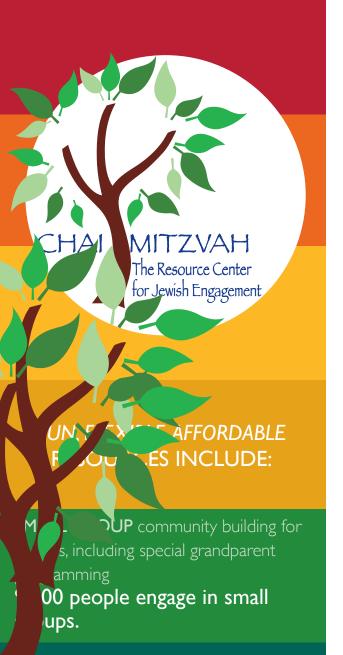


CHAIMITZVAH

The Resource Center for Jewish Engagement

A unique model for strengthening Jewish communal life.



EN PROGRAMMING and ENGAGEMENT 1,500 teen participants, 500 Israel travel scholarships

SOURCEBOOKS for meaningful small group discussion can be cobranded to STRENGTHEN ORGANIZATIONS Over 20 topics available

scholars circle bringing academic research to lay audiences Virtual live lectures attended by 100s bi-weekly

LESSONS about ANTI-ZIONIST CONSPIRACY THEORIES and JEWISH HISTORY 1800 books taught on 5 campuses

Working with INTERFAITH ORGANIZATIONS: I 500 books with 3 curricula support interfaith conversations

Unique Model for **COMMUNITYWIDE** engagement ... **AND MORE!**

WHY CHAI MITZYAH?

Great Jewish programs are created every day, but often a underutilized and undersubscribed: There is much *supply* but not enough *demand*. As you will read in the following pages, **Chai Mitzvah: The Resource Center for Jewish Engagement,** partners with an ever expanding variety of organizations to strenghthen them and increase engagement throughout the Jewish community.

Our partnerships are unique in that our goal is to strenghthen our partners, as we work throughout the spectrum of the Jewish community for all ages and stages in order to increase engagement in Jewish communal life. Our method is embedded small group conversations in our partner organizations coupled with opportunities for social action and spiritual and ritual growth.

Since our inception in 2009, over 9,000 people, in over 700 organizations, have participated in Chai Mitzvah.

