

C O N G R E G A T I O N



Sha'aray Shalom

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL
HANDBOOK

2009-2010

5769-5770

Rabbi Shira H. Joseph
Cantor Steven I. Weiss
Barbara Marcus, President

*"The world rests more securely because of
the sounds of children in the schoolhouse..." - Talmud*

1112 Main Street
Hingham, MA 02043
781-749-8103
781-740-1480 (fax)
www.shaaray.org

Religious School Calender 2009-2010

September

F	4 th	Shabbat & Birthday Blessings Service, 7:30pm
F	11 th	Prospective Member's Shabbat Service, 7:30pm Welcome for Ellen Bernstein
Su	13 th	First Day of School PT-6 th grade, 9 & 11am Sisterhood Welcome Back Breakfast Parent Orientation for both sessions (PT-6 th)
M	14 th	First Day of School 3 rd -5 th gr., 4-6pm. 7 th -10 th grades, 6-7:30pm, Parent/Student Orientation for 7 th -10 th grades, 6pm First Day of School, Thurs. Session, 3 rd - 7 th
Th	17 th	
grades		
F	18 th	Erev Rosh Hashanah Service, 7:30pm
Sa	19 th	Rosh Hashanah Children's Service, 9am Children's Choir Morning Service, 10:30am, Tashlich, 1pm @ Hingham Harbor
Su	20 th	NO SCHOOL , Rosh Hashanah Day 2, Rosh Hashanah Service, 10:30am
M	21 st & Th 24 th	Sukkah decorating, 3 rd - 7 th grades
Su	27 th	Kol Nidre Service, 7:30pm - NO SCHOOL
M	28 th	Yom Kippur, Children's Service, 9am Children's Choir Yom Kippur, Morning Service, 10:30am

October

F	2 nd	Pizza in the Hut, 6pm Shabbat/Sukkat Service, Birthday Blessings, Membership Shabbat, 7pm
Su	4 th	Hebrew Marathon, 9am-2pm, Flea Market, 9am - 1pm Consecration Dinner, 6pm
F	9 th	Simchat Torah/Consecration Service, 7pm NO SCHOOL
Su	11 th	Columbus Day - NO SCHOOL
M	12 th	Debbie Friedman Shabbat
F	16 th	50 th Anniversary Celebration KIDushat Shabbat & Birthday Blessings, 9am Shabbat L'Kulam - 7 th Grade, 10:30am
Sa	17 th	Shabbat Service, 7:30, 5 th Grade leads Kiddush
F	30 th	

November

F	6 th	Shabbat & Birthday Blessings Service, 7:30pm
Th	12 th	NO SCHOOL
Sa	14 th	Debbie Friedman Concert, 8pm
Su	15 th	NO SCHOOL
F	20 th	Shabbat Service, Friday Night Live, 7:30pm 7 th Grade leads Kiddush
Sa	21 st	KIDushat Shabbat & Birthday, Blessings, 9am Morning Service, 10:30am, 6 th Gr. leads Kiddush Camp Shabbat
Su	22 nd	Holiday Boot Camp, 9:30am
W	25 th	Thanksgiving Community Service, at Old Ship Church, Hingham, 7pm
Th	26 th	Thanksgiving Day, NO SCHOOL
F	27 th	Shabbat Service, 7:30pm, Grandparents Blessings
Sa	28 th	Shabbat Serv., 10:30am, College & Career Shabbat
Su	29 th & M 30 th	NO SCHOOL

December

F	4 th	Shabbat & Birthday Blessings Service, 7:30pm
F	11 th	Chanukah Dinner, 6pm Chanukah Shabbat Evening Service, 7pm 6 th Grade Shabbat L'Kulam Service, 10:30am, NO SCHOOL
Sa	12 th	Friday Night Live Shabbat Service, 7:30pm
Th	17 th	KIDushat Shabbat & Birthday Blessings, 9am
F	18 th	5 th Grade Shabbat L'Kulam Service, 10:30am
Sa	19 th	
Su	20 th	Sun Jan 3 rd , NO SCHOOL Winter Break

January

F	1 st	Shabbat & Birthday Blessings Service, 7:30pm
Su	3 rd	NO SCHOOL
F	8 th	8 th , 9 th & 10 th Grade at L' takein Seminar in DC
Th	14 th	NO SCHOOL
Sa	16	KIDushat Shabbat & Birthday Blessings, 9am
Su	17 th	NO SCHOOL
M	18 th	Martin Luther King Day, NO SCHOOL
F	22 nd	8 th -10 th Grade Dinner, 6:30pm, Friday Night Live & 8 th -10 th Grade Shabbat L'Kulam Service, 7:30pm
Sa	23 rd	Shabbat L'Kulam Service, 4 th Grade 10:30am
F	29 th	Tu B' shvat Seder & Service, Birthday Blessings, 6:30pm

February

F	5 th	Shabbat & Birthday Blessings Service, 7:30pm 4 th Grade Leads Kiddush
Sa	6 th	KIDushat Shabbat & Birthday Blessings, 9am 3 rd Grade Shabbat L'Kulam, 10:30am
Sa	7 th	Holiday Boot Camp - Purim, 9:30am
F	12 th	Friday Night Live Service, 7:30pm Honoring NFTY & Camp Attendees
Su	14 th - Su 21 st	NO SCHOOL , Spring Break
F	26 th	Queen Esther's Feast, 6pm Shabbat/Purim Service, 7pm Purim Sheil Megillah Service, All grades report at 10:30am
Su	28 th	Purim Carnival, 11:15am

