Homework

*Homework is an integral part of our educational program. All students in all classes* will be bringing home a homework assignment every week for Judaica and/or Hebrew - also, teachers will email a reminder of the homework assignment to parents. While the assignments will not take a long time to complete, we do ask that you sit down as a family together to complete them. This will allow parents to see what their children are learning about and will enable students to reinforce their once a week instruction at home. **A school bag with homework, notebooks, workbooks, and pencils** should return to school **every Sunday!**

#### 8. Tzedakah (weekly contributions towards a recipient organization, selected annually by the students)

#### 9. Attendance (expectations for Religious School & services)

#### 10. Communications, Assessment & Conferences

Teachers will send weekly emails about what happened during class, homework assignments, and more. Other assessment/conference activities will be determined as needed or requested.

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