TO DONATE





GIVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH

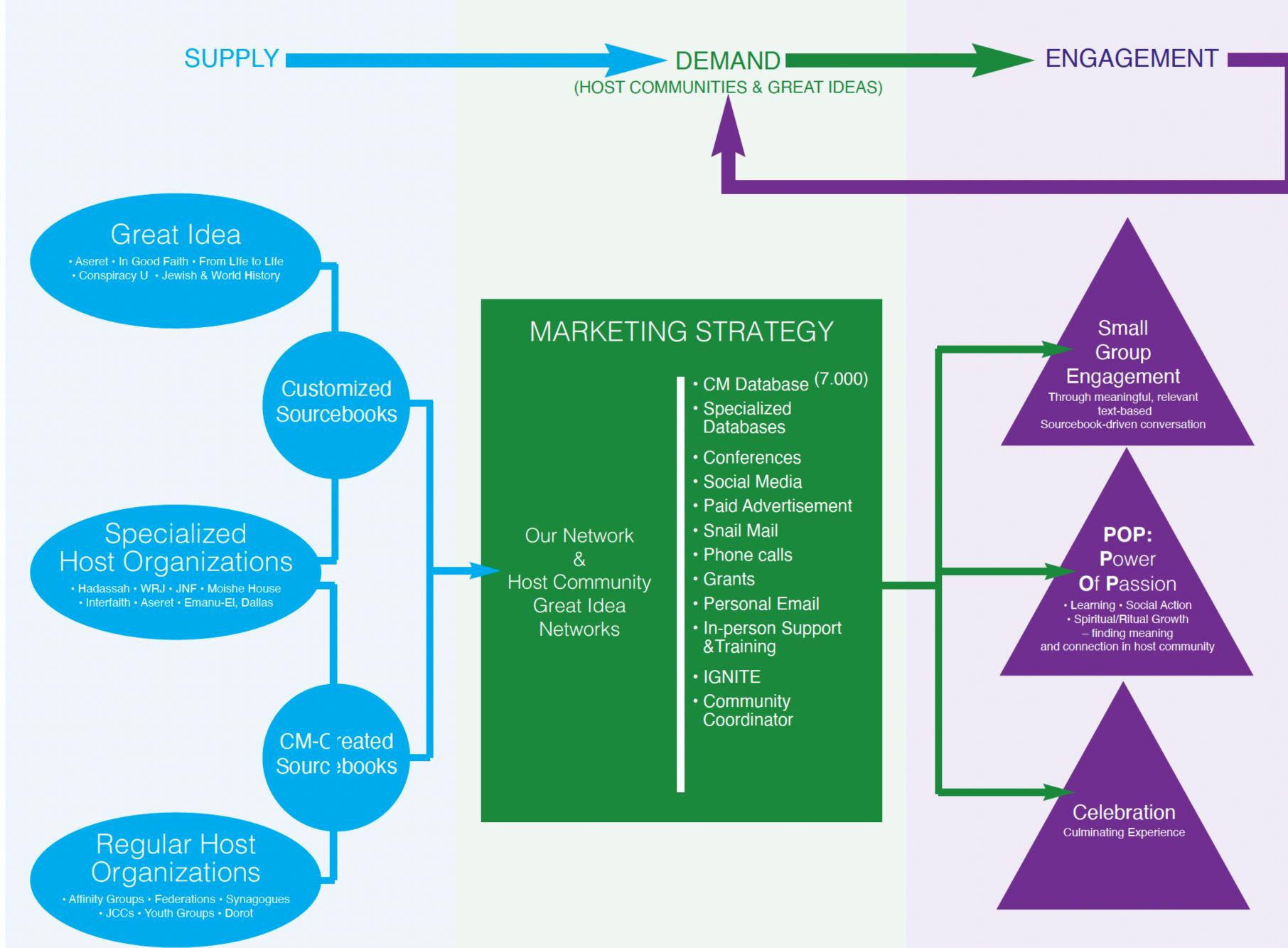
Expanding the team: Chai Mitzvah's success is directly impacted by our ability to promote Chai Mitzvah in the community. This requires hiring an individual who can identify appropriate partners, explain the program, and in many cases, lead conversation groups.

- IGNITE: This is a proven model that engages the entire community in Chai Mitzvah creating up to 20 groups with an average of 10 people in each group. We seek buy-in from legacy organizations such as synagogues, schools, JCCs, and Federations in addition to informal affinity and friendship groups. A commitment of \$30,000 will bring IGNITE to a community.
- Community Coordinator model: Similar to the IGNITE model, but less hours, the Community Coordinator is paid \$1,000 for each Chai Mitzvah group they facilitate, as well as a stipend for each group that is started in the community. A commitment of \$5,000 will bring a Community Coordinator to a community.

Chai Mitzvah: A Jewish B to B Decentralized Platform

Great Jewish programs are created every day, but often are underutilized and undersubscribed: There is much supply but not enough demand.

Chai Mitzvah: The Resource
Center for Jewish Engagement
partners with an ever expanding
variety of organizations to
strengthen them and increase
engagement throughout the Jewish
community.





ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Synagogues, JCCs, Schools, Youth Groups, Moishe Houses, Federations & more

CHAI MITZVAH MAKES PARTNERS STRONGER

We partner with many organizations to help them flourish by engaging their membership in two ways. First, we **form small group discussions** using one of our many text-based conversation sourcebooks. Secondly, each member is encouraged to identify their **POP** – **Power Of Passion** – something Jewish they want to learn, a ritual to take on or deepen, and a social action project of their choosing. We encourage participants to find these in their sponsoring organization. (For Chai Mitzvah in action, see <u>Celebration Brochure</u>.)