March

F	5 th	Kabbalat Shabbat Dinner, 6:30pm Friday Night Live Service/Shabbat Across America, Birthday Blessings & Children's Choir, 7:30pm
F	12 th	Shabbat Evening Service, 7:30, 3 rd Grade leads Kiddush & 3 rd Grade Siyum
F	19 th	Shabbat Evening Service, 7:30pm Honoring Past 'N' of Mitzvah & Canfirmants
Sa	20 th	Shabbat L'Kulam Serv., Tot's-2 nd Grades, 10:30
F	26 th	South Shore Union Service with Guest Speaker - Anita Diamant Friday Night Live Service, 7:30pm
M	29 th	NO SCHOOL , Erev Pesach
Tu	30 th	Community Seder, 5:30pm

April

Th	1 st	Passover, NO SCHOOL
F	2 nd	Shabbat & Birthday Blessings Service, 7:30pm
Sa	3 rd	KIDushat Shabbat & Blessing of Babies/Birthdays, 9am
Su	4 th	Passover, NO SCHOOL
Sa	10 th	Shabbat Morning Service, 10:30am 8 th - 10 th Grades will lead service - Yom HaShoa Commemoration, Guest Speaker: Edgar Krasa
Su	11 th	Holiday Boot Camp - Modern Jewish History
Th	15 th	NO SCHOOL
Su	18 th - Su 25 th	NO SCHOOL , Spring Break
F	30 th	Shabbat Evening Service, 7:30pm 1 st & 2 nd Grades Lead Kiddush.

May

Su	2 nd	Mitzvah Day, Flea Market and Temple Picnic, 9am to 1pm
F	7 th	Kabbalat Shabbat Dinner, 6:30pm Teacher Appreciation/Friday Night Live & Birthday Blessing Service, 7:30pm
Su	9 th	NO SCHOOL
M	10 th	Last Day for Monday Classes
Th	13 th	Last Day for Thursday Classes
Sa	15 th	KIDushat Shabbat Dinner, Havdalah Service & Birthday Blessings, 5pm
Su	16 th	Last Day for Sunday Classes
Tu	18 th	Confirmation Dinner, 6pm Confirmation & Shavuot Service, 7pm

Religious School Calendar 2009-2010

September 2009

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

October 2009

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

November 2009

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December 2009

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

January 2010

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February 2010

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

March 2010

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

April 2010

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

May 2010

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

PARENT TOT, PRE SCHOOL & PRE KINDERGARTEN DATES

Sep. 13
Oct. 4, 18
Nov. 1, 22
Dec. 6, 13
Jan. 10, 24
Feb. 7, 28
Mar. 7, 21
Apr. 11
May 2, 16

CHILDREN'S CHOIR SERVICES:

Sep. 19, 28
Mar. 5

KIDUSHAT SHABBAT SERVICES: SATURDAYS 9AM

Oct. 17
Nov. 21
Dec. 19
Jan. 16
Feb. 6
Apr. 3

May 15 ** 5pm
Havdalah
Dinner & Service

SHABBAT L'KULAM SERVICES: SATURDAYS AT 10:30AM

Oct. 17: Grade 7
Dec. 12: Grade 6
Dec. 19: Grade 5
Jan. 22 (Fri): Grade 8-10
Jan. 23: Grade 4
Feb. 6: Grade 3
Mar. 20:
Grade 2 – Tots
Apr. 10:
Grades 8 – 10*
*Yom HaShoa
Commemoration

LEADING KIDDUSH BLESSING

Oct. 30: 5th Grade
Nov. 20: 7th Grade
Nov. 21 (Sat): 6th Grade
Feb. 5: 4th Grade
Mar. 12: 3rd Grade
Apr. 30: 1st & 2nd
Grade

Dear Parents and Students:

Welcome to the Congregation Sha'aray Shalom Religious School. As we celebrate our 50th anniversary this year, we are so excited to share with you exciting changes and additions to our religious school programs. This handbook has been prepared to help you understand the policies and goals established for the Religious School. Please review the handbook together so that everyone is familiar with its contents.

The role of providing an excellent Jewish education for our children can only be fulfilled through the collaborative efforts of our students, teachers and parents. We aim to strengthen the bond between the home and the temple; that bond is essential to the effectiveness of the school. We urge parents to get involved through your cooperation, your support and through your reinforcement of the lessons we teach. Please make sure to mark your calendars with the important dates including the family programs, special events, as well as our Shabbat L'Kulam services for this coming year.

Through this handbook we have tried to anticipate and answer many of your questions. We are supported by the wonderful efforts of our lay leadership, who support us in our continued efforts to provide the most outstanding Jewish education possible for our students. The Education Committee, led by Dr. Mark Creager with oversight from Hal Shainwald, Vice-President of Education, is an essential ingredient to the proper functioning of our school. The committee is always looking for new members. If you would like to serve on the committee, please let us know.

We look forward to your participation in the education of our children throughout the year.

L'shalom,

Rabbi Shira Joseph	Cantor Steven Weiss
Barbara Marcus, President	Hal Shainwald, VP of Education
Mark Creager, Education Committee Chair	

Educational Mission

The mission of education at Congregation Sha'aray Shalom is:

To enable children and adults to affirm and strengthen Jewish identity by promoting the goal of Jewish education within the Reform Movement.

To deepen Jewish experience and knowledge in order to strengthen faith in God, love of Torah, and identification with the Jewish people throughout the world.

Goals of the Religious School

The Religious School program at Congregation Sha'aray Shalom is an integrated program of Hebrew Prayer and Judaic study both on Sunday as well as mid-week. In addition, participation in the life of the synagogue community including worship, mitzvah and programming outside of the walls of the congregation are essential elements of our program.

The purpose of our Judaic curriculum is to promote a positive Jewish identity through the study of Jewish beliefs, ideals and history, and the performance of Mitzvot. Our goal is to have students think and act in a Jewish way. The Hebrew curriculum is a Siddur program, designed to enable students to become proficient in reading the Hebrew prayers, and to gain an understanding of both the prayers and the service. Students surpassing these goals will have an opportunity to learn the rudiments of conversational Hebrew.

Overview Religious School Curriculum

We are extremely excited to have some new and innovative programs and curriculum as part of our school. A brief outline of the curriculum topics for each grade is listed below.

