

Introduction to Judaism 2016-17
Congregation Etz Chaim
Rabbi Noah Kitty

November 15

Class 1

Lecture: David & Jonathan- Comrades in Arms

This lecture is part of a community initiative, "King David: A New Song About a Biblical Hero". Tonight we will discuss David & Jonathan, and Biblical and contemporary views on homosexuality.

Nov. 22

Class 2

Peoplehood & the Jewish Community

How the understanding of peoplehood supports our community.

1. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewish_peoplehood
2. <http://forward.com/shma-now/shevirah/341783/letting-go-of-jewish-peoplehood/>

December 6

Class 3

Jewish Textual Tradition

We are the People of the Book for a good reason. This week we will look at some of the texts of our tradition and the jewels found within them.

1. <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/jewish-texts/>
2. <http://halakhah.com/rst/zeraim/01a%20-%20Brochos%20-%20a-31b.pdf> (pgs. 1-5)

Dec. 20

Class 4

Jewish Prayer

The formal construction of prayers, and the poetry that lies within them.

1. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Jewish_prayers_and_blessings

Jan 3

Class 5

Intermarriage/Interfaith: How It Makes Us Stronger

Some claim intermarriage weakens the fabric of the community. Others claim it makes us stronger. Recent research finds the latter is correct.

1. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/11/12/what-happens-when-jews-intermarry/>

January 10

Class 6

The 613 Commandments

You've heard about them, but never seen them all in one place. Here they are.

1. http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/940209/jewish/Sefer-Hamitzvot-Translation.htm

Check the syllabus online prior to class for readings for sessions listed below:

Jan. 17

Class 7

Jewish Holiday Cycle

Starting with Rosh Hashanah, we will dip into the wisdom of Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Shmini Atzeret/ Simhat Torah, Hanukkah, Purim, and Pesach.

Jan. 24

Class 8

Jewish Life Cycle

You are born, named, welcomed into the covenant, acknowledged for reaching 13, (ten perhaps) get married, then (perhaps) have children of your own, and then join your ancestors.

Feb 7

Class 9

Shabbat

A moment out of time, for supreme rest and renewal. Why do we need to be commanded to take a break?

February 21

Class 10

The "Challenge of Evil" in Jewish Thought

It's been with us since the beginning, and we've come up with several responses.

Feb. 28

Class 11

Jewish Messianism

We are still waiting. What are we waiting for?

Mar 7

Class 12

Jewish Family Life & Same Sex Relationships

How does being LGBT figure in the picture?

March 14

Class 13

Jewish History

Since we can't cover all 5000 plus years, we'll review major trends and the folks who inspired them.

Mar. 21

Class 14

The Holocaust

There is still more to be learned.

Apr 4

Class 15

Israel & Zionism

How belief in a Jewish future led to the State of Israel.

April 18

Class 16

Passover

Why is this night different from all others?

Apr. 25

Class 17

Jewish Family Ethics

It is said that you can learn a lot about a person from how they treat their own family.

May 2

Class 18

Jewish Communal Ethics

Our communities look the way they do because we have created them that way. What should we have done differently?

May 9

Class 19

Kashrut/Environmental Ethics

Clean or unclean- why it matters

May 16

Class 20

How Jews Talk About God

We don't much, but we are getting better at it.

May 23

Class 21

Jewish Art

A thing of beauty lifts the heart and inspires the soul.

Celebration of Shavuot

Friday, May 19th