These groups are either lay-led, or led by a professional of the partner organization. We like to say, "If you like your book group, you'll love Chai Mitzvah!" Our materials, printed or electronic, are available at a nominal fee and can be cobranded and tailored for each organization.



OUR GROWING LIST OF PARTNERS INCLUDES:

- ALEPH: Alliance for Jewish Renewal
- Alums for Campus Fairness
- Aseret Global
- Congregation Beth Hatikvah in Summit NJ (cobranded)
- Dorot and Assisted Living Facilities
- Grandparent/Grandchild Connection
- Hillel International: CUNY and Brooklyn College
- Hundreds of synagogues of every denomination
- JCCs across North America, including: Hartford, Indianapolis, Pittsburgh, & Kansas City
- Jewish Federations and of North America, including: Baltimore, Indianapolis, Ann Arbor, Pittsburgh,

Lions of Judah Women's Philanthropy in Houston TX, Hollywood FL, & Hartford CT

- Jewish National Fund (JNF)
- Kavod V'Nachum
- Moishe House
- Mussar Institute
- Prizmah: Center for Jewish Day Schools
- Shutaf Inclusion Programs
- Students in Support of Israel (SSI)
- Temple Emanu-el of Dallas (cobranded)
- Women of Reform Judaism (WRJ)
- Youth Groups including: NCSY, Habonim Dror, B'nei Akiva, & BBYO



TOPICS FOR ENGAGEMENT: Sourcebooks

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT:

Chai Mitzvah has created over 20 topics with 5 to 12 sourcebooks per set to spark small group conversations. These user friendly text-based resources are designed with an introduction, text, and conversation format to allow for easy implementation by either a lay or professional leader.



SEE SAMPLE MATERIALS

Leadership Group: Baltimore's Federation — The Associated, using Chai Mitzvah's cobranded Aseret Leadership Curriculum

Studying and learning with Aseret, I am a more knowledgeable, passionate, committed, and connected Jew. I wanted to give this meaningful and transformative gift to my Federation Board of Directors to enhance and infuse Judaism in their professional, volunteer, and personal lives.

- Linda A. Hurwitz, Past Chair of the Board of The Associated, Jewish Federation of Baltimore

CURRICULAR TOPICS INCLUDE:

(Almost all of the topics have a version created especially for a teen audience.)

- INTERGENERATIONAL: Gan 2 Grown-ups, Grandparents & Beyond, Family Education
- VALUES AND PERSONAL GROWTH: Aseret & Aseret Leadership, Business Ethics, Jewish Journeys, Kehila: Caring and Community, Mussar, Rosh Chodesh
- INTERFAITH: Community Conversations, Critical Conversations, In Good Faith: Questioning Religion and Atheism (book and curriculum guides)
- ISRAEL AND HISTORY: Because We Were Slaves: The Jewish Struggle for Justice in Making America Home, Conspiracy U: A Case Study (book and curriculum guides), How Israel Compares: Conflicts Around the World, Traveling the Ten Commandments, Curriculum in progress: Jewish and World History
- CUSTOM COBRANDED CURRICULA: Jewish National Fund, Women of Reform Judaism, Moishe House, Aseret Leadership with Baltimore's Federation The Associated, Temple Emanu-El of Dallas



CAMPUS AND BEYOND

CAMPUS ACTIVITIES:

Using Conspiracy U: A Case Study by Scott A. Shay, we have educated hundreds of students about anti-Zionist conspiracy theories on the left and on the right of the political spectrum. We have provided stipends for students to learn and to support their organizations as well as stipends for those who complete the semester course to travel to Israel.

We have worked with Alums for Campus Fairness to create and disseminate a 5-part video course on the book which has been used by student groups throughout the country.

To date, Chai Mitzvah has formed deep connections with CUNY Hillel, SSI (Students in Support of Israel), ICC (the Israel Campus Coalition), and JNF (Jewish National Fund) in providing support for teaching the course.