PARENT-TOT/PRE-SCHOOL & PRE-K

Three distinct programs for children ages 15 months and older. Each one focusing on the following subjects:

- Introduction to the synagogue, Shabbat, and the holidays
- Introduction to the Hebrew Letters and Shabbat Prayers
- Parashat Ha'shavua - a study of the Torah Portion of the week

GAN/KINDERGARTEN

- Continued Introduction to Hebrew letters
- Continued study of Shabbat and daily blessings
- The synagogue building, the Torah, the Ark, the Rabbi, the Cantor, the service, bar/bat mitzvah, weddings.
- Major Holidays

TEXTS: Let's Discover the Alef-Bet Drops of Honey

ALEPH/FIRST GRADE

- With comprehension of the Alef/Bet, Introduction to basic Jewish words
- Learning of basic Shabbat Prayers
- Shabbat, Havdalah, the Sh'ma, God, Jewish Community
- Introduction to Israel
- Introduction to Torah Stories

TEXTS: Sam the Detective Let's Celebrate the Jewish Holidays
Teach Me Torah Let's Discover Israel

BET/SECOND GRADE

- Review of the Aleph Bet
- Continued learning of prayers and an introduction of Hebrew Vowels
- Study of Jewish Holidays throughout the year
- Chai Curriculum – Level 1

TEXTS: Shalom Alef-Bet The Jewish Holiday Treasure Hunt
Chai Curriculum – Level 1 Workbook

GIMEL/THIRD GRADE

- Aleph bet with an introduction to block writing
- Introduction to the prayer book and word roots
- Bible from Moses through Exodus and Deuteronomy
- An introduction to the sites and cities of Israel
- Study of the Jewish Holidays

TEXTS: Alef-Bet Quest with CD Alef-Bet Quest Workbook
The Great Israel Scavenger Hunt
Chai Curriculum – Level 2 Workbook

DALET/FOURTH GRADE

- Major prayers from the Shabbat Morning Service
- Improved reading comprehension and a better understanding of the prayers
- People and events from Prophets and Writings
- Study of God in our lives

TEXTS: Kol Yisrael with CD
Artzeinu – An Israel Encounter
Chai Curriculum – Level 3 Workbook

HAY/FIFTH GRADE

- Prayers from the Shabbat morning liturgy, blessings, understanding of structure of the service, key words, and concepts of prayers
- Boston/Haifa School to School Program

TEXTS: Hineni – Book 2 Hineni – Book 2 Workbook
Chai Curriculum – Level 4 Workbook

VAV/SIXTH GRADE

- The Shabbat morning service with a focus on the Torah service
- American Jewish history, focusing on the colonial, Civil War, settling of the West, and the immigration periods
- Detailed study of the Jewish Life Cycle

TEXTS: Hineni – Book 3 Hineni – Book 3 Workbook
America: The Jewish Experience The Melting Pot
The Time of Our Lives: A Teen Guide to the Jewish Life Cycle
Chai Curriculum – Level 5 Workbook

ZAYIN/SEVENTH GRADE

- Review of the Shabbat morning service
- Introduction to Modern Hebrew
- Major emphasis on values and ethics, including the importance of performing mitzvot in our daily lives
- A study of Jewish Wisdom in Action
- Jewish Heroes

TEXTS: Jewish Heroes/Jewish Values A Life of Heschel
Let's Talk Night
Chai Curriculum – Level 7 Workbook

CHET/EIGHTH GRADE

- Anti-Semitism
- Holocaust
- Ethics
- Sacred Choices

TEXTS: The Holocaust: The World and the Jews: 1933-1945 w/Workbook
Sacred Choices

TET/NINTH GRADE

• This year's Curriculum will focus on the study of ethics through the study of "Hot Topics." Students will have the opportunity to struggle with some of the most controversial issues of the day. They will have the ability to explore the moral and ethical issues in depth, think about real-world scenarios, and study ancient and modern texts that will shed light on the topics at hand.

• Students will also use a new program entitled the MTV (Media and Torah Values) Challenge. This program provides a tool that enables students to view the media through Jewish eyes. Each lesson not only shows how to deconstruct the media and the messages it sends, it also provides the classical Jewish texts that either contrast with or confirm the values that flow from the clips.

• In addition, our 9th grade students will study current issues that will be talked about during the L'takein Seminar in January.

• Ninth grade students will participate in the Service of Confirmation on Tuesday, May 18, 2010 at 7:00 pm.

TEXTS: Hot Topics
MTV Challenge Lessons Packet

YUD/CONFIRMATION

- Confirmation students will study the 10 Commandments and apply these ancient laws to today's world. The students will also create a modern set of commandments by which they wish to live.
- An important aspect of the study of the commandments is a series of three parent programs giving students and parents the opportunity to learn together.
- In addition to the 10 Commandments curriculum, the Confirmation students will study current issues that will be discussed during the L'takein Seminar in January.
- Confirmation will conclude with a creative service written by our confirmation students on the evening of Shavuot (Tuesday, May 18, 2010 at 7:00 pm), the holiday which celebrates the receiving of the 10 commandments.

L'Takein Seminar (Washington D.C. Trip) – January 8-11, 2010

The highlight of the 9th and 10th grade program will be their participation in the L'takein Seminar, sponsored by the Religious Action Center, the political advocacy arm of the Union of Reform Judaism. The Bernard and Audrey Rapoport L'Takein Social Justice Seminar is an intensive four-day study kallah in Washington, DC, focusing on Jewish values and social justice.

Every year more than 100 congregations from across the country bring their high school students to participate in this exciting event. This unique Washington opportunity enables students to hear from experts both inside and outside the Jewish community. Every L'Taken Seminar covers several different issue areas in a variety of interactive formats. Each seminar includes an opportunity for students to tour the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and participate in Havdalah services at one of the memorials. Students also sample the vibrancy of Georgetown and other exciting areas of Washington, DC.