Scott Shay, our Founder and Board Chair, also speaks virtually and in person to student groups and provides copies of the book at no cost. To date, we have distributed over 1,800 books to students in 5 campuses across North America.

We started a new chapter at Florida Atlantic University... the class played a huge role in finding the right people and growing the chapter to over 115 members. I hope we can do this again next fall.

Ilan Sinelnikov, president SSI

SCHOLARS CIRCLE:

Beginning in 2023, we enlisted the expertise of four prominent scholars on Israel and campus issues to deliver virtual live lectures every two weeks. These lectures are geared to rabbis, educators, and lay leaders who are tasked with explaining the complex issues in the Middle East. To that end, each lecture is accompanied by a source sheet and links to relevant articles. These lectures are attended by hundreds of participants and have been very well received.

SHOCKING TRENDS ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES:

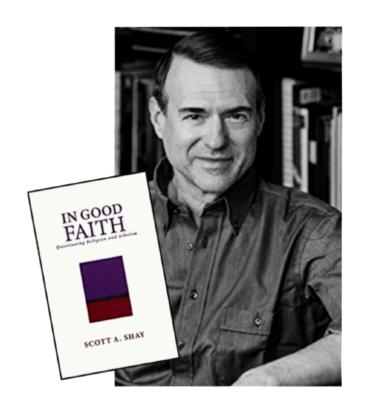
Shocking Trends on College Campuses, a presentation by Scott Shay and Dr. Andrew Pessin, was presented as live video to the Kansas City community and we are working to make this format available to additional communities.





INTERFAITH PROGRAMS AND MATERIALS

The fastest growing group in the United States is the spiritual but not religious. Religious affiliation has declined and been maligned as the cause of many of society's ills.

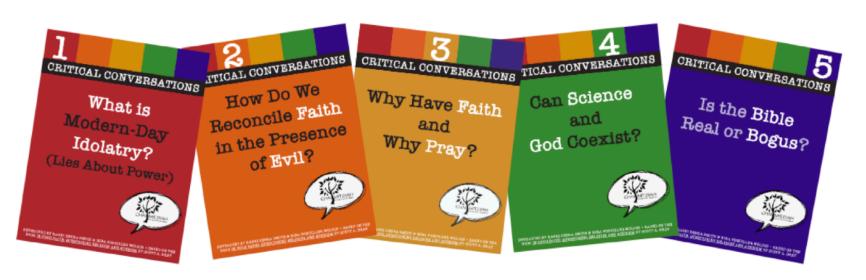


Scott Shay, our founder, has written an award-winning book in defense of monotheism. *In Good Faith:* Questioning Religion and Atheism is a serious examination of the ways that monotheism has positively shaped and contributed to civilization.

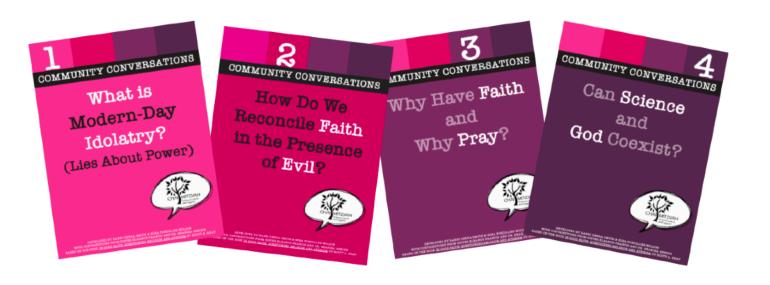
Chai Mitzvah has created a series of curricula: *Critical Conversations* and *Community Conversations* that encourage small group conversations as an accompaniment to this book.

This book builds bridges of understanding in today's multi-religious and secular age.

 Bishop James Massa, Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn NY and United States Conference of Catholic Bishop



CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS is a five-part curriculum. Each topic is designed to spark open and meaningful discussion that will encourage participants to think critically about questions such as "What is Idolatry?" and "Can Science and God Coexist?" Critical Conversations discussion groups meet in person locally, and a monthly virtual Critical Conversations group is led by Chai Mitzvah.



COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS, containing materials from Jewish, Christian, and Muslim sources, it is endorsed by faith leaders around the globe. Ideal to spark open and meaningful dialogue in multi-faith groups.



VIRTUAL COMMUNITY AND INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMS

VIRTUAL COMMUNITY: In 2020, during Covid, we began to offer many of our courses online. This resulted in the growth of a dedicated community of hundreds of participants across North America who now rely on us as an essential connection to a welcoming Jewish community. We currently offer four virtual courses each month.

In addition to our courses we offer regular interactive Community Gatherings which attract a wide variety of participants from all over the world. Past activities have included creating a Haggadah full of meaningful traditions from our participants, and a cookbook full of recipes from the varied traditions that connect to our participants' histories and families, and celebrating holidays together.

We also offer provide virtual phone classes for elderly and homebound individuals through Dorot.



66 Despite Zoom as a way to meet, we really connected with one another through our stories, and we found one another in different and new ways, which is beautiful!

Participant, Virtual Community Event:
 From Generation to Generation: Sharing Our Stories

INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMS AND MATERIALS:

- FAMILY EDUCATION MATERIALS are designed for school groups, family education settings, Chavura groups, or individual participants with their families. The program includes learning, social action, and ritual.
- GRANDPARENTS AND BEYOND: Grandparents and others aspire to pass on a love of Judaism, so Chai Mitzvah created *Grandparents* & *Beyond* which contains our signature text-based conversations, as well as fun activities to engage all ages. *Grandparents* & *Beyond* groups have met both in person and remotely. They have been enjoyed not just by grandparents and grandchildren, but also by school groups for intergenerational programs and activities of all kinds.
- GAN 2 GROWNUPS CONNECTION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD: Chai Mitzvah created the *Gan 2 Grown-ups Connection* specifically curated for early childhood exciting intergenerational exploration, activities to do together both in person and remotely, and supplemental videos and music.

We need to be the link for the next generation.
Sarah M., Grandparents & Beyond participant





TEENS AND BEYOND

TEENS: Over 1,500 teens have participated in our unique Chai Mitzvah Teen Program, which is full of experiential and text-based learning. Students engage in learning, social action, and spiritual/ritual development. We work with teens in schools, youth groups, JCCs and summer camps.

Students who have completed the Chai Mitzvah program have received a scholarship to travel to Israel. Since 2017, we have given out approximately 500 scholarships, averaging \$750 per student. We also provide seed grants of \$250 per school that participates in the Chai Mitzvah teen program for social action projects.

Teen Partners Include:

- 134 synagogues
- 41 Community Schools
- Jewish National Fund
- Youth Groups including NCSY-JSU, B'nei Akiva, Habonim Dror
- URJ Summer Camps including Camp Harlam, Goldman Union Camp Institute
- Emma Kaufman Camp (JCC camp in Pittsburgh)
- JCCs including Indianapolis and Pittsburgh

Chai Mitzvah has a special partnership with JSU (Jewish Student Union) public school students, providing them with grants towards summer Israel travel.

Wow, what a great summer I had! Thanks to Chai Mitzvah, I was able to have the trip of a lifetime on ReSurf-NCSY! I volunteered with the teens of *Beit Hashanti*, a group home for kids running away from abuse, as well as with *Alut*, an organization that works with children on the spectrum, and *Yam Tov*, an organization that provides an outlet through water sports for veterans of the IDF suffering from PTSD. The trip was especially meaningful for me since this was my second year on the program, and I was able to return to my friend from *Beit Hashanti*, Gal, and give him his own surfboard, enabling him to surf to his heart's content =). I want to thank Chai Mitzvah and all of its donors for making this very special trip possible for me as I continue my religious journey and cherish all of the fond memories and friendships that I made over the summer.

Jedidiah Devillers, JSU group member



TEENS AND BEYOND

There is nothing out there as good as the Chai Mitzvah materials. They engage my students and are super easy to use!