CHAI Curriculum (Grades 2-7)

This year we are introducing a new comprehensive curriculum entitled Chai (Life). This curriculum is a flexible educational system for Reform congregational schools based on the values of Torah, Avodah, and Gemilut Chasadim. The program is based on the most important concepts and values of Jewish life, helping students grow into committed and thoughtful Jewish adults.

Gold Kippah Program

Starting in January 2010, we will introduce the Gold Kippah Incentive Program. This program is designed to stimulate and reinforce learning in our religious school. Students will be rewarded for mastering Hebrew skills and prayer goals, as well as class and service attendance with awards and congregational recognition for their achievements. More information about the specifics of the program will be distributed in the fall.

Tzedakah

Tzedakah and Gemilut Chasadim are two important themes in our Religious School curriculum. Tzedakah is not charity but rather doing what is right and just. Gemilut Chasadim refers to deeds of loving kindness, action-oriented approach to improving the world in which we live. We believe that tzedakah and Gemilut Chasadim go hand-in-hand and that their importance can be taught from an early age, both in the school and at home. The goal is not only that our students experience the process, but also that they learn to **build tzedakah and Gemilut Chasadim into their lives, as a fundamental Jewish value.**

We encourage students to make weekly contributions when we collect tzedakah money and to participate in class discussions concerning the allocation of the money collected. Students and parents are asked to participate in social action projects undertaken by the school or congregation.

Students are encouraged to contribute canned goods for donation to the local food pantry during each family program this coming year.

This year all monies raised through weekly Tzedekah will be given to the Union for Reform Judaism Nothing But Nets Program. This program works to end the spread of Malaria in the African countries.

Class Social Action Project

In coordination with our Social Action Committee, each class assisted by the class parent and will take part in a class social action project of some type. This project will take place over the course of the school year. More information will be presented at the beginning of school.

Flea Market – Sunday, October 4, 2009 – 9am – 1pm

A wonderful way to sell your wares, services or individual projects, all of the monies raised from the flea market will go to the Youth Scholarship Fund. Please consider renting a table and helping out the synagogue and our students.

Mitzvah Day/Flea Market and Picnic – Sunday, May 2, 2010

Our social action program will culminate in the Mitzvah Day and Flea Market on Sunday, May 2, 2010. Each class in the religious school will be assigned a social action program to participate in during the day. In addition, we will once again hold our flea market giving families and outside vendors the opportunity to sell their wares to support the synagogue.

This year, Mitzvah Day falls out on the Jewish holiday of Lag B'omer, which commemorates the thirty-third day in the Count of the Omer. The counting of the Omer takes place during the 49 days between Passover and Shavuot. A tradition in Israel is to hold a picnic on the 33rd day (Lag B'omer). So, we will continue that tradition this coming year with a big family picnic following the Mitzvah Day activities. More information will be forthcoming.

Important Life-Cycle Celebrations

CONSECRATION

Consecration is the ceremony that welcomes new students at the start of their formal Jewish education. In addition, Consecration welcomes students of all ages who are new to our school. It is Jewish tradition, that as we celebrate the conclusion of the Torah reading cycle on Simchat Torah, so too, do we celebrate the beginning of a child's Jewish education. On the evening of Simchat Torah these students receive a blessing from the Rabbi and Cantor, and a certificate and miniature Torah from the Congregation commemorating their entry into Jewish education.

This year, our service of Consecration will be held on Friday, October 9, 2009 at 7:00 pm. The service is preceded by a dinner at 6:00 pm followed by a formal class picture, which will be on permanent display in the school wing.

We will once again be joined by the Winiker Band to help us celebrate this milestone in our student's lives with festive dancing during the service.

BAR/BAT MITZVAH

The tenets of Judaism hold that when a child turns the age of 13, they are considered an adult and therefore are responsible for upholding the 613 commandments. In celebration of this entry into Jewish adulthood, one becomes a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. As part of the ceremony, the child will participate in leading the Shabbat morning service, read sections from the Torah and Haftarah portion for that week, as well as delivering a D'var Torah (speech) to the congregation focusing on their interpretation of the Torah portion. All students must satisfy their Shabbat service requirements as well as complete a significant mitzvah project.

The process for selecting a Bar/Bat Mitzvah date occurs approximately two years prior to the year of the event. In the late fall, families will receive a list of available dates along with a selection sheet. Families will be asked to list three potential dates and return the sheet to the office as soon as possible. Dates are given in the order that they are received. Further information concerning the requirements as well as the training process for becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah can be found in the Congregation Sha'aray Shalom Bar/Bat Mitzvah Handbook.

SERVICE OF CONFIRMATION

The service of Confirmation takes place on the holiday of Shavuot, celebrating the giving of the Torah to the Jewish people at Mount Sinai. The Confirmation service is a creative worship service written and led by the Confirmation class, assisted by the 9th grade class.

This year, Confirmation will be held on Tuesday, May 18, 2010 at 7:00 pm. A dinner for confirmation families will be held at 5:30 pm and a class picture will be taken prior to the start of the service.

School Attendance

Consistent attendance at Religious School demonstrates your commitment as a parent to your children's Jewish education; promotes an optimal learning experience and helps foster the development of important social relationships within the Jewish community.

The following are the total acceptable absences for the school year:

Kindergarten through 2nd Grade – 4 classes

3rd Grade through 7th Grade – 8 classes

8th Grade through 10th Grade – 4 classes

If a student exceeds this number of absences, he/she may not be eligible to matriculate to the next grade without make-up work and tutoring as determined by the teacher and Cantor Weiss.