— Jennifer S., teen educator

Educators rely on Chai Mitzvah's affordable, accessible, and attractive curricular materials to engage and educate their students. Each topic has multiple sourcebooks which provide enough material for a semester. Materials are available both digitally and in print, and contain links to additional information, videos, and music to further inspire the students.

YOUNG ADULTS:

Chai Mitzvah has entered into a partnership with Moishe House, creating new materials and offering stipends to Moishe Houses that run a Chai Mitzvah program. For the year 2024/2025 we are aiming to work with 20 Moishe Houses, engaging over 150 young adults.





- Aseret: The Big Ten
- Aseret Israel Scholars: Traveling the Ten Commandments
- Because We Were Slaves: The Jewish Struggle for Justice in Making America Home
- Critical Conversations
- Community Conversations (Interfaith Project)
- Grandparents and Beyond (excellent both for teens and their grandparents, or for intergenerational social action project)
- Jewish Journeys
- Kehila: Caring & Community
- Mixtape (Arts-based curriculum written by Matt Bar, the "Bible Rapper")
- Mussar
- **COMING SOON:** Chai Mitzvah is working with Dr. Olga Kirschbaum to create a comprehensive Jewish and World History curriculum to be used in Jewish day schools and other academically rigorous programs.



CHAI MITZVAH in action - growing congregational engagement!

Congregation Beth Ahm's Chai Mitzvah Class Celebration

Congregation Beth Ahm 5075 West Maple Road, West Bloomfield, MI 48322 248-851-6880 • www.cbahm.org



Sidney Blackman Linda Bolton Paul Darmon Debra Darvick Martin Darvick Julie Englender Shaul Englender Jody Grossman Manny Kalef Nancy Kalef Debi King

Small Group Participants

Steven King Francine Levine Robert Levine Rene Lichtman Ruth Moltz Al Sasson Diane Sasson Alesa Silver Judy Vine Jeffrey Weiss Faye Wolf

Chai Mitzvah is a national program created in 2008 as a way to engage adults in a Jewish journey throughout their lives. Our participants have attended monthly study sessions, identified something Jewish that they wanted to learn, took on or deepened an existing Jewish ritual and engaged in social action. Now it is time to celebrate!

For more information about Chai Mitzvah, go to www.chaimitzvah.org

The 9 Session Core Curriculum

Topic 1:Adult Rites of Passage Topic 2: Philanthropy/Tzedakah

PART ONE: Topic 3: Individual and Community Our Jewish Topic 4: Interpersonal Relationships Topic 5: Mindfulness/Conscious Living

Curriculum Topic 6: Adding New Insights to the Passover Seder

Topic 7: Israel and the Jewish Spirit Topic 8: Gratitude/Modim Anachnu Lach Topic 9: Judaism and the Environment

Individual Projects of the Participants PART TWO: SIDNEY BLACKMAN

POP-Passion: individual choices for each Participant

Learning Project: I found that taking this course and the discussions in class and with my wife about Jewish practices and thinking more meaningful. Especially one's responsibility to family, friends, co-workers and the community at large which I had taken for granted.

Social Action Project: I was asked to blow the Shofar prior to the High Holidays at the Jewish old folk's home; the look on their faces will want me to do it every year. The appreciation that they showed was amazing. I have also visited seniors who are members of our shul. I have talked to the person who is responsible for Meals on Wheels to start

Ritual Practices: I have started taking a conversational Hebrew class at our shul, and I have also obtained a transliterated linear siddur, to help me learn what I am saying in

PAUL DARMON

Learning Project: I have learned and studied about the biblical and historical origins of the "counting the Omer" ritual and its kabbalistic implications and led a Saturday morning Torah class and also an "On One Foot" mini-learning session regarding this topic.

Social Action Project: I have volunteered at the Jewish Dental Clinic one day a month. I also volunteered at the Saint Vincent DePaul Dental clinic one day a month providing free dental

Ritual Project: I counted the Omer and incorporated the kabbalistic meditations every evening for the 49 days between Pesach and Shavuot for the first time in my life.

DEBRA DARVICK

Learning Project: I picked up the thread of my Hebrew language studies once again. I also studied the structure of the prayer services with Rabbi Krakoff.

Social Action Project: I have been involved in a project that coordinates giving food-filled backpacks for kids to take home to their families on the weekends.

Ritual Project: I learned to read one new Torah portion for

MARTIN DARVICK

Learning Project: I studied the structure of the prayer services

Ritual Project: I have found a new reading to add to our Friday

JULIE ENGLENDER

Learning Project: In order to connect to prayer in a more satisfying way, I read Reuven Hammer's book, Entering Jewish Prayer, and have begun to read Heschel's Quest for God.

Social Action Project: I am part of a group of volunteers that support the Jewish Senior Life Community Garden at Temple Emanuel. I help to plan activities for the residents at the Tietel and Prentis apartments related to the garden, such as seeding, planting, and harvesting as well as deal with garden maintenance. Ritual Project: I have worked on increasing my participation

SHAUL ENGLENDER

Learning Project: I participated weekly in a Parashat Hashavua discussion with Rabbi Elimlech Silberberg.

Social Action Project: I volunteered on a regular basis at the Jewish Senior Life Apartments Community Garden. Ritual Project: I learned the Friday night Kiddush and celebrated Shabbat at home on a regular basis.

JODY GROSSMAN

Learning Project: I participated in a conversational Hebrew class taught by Beth Ahm member Chava Adler. A few of us in the Chai Mitzvah program met with Chava on Sunday mornings for a very worthwhile and enjoyable class.

Social Action Project: I chose to participate in this year's projects organized by Beth Ahm's Tikkun Olam Social Action Team (TOSAT). This included cooking and serving at the Ronald McDonald House, contributing to Yad Ezra, the mitzvah crib, and to families for Hanukkah.

Ritual Project: When I was a young girl, I said the Sh'ma with my mom every night before bed. For my Ritual Project, I started saying the Sh'ma at bedtime once again.

MANNY KALEF

Learning Project: 9 a.m. Shabbat Study group.

Social Action Project: I continued to deliver for Meals On Wheels and I participated in a variety of Beth Ahm activities. Ritual Project: I intend to wear a Kittel on High Holy Days.

NANCY KALEF

Learning Project: Since Rabbi Rubenstein arrived at Beth Ahm, I have attempted to attend as many of his Study Sessions as I can possibly get into my calendar. During this past year, I have continued to attend Conversation Cafe, Shabbat events, Bet Midrash, On-One-Foot mini-learning sessions, book reviews, and any other time the Rabbi teaches.

Social Action Project: I have mentored congregants and guests to navigate through Siddur Eit Ratzon. Since September of 2012, I have held two classes and six attendees have enjoyed the learning experience.

Ritual Project: My new ritual has been to light Shabbat candles. I have not participated in this mitzvah for over 25 years. It feels great to get back into the swing of Shabbat properly. **DEBI KING**

Learning Project: I attended Howie Lupovitch's lectures, read Jewish themed books and met with Nancy Kalef to help me understand the prayer book for Shabbat.

Social Action Project: I have become more active with Tikkun Olam Social Action Team (TOSAT) including buying Chanukah gifts for two families (ten people) and cooking for Ronald McDonald House.

Ritual Project: I have continued weekly minyan and attended a few Shabbat morning services.

STEVEN KING

Learning Project: I attended Howie Lupovitch's lectures, and the DVD lecture series.

Social Action Project: I assisted the office staff with mailings. Ritual Project: I began attending minyan on a weekly basis and attended a few Shabbat morning services.

FRANCINE LEVINE

Learning Project: I have been reading the Torah portion and commentaries on it each week.

Social Action Project: I volunteer now for Friendship Circle Bakery Project, helping young adults with cognitive delays or autism learn to bake bread and sell it at the Friendship Circle. I still volunteer for the Friends of IDF and have done so for the past || years.