Shabbat Service Requirements

Families are encouraged to worship together at Congregation Sha'aray Shalom. The Service experience combines singing and learning, promotes Hebrew fluency, along with comfort and familiarity with Jewish religious practices, and helps build a sense of commitment and community- all of which are crucial for young Jews growing up on the South Shore. Because service attendance is essential to gaining proficiency in the curriculum, **students are required to attend religious services on a regular basis.** If by March of the school year, a child is falling behind in meeting the service requirements, parents will be contacted by either the Rabbi or Cantor to discuss how to develop a plan to meet this extremely important requirement.

The following are the number of services students are expected to attend during the school year:

Kindergarten through 2nd Grade – 4 services

3rd Grade through 7th Grade – 8 services

8th Grade through 10th Grade – 8 services including Confirmation

Credit will be given for services attended as part of SHASTY events.

Only Shabbat services (Friday or Saturday) at Congregation Sha'aray Shalom count toward the fulfillment of the service requirements. Participation in Junior Congregation services will count towards this requirement.

To get credit for service attendance, the student must check in with the Board representative on the bimah and have his/her card credited.

Class Attendance at Friday Night Services

Once again this coming year, we will be designating one Shabbat service in which each grade will join us as a class to help us lead the Shabbat Evening Kiddush at the beginning of the service. Classes will be encouraged to arrange for a simple Shabbat dinner for parents and students at 6:30 pm prior to the service.

Sixth grade students will be participating in a Saturday morning service and lead the morning Kiddush on Saturday, November 21st.

The dates for the services are:

October 30th – 5th Grade

November 20th – 7th Grade

November 21st – 6th Grade (Saturday)

February 5th – 4th Grade

March 12th – 3rd Grade (3rd Grade Siyyum)

April 30th – 1st and 2nd Grade

Procedure for Service Credit

Each student in the religious school will have an index card with their name on it in a box located at the entrance to the sanctuary. When they are at services, they should bring their card to the bimah officer who will affix a sticker onto their card. They should then re-file their card in the box.

Shabbat L'Kulam (Shabbat for Everyone)

Shabbat L'Kulam (formerly known as Junior Congregation) services are held on selected Saturday mornings (see schedule below). Students in each grade will assist with the planning and leading of the service. These services are an important element of the school curriculum and all students are required to attend at least two services throughout the year. Each time a Shabbat L'Kulam service occurs, there will be a grade that leads the service, as well as a grade that will assist with the service and coordinate the Shabbat luncheon following its conclusion. Further information about services will be provided during the year.

Shabbat L'Kulam Schedule - Saturdays at 10:30:

DATE	GRADE LEADING	GRADE ASSISTING*
October 17	7th	6th
December 12	6th	5th
December 19	5th	4th
January 22 (Friday)	8th, 9th, and 10th	
January 23	4th	3rd
February 6	3rd	2nd
March 20	2, 1,	Tot
April 10	8th-10th	7th

***The assisting grade will lead the closing song of the service as well as coordinate the Kiddush Luncheon**

KIDushat Shabbat Services

Formerly known as Tot Shabbat, these Shabbat morning services are geared towards families with young children. The service lasts approximately 30 minutes and is followed by snack and an arts and crafts project. Birthday blessings will be done during these services. All KIDushat Shabbat services begin at 9:00 am.

KIDushat Shabbat will be held on:

October 17

November 21

December 19

January 16

February 6

April 3

KIDushat Pajama Havdalah Services

This year, we have one additional special KIDushat Pajama Havdalah Service which will be held on Saturday, May 15th at 5:00 pm.

Ushering at Services

In order to help students and parents feel more comfortable during services, students and parents in grades 5-7 will be asked to assist as ushers and greeters at a service during the year. Fifth grade families will be asked to serve as ushers on a Shabbat evening and sixth and seventh grade families will be asked to serve as ushers at a Bar/Bat Mitzvah service during the year.

Questions People Ask about Services

The Religious Practices Committee has been asked to address the issue of sanctuary behavior and decorum. A small task force was formed to develop and communicate some commonsense guidelines for our congregation. It is our hope that this may help to provide a mutually respectful communal prayer environment which will improve the worship experience for all; congregants, clergy and guests. We realize that such guidelines may need constant revision as we determine what works best for our community. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact a member of the religious practices committee. We thank you in advance for your cooperation.

GENERAL REQUESTS

- Please try to arrive on time to participate fully in the joyful experience of the service. Service times are easily accessible on our website, in the bulletin, through the weekly email, or by calling the temple office.
- Before entering the sanctuary, please turn off all cell phones and electronic devices.
- While our attire in the sanctuary has relaxed somewhat over the years, we ask that you be respectful of the prayer environment and fellow worshipers by selecting attire appropriate for the occasion. If you are participating on the bimah you may consider something more appropriate as a prayer leader. (Jeans, shorts, sneakers, etc. are not appropriate.)

- Food and drink are not permitted in the sanctuary, unless medically necessary. We enjoy refreshments in our social hall following services, when we gather to greet each other.
- Please do not move about unnecessarily in the aisles, the side ramp, or onto the bimah during the service. Please be aware that noise in the hallways travels easily.
- We request that you refrain from the distraction of picture taking during services.
- You are welcome to take pictures at the conclusion of the service (Some folks have set up stationary video equipment at the back of the sanctuary, prior to the start of the service).
- If it is necessary for you to have prolonged conversation with others, please do so outside the sanctuary. So too, extended vocal distractions or raised voices are not appropriate to the prayer space.
- Coming and going should be kept to a minimum. Our volunteer ushers are there to assist you and may let you know when it is appropriate to be seated. Please feel free to call on them if you need something in particular or if they can be of help in an emergency.

REGARDING CHILDREN

We welcome children of all ages at our services and request that young children sit with their parents. While older children may wish to sit with friends, parents should be nearby to monitor any distractions. The rear of the sanctuary is especially well suited to families with young children. The deeper row provides ample room for strollers and floor sitting. The occasional sweet noise of a child is welcome and adds a warm cozy feeling to our community, and we request the patience of the entire congregation as our children grow and learn to worship in community. Should your child become loud or physically active, please leave the sanctuary as quietly as possible.