Ritual Project: I have learned a few more prayers and have a stronger voice with them. This happens to be an ongoing project for me.

ROBERT LEVINE

Learning Project: I'm exploring Mussar through the study of Rabbi Hayim Luzzato's The Path of The Just.

Social Action Project: I'm volunteering as a docent at the Holocaust Memorial Center.

Ritual Project: I'm leyning Torah at Minyan.

RENE LICHTMAN

Learning Project: I have listened to a number of books on tape and bought the texts that went along with them, including:

- Professor Shai Cherry: Introduction to Judaism
- Professor Isaiah Gafni: Beginnings of Judaism
- Professor Howard Lupovitch DVD's on development of Judaism, both Sephardic and Ashkenazi.

Social Action Project: I continue to speak at the Holocaust Memorial Center, to classes of students. I conclude my presentations by stressing tolerance and the need for them to not be "bystanders", and to challenge such things as bullying when they encounter it. I am a member of the TOSAT and the JCRC.

Ritual Project: I have met with Bob Levine to review the Morning Minyan Service, so as to improve my understanding

RUTH MOLTZ

Learning Project: I have been learning modern Hebrew with Chava Adler. I attend the DVD lecture series led by Nancy Kaplan. I've been doing self-study about Jewish History and customs.

Social Action Project: I volunteered to be a resource person for JGN. Two of my Catholic friends have attended, and will be attending future sessions of the DVD lecture series with me led by Nancy Kaplan with the purpose of learning more about Judaism.

Ritual Project: I attended nearly every Saturday service since July 2012. I attended Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services for the first time.

AL SASSON

Learning Projects: 1. Learning the long Kiddush. 2. Learning the Kaddish. 3. I took an online course on Astro-Physics and am currently taking Einstein's Theory of Relativity.

Social Action Projects: I. As part of the Tikkun Olam Committee: a. Deliver food to the home bound at Yad Ezra, quarterly. b. Served dinner at Ronald McDonald House 2. I am involved with Kadima, Common Ground and Hillel of Metro Detroit (HMD).

Ritual Project: I join the daily Minyan on the first Wednesday DIANE SASSON

Learning Project: I have been taking the Jews and Literature class with Howard Lupovitch. It is an excellent class. Social Action Project: I have volunteered at Yad Ezra to deliver meals and at Ronald McDonald House to serve meals, I also volunteered at Bookstock

Ritual Project: I am tutoring my grandson, Max Sasson, for his Bar Mitzvah with prayers and Torah reading.

Learning Project: I studied the history and significance of

Social Action Project: I volunteered regularly by visiting hospice patients via Jewish Family Services.

Ritual Project: I participated in evening minyan regularly,

JUDY VINE

Learning Project: I joined a Beginners Conversational Hebrew class and learned that one can be a beginning Hebrew student for a long time.

Social Action Project: I accepted a board seat with Jewish Gay Network, an advocacy/education organization that works on behalf of the lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender

Ritual Project: Our family added the ritual of a D'var Torah to our Shabbat dinner table. JEFFREY WEISS

Learning Project: I learned to read Torah and read the Maftir during a Shabbat service.

Social Action Project: I volunteered twice per month at Fleischman Senior Residence during Thursday Bingo.

Ritual Project: I am attending evening minyan, Minha and Shabbat services on a more frequent basis.

FAYEWOLF

Learning Project: I took a class from Jewish Federation's Florence Melton Mini School on the Talmudic Investigation of Emet VaShekker (Truth and Lies).

Social Action Project: I attended afternoon/evening services on a weekly basis at Beth Ahm to assure a minyan, with a special effort to attend Minha on Shabbat.

Ritual Project: With the aid of a tutor and self-teaching, my son and I learned how to put on Tefillin and say the

Increased Engagement! ... as the Rabbi said:

"Look at all the things people did for their learning, social action and ritual... and I didn't have to create anything new... it was all there in my congregation!" -Rabbi Steven Rubenstein

Success for Chai Mitzvah is a more engaged Beth Ahm congregant!