Holiday Boot Camp Programs

This year, we will hold a number of programs which will focus on Jewish Holidays and the observance of them:

The December Dilemma

Sunday, November 22nd – 9:30-11:00 am

Is there such a thing as the “Hanukkah bush?” How do you handle the cultural overload of Christmas? How do interfaith families survive the December holidays? Have your questions and concerns addressed during this special program.

Masking and Unmasking Ourselves – The Purim Story

Sunday, February 7th – 9:30-11:00 am

Ever wonder why Jews wear masks and costumes at Purim? Why do we make so much noise during the services? What was the menu at Esther’s Feast? Whose idea was a Purim Shpiel anyway? Come and find out all you wanted to know about Purim during this program.

Modern Jewish History – From Ashes of the Holocaust to the Land of Milk and Honey

Sunday, April 11th – 9:30-11:00 am

A look at the development of the State of Israel following the horror of the Holocaust. What is the impact of Israel on the rest of the world and what are the challenges facing it sixty one years after its founding.

Other Learning Opportunities:

Holiday Rap: Shofar Blowing 101

Sunday, September 13th at 12:00 pm

“And on that day a great ram’s horn shall be sounded”, Isaiah 27:13

Add a new dimension to your High Holy Day experience and learn to blow the shofar. Learn the meaning of the piercing blasts, the origin of the trumpeting sounds that awaken us at the New Year. Participate in the mitzvah of blowing the shofar at the final T’kiah G’dolah, the Great Blast, at the end of the Yom Kippur Neilah service on Thursday, October 9. No experience necessary. All ages welcome! Bring your own shofar or temple will supply one.

Lunch and Learn

Beginning September 8 every Tuesday, 11:30am -1:00pm

Instructors: Cantor Steven Weiss and Rabbi Joseph

How could the words of the Five Books of Moses still speak to us today? Come eat and learn as we delve into the weekly Torah portion (Parashat HaShuva) and study age old commentators alongside Modern interpretations of the Torah. No knowledge of Hebrew is required for this exciting discussion. Each weekly session stands on its own.
Course Text: A Torah Commentary for Our Times 3 volume set
By Harvey J. Fields \$34.00

Hebrew Marathon

Sunday, October 4, 9am-2pm

Instructor: Rabbi Shira Joseph

Can’t find the time to take a weekly course in Hebrew decoding? Still struggling with remembering the Hebrew letters? Looking for a crash course in Hebrew letter recognition to become inspired and be a role model to your child? Feeling out of sorts at Shabbat services because you can’t tell an aleph from a bet? Does Hebrew look like it is all Greek to you? THEN, this one-day class is for you!! No knowledge of Hebrew letters is required. At the end of the day, you will be able to decode basic Hebrew words and prayers (like a snail!).

Sex, Drinking, Tattoos and so much more.

Tuesday, October 13, 20, 27

Time: 7:30pm-9:00pm

Instructor: Rabbi Shira Joseph

Did one ever wonder what Judaism says about taking care of our bodies? How much sexual intimacy should a person engage in? Did the ancient rabbis even discuss addictions? Can we be buried in a Jewish cemetery with a tattoo? These questions and others will be discussed and answered.

SPECIAL EVENTS SCHEDULE 2009-2010

Sep

13	9:00 am	Opening School Assembly for all School Families (PT-3)
	11:00 am	Opening School Assembly for all School Families (4-6)
14	6:00 pm	Opening School Assembly for all School Families (7-10)
21	4:00 pm	Decorate Sukkah (Grades 3-5)
24	4:00 pm	Decorate Sukkah (Grades 3-7)

Oct

4	9am-2pm	Hebrew Marathon
4	9am-1pm	Flea Market
9	7:00 pm	Consecration service with the Winiker Band
10-12		Eisner & Crane Lake New Camper Weekend

Nov

21	10:30 am	Eisner & Crane Lake Camp Presentation
22	11:00 am	Vav/6th Grade B'nai Mitzvah Kallah (part 1)

Dec

6	11:00 am	Vav/6th Grade B'nai Mitzvah Kallah (part 2)
11	6:00 pm	Community Chanukah Celebration Dinner
	7:00 pm	Community Shabbat/Chanukah Service

Jan

8-11		L'Takein Seminar for 9th and 10th Grade
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Feb

28	10:30 am	Purim Service led by our Religious School Faculty (All Grades K-6 – no First Session)
	11:15 am	Purim Carnival

Apr

10	10:30 am	Shabbat Morning Service with Yom Hashoah Commemoration Guest Speaker: Edgar Krasa Services led by grades 8-10
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May

2	9:00 am	Mitzvah Day/Flea Market and Lag B'omer Picnic
7	7:30 pm	Shabbat Evening Service – Teacher Appreciation Shabbat
18	7:00 pm	Confirmation Service
26-27		Scholar in Residence Weekend with Anita Diamant

Special Events

Eisner and Crane Lake New Camper Weekend

October 10-12, 2009

Open to students in grades 3-5 who have not yet spent a summer at one of the URJ camps, this weekend will provide prospective campers with a taste of the camp community and experience "camp life." For more information, contact the school office.

Eisner and Crane Lake Camps Presentation

Saturday, November 21st at 10:30 am.

As an adjunct to your children's Jewish education, please consider sending your children to the URJ Eisner and Crane Lake Camps. These full service summer camps will offer your children an unforgettable experience, which will change their lives. The camps located in the Berkshire mountains offer numerous program options for children as young as 7. Further information about camp as well as scholarships are available from the school office. We will hold a special program about camp on Saturday, November 21st at 10:30 am. A representative of the camps will be with us that morning to talk more about camping and the programs offered.

Families with children who attended Eisner and Crane Lake Camps this past summer will be asked to assist us with the Kiddush lunch following the service and to be available to speak to other potential camp families about the experiences that their children have had at camp.

Vav/6th Grade Bar/Bat Mitzvah Kallah

Sunday November 22nd and Sunday, December 6th.

Once again, we will hold a special two-part program for those students who will become a Bar/Bat Mitzvah in the coming year. The purpose of this program will be to work together as families learning and studying together as you begin the journey toward beginning a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The program, taught by Rabbi Joseph and Cantor Weiss will be held on Sunday November 22nd and Sunday, December 6th. Attendance at both sessions is required of parents and students.

Erev Chanukah Dinner and Shabbat Celebration

Friday, December 11, 2009 at 6:00 pm (dinner) service at 7:00 pm

Join us as we gather together to celebrate the first night of Chanukah with lights, food, crafts and song. Bring your family and your Chanukiah and join us as we welcome the Festival of Lights together.

Scholar in Residence weekend with Anita Diamant

Friday, March 26-Saturday, March 27, 2010

Join us for a special weekend as we welcome best selling author Anita Diamant to our congregation for a weekend of scholarship. She will present programs on Friday evening, March 26th as part of our annual South Shore Union Service as well as on Saturday, March 27th during the Shabbat morning service. Additional information will be forthcoming.

Special Yom Hashoah Service

Saturday, April 10, 2010 at 10:30 am

Please join us for a special Shabbat morning service as we commemorate the Holocaust with our guest speaker, Edgar Krasa. As a survivor of the Terezin Concentration Camp, Edgar has a remarkable story of story and triumph to share with us.

Students in grades 8-10 will participate in this service.

Travel To Israel – 10th Grade

There is no better culmination to a student's formal religious study, than to travel with hundreds of other teens from around the country to Israel. NFTY (The North American Federation of Temple Youth) is the largest provider of Israel trips in North America and every year. Congregation Sha'aray Shalom has sent students to Israel for the summer. Further details about the summer 2008 trips will be forthcoming or you can get detailed information on the NFTY website, which is www.nftyisrael.org. There are other programs that are tailored to the needs to each individual student. Please contact Cantor Weiss for further information on NFTY as well as other Israel programs.

Passport to Israel

The Myra and Robert Kraft Passport to Israel program is a unique savings plan to help parents send their children on a life-changing teen Israel experience. The program is designed so that the community, the synagogue and CJP, helps families make a trip to Israel during the high school years a reality.

So, give your child the passport he or she needs to become a proud part of the Jewish future. Enroll now in the Myra and Robert Kraft Passport to Israel Program and join us in planning for your child's future.

Q: Who is eligible?

A: Any child in third or seventh grade enrolled in a formal Jewish education program whose family is a member of a participating congregation.

Q: How much are the yearly contributions?

A: The contribution for the regular seven-year program (beginning in 3rd grade) is:

- \$200 jointly from your family and congregation each year.
- \$700 from CJP will be contributed at the end of the program.

The contribution of the three-year option (beginning in 7th grade) is:

- \$400 jointly from your family and congregation each year.
- \$700 from CJP will be contributed at the end of the program.

Q: How much money will the fund be worth by the end of 10th grade?

A: Based on current economic conditions, contributions plus interest should total approximately \$2,200 for seven-year participants and \$2,000 for three-year participants.

Electronic Devices

The use of electronic devices of any kind by students during religious school hours is prohibited. This includes cell phones, pagers, game boys, I-Pods, etc. Students found using these items will have them confiscated and will only be returned to a parent.

Parent Inquiries

If a parent has a concern with regard to school programming or a member of the staff, it is recommended that the particular member of the staff be contacted directly to share the concern. As always, Cantor Weiss or Rabbi Joseph will be available should additional consultation be necessary.

Homework

Homework assignments are an essential part of the learning process and are intended to complement classroom learning. Parents can expect their children to **have regular homework and are strongly encouraged to study with them.** This provides a great opportunity to emphasize the value of Jewish learning through modeling. Given our busy schedules, teachers will work to ensure that homework assignments are of appropriate length. Spending just 10-15 minutes doing Jewish learning on most evenings has the potential to have an enormous impact on your child's learning and Jewish identity.

This year, students in grades 3 through 6 will be receiving Hebrew interactive CD's for use at home on their computer. The teachers will be able to track student's progress through the internet and homework will be assigned through the use of the CD's.

Materials

All students will be provided with the appropriate textbooks at the beginning of the year. In general, each student is expected to bring his/her textbooks, notebook and pencil to each class, and to arrive in class prepared to work. All students through grade 6 will be charged a fee in order to cover the increasing cost of books and materials used in the school.

Progress Reports

Progress reports are issued twice each year to report on your child's strengths, in addition to areas needing improvement. In addition, teachers are available throughout the year to discuss your child's progress. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher. Contact information is included in this booklet.

Tutoring

In order to assist those students that we identify as needing additional assistance, the religious school will provide a limited amount of tutoring both in small groups and individually. In the event a child misses a large number of classes, or falls behind significantly, parents will be encouraged to pursue private tutoring at their own expense.

Behavior

All students are expected to be respectful and considerate of others, to follow school rules, and to dress in an appropriate manner, typical of everyday school dress. For service attendance, students should be dressed in a manner befitting the sanctuary (No jeans, tee-shirts, sneakers, bare shoulders, etc.).

New Toddler Playground

We are thrilled with our newly completed playground, built as part of our preparation for the opening of the JCC Early Learning Center at Congregation Sha'aray Shalom. **The playground is only for use by children ages 5 and younger.** Children must be accompanied and supervised by an adult. The playground hours will be posted in the fall.

Discipline

If a student fails to meet academic or behavioral standards, the following progression of steps will be taken, as necessary.

- The teacher will discuss the problem with the student and develop a plan to resolve the issue.
- The teacher will notify the parent(s) of the problem.
- The teacher and Cantor Weiss will confer with the parent(s).
- A child may be suspended from class and assigned an independent study Mitzvah project at the direction of the Cantor and Rabbi should inappropriate behavior continue.
- In extreme circumstances, and with the approval of the Rabbi & Cantor as well as the Education Committee, a child may be expelled from the religious school program. Such expulsion would jeopardize continued opportunities in the Congregation Sha'aray Shalom education program such as Bar/Bat Mitzvah and Confirmation.

Parent Involvement

The members of our Religious School staff work in close partnership with the parents and larger community to promote Jewish education. Parents at different grade levels are asked to accept the responsibility to help organize and participate in specific school or congregation events. Members of the Education Committee will serve as liaisons. The activities and responsible classes are listed below

- Sukkah Decorating – (3rd through 5th) – Monday, September 21, 2009
- Sukkah Decorating – (3rd through 7th) – Thursday, September 24, 2009
- Camp Shabbat Oneg – Eisner & Crane Lake Camper Families – Saturday, November 21, 2009
- Purim Carnival - (3rd and 4th grades) – February 28, 2010
- All grades – Teacher Appreciation Shabbat Oneg – May 15, 2010
- 7-9th Grades – Dinner and Oneg for Confirmation – May 18, 2010

In addition to the activities listed above, all grades will participate in our Shabbat L'Kulam Services and Family Education programs. Further information is found earlier in this handbook.

School Fundraisers

Over the past few years, different fundraisers have been held in order to raise needed funds for our youth scholarship programs. As part of our ongoing program, many thousands of dollars are distributed to families in order to help them send their children to summer camp, Israel, or other synagogue sponsored programs such as the Washington D.C. and New York City Trips. These fundraisers while marginally successful also were very time consuming.

Therefore, this year, there will be no school fundraisers. Rather, we ask each school family to make a voluntary contribution of \$36 per student to the Youth Scholarship or School Fund. Thank you for your support.

Teacher Appreciation Shabbat – Friday, May 7, 2010

An annual tradition in our congregation, our annual service of tribute to our religious school faculty and staff will be held on Friday, May 7th at 7:30 pm with a dinner prior. Students in all grades are expected to attend and participate in the service. Please mark your calendars now for this important service.

Room Parents

Each class will have a room parent who serves as an important link between the school and the home. Room parents will work hand in hand with the teacher and are there to assist in coordination of volunteer help throughout the year.

In addition to the class parents, once again, there will be a point person selected for each class in order to coordinate a class mitzvah project. The purpose of the project is to promote social action and responsibility in our students beginning at the earliest age, as well as to provide an opportunity for parents and students within the same grade to spend time together outside of the classroom.

Health Tips for the School Year

As you probably have heard, the H1Ni Virus (Swine Flu) is expected to be of serious consequence again this year. Because the health and safety of our children and teachers are our highest priority, we want to provide you with additional information.

What can we do to keep children from getting sick?

It is important to teach your children how to reduce their risk of getting the flu and how to protect others from becoming infected.

- **Teach your children to wash their hands often.** Washing with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds is ideal (that is about as long as it takes to sing the “Happy Birthday” song twice).
- **Teach your children the proper use of hand sanitizer.** Gels, rubs, and hand wipes all work well, as long as they contain at least 60% alcohol. Hand wipes must be disposed of properly.
- **Teach your children to cough or sneeze into your sleeve—not their hands!** Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of their elbow. They should wash their hands after blowing their nose or coughing into a tissue.
- **Teach your children to avoid touching their nose, mouth or eyes.** They should keep their hands away from their face.

Is it safe for my child to go to school?

At this time, the state and local health departments have advised us that students can continue to come to school, as long as they are not sick and do not have flu symptoms. Flu-like symptoms include: fever (over 100 degrees F), feverishness, cough, sore throat, runny nose, or stuffy nose. Additional symptoms may be experienced with swine flu, including muscle pain, fatigue, and sometimes vomiting or diarrhea.

Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our children and our schools healthy.

Snack

In order to maintain proper health codes and to assure the best education possible for our students, with the exception of students in our parent-tot, Pre-school and Pre-k classes, there will no longer be snacks served during the school day. Appropriate foods will be distributed throughout the year in keeping with Jewish holiday celebrations. Breaks will still be given in order to allow students to get a drink of water or to use the restrooms.

Traffic

The temple parking lot can be a dangerous place. To promote our children's safety we ask that you follow the guidelines outlined below when bringing them to or picking them up from Religious School classes.

- The preferred approach is to park your car and walk your child or children into the building or to your car. **Children should NOT cross the parking lot unaccompanied, to get to or from your car.**
- If you choose not to park your car, please follow the directions for drop off and pick up that will be posted in the synagogue parking lot.

Drop-off and Pick-up

Please do not drop off students any earlier than 15 minutes before the start of classes. In the event you need to bring them earlier, they must be supervised by a parent.

It is expected that parents will pick-up students no later than 10 minutes after the conclusion of school. In the event of an emergency that would prevent timely pick-up, please call the school office (781)-749-8103 so that we can be aware of the circumstances.

Early Dismissal

In order for a student to leave school early, they must have a note signed by a parent. The note should be brought to the school office. Whoever is picking the student up must come into the building in order to sign out the student. Students will be waiting in the school office.

Other Safety Issues

For emergency situations, Congregation Sha'aray Shalom has procedures to evacuate children from the building and/or bring them to a safer location, if necessary. Fire drills will be conducted at the beginning of the fall and winter terms for the benefit of our students and teachers.

Weather Related School Announcements

If the Hingham Public Schools are closed or dismissed early, Sha'aray Shalom Religious School will be closed that day. School closing announcements will be made on WBZ News Radio 1030, WBZ Channel 4 TV, WCVB TV 5 and WHDH Channel 7 TV. If there is any doubt whether or not school will be open, the Temple telephone answering machine will have a recording giving the status of school that day. The synagogue phone number is (781) 749-8103. As always, we recognize that parents will use their best judgment when deciding on whether to drive in extreme weather.