



CONGREGATION BETH EL OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

THE RABBI SAMUEL SCOLNIC ADULT INSTITUTE

FOUNDED IN 1977 IN MEMORY OF SAUL BENDIT

Spring 2017

*"FIX A PERIOD FOR THE STUDY OF TORAH"
PIRKEI AVOT 1: 15*

REGISTER ONLINE!
Register NOW for the Early Bird Discount.
Deadline: February 17

SIX TUESDAY MORNINGS
February 28; March 7, 14, 21, and 28; April 4

SIX WEDNESDAY EVENINGS
March 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29; April 5

*All classes are open to the public.
There is no prerequisite—only a desire to participate, learn, and enjoy.*

THE RABBI SAMUEL SCOLNIC ADULT INSTITUTE, founded in 1977 in memory of Saul Bendit, is one of the leading synagogue-based adult education programs in the Washington, DC area. Now in its 39th year, the Institute has received national and international recognition. The Spring program, running for six weeks, comprises 10 courses offered Wednesday evenings beginning March 1, and four classes offered Tuesday mornings, beginning February 28. We are confident that you will find the courses interesting and informative.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

WEDNESDAY NIGHT SCHEDULE

WITH MINYAN/REFRESHMENT BREAK FROM 8:20-8:40 PM

7:30 - 8:20 PM

8:40 - 9:30 PM

**Rabbinic Fables from the *Talmud* and
*Midrash***

Rabbi Fabián Werbin

**Innovative Jewish Thinkers:
David Ben Gurion**

Rabbi Gregory Harris

Does the Soul Survive?

Rabbi Emeritus William D. Rudolph

Jews and Classical Music

Hazzan Matthew Klein

**After the Expulsion: How Sephardim
Shaped the New World and Survived**

Jeffrey Kaplan

**From Our Mothers to Our Daughters:
Revolutionary Changes in the Status
of Jewish Women in the Past 50 Years**

Rabbi Mindy Avra Portnoy

**How It All Began: First Person
Accounts of the Origins of Modern
Israel**

Eric Gartman

**Sacred *Schmutz*: How the Cairo
Genizah Has Revolutionized Jewish
Studies**

Rabbi Steven Glazer

**Jewish Values and Traditions in
Estate Planning**

Rabbi Evan Krame

**Talking to God on Shabbat:
Themes in Familiar Prayers**

Rabbi Avis Miller

TUESDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

WITH REFRESHMENT BREAK FROM 10:50-11:10 AM

10:00 - 10:50 AM

11:10 AM - NOON

**Talking to God on Shabbat:
Themes in Familiar Prayers**

Rabbi Avis Miller

**After the Expulsion: How Sephardim
Shaped the New World and Survived**

Jeffrey Kaplan

**Sacred *Schmutz*: How the Cairo *Genizah*
Has Revolutionized Jewish Studies**

Rabbi Steven Glazer

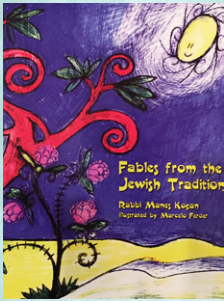
**From Our Mothers to Our Daughters:
Revolutionary Changes in the Status
of Jewish Women in the Past 50 Years**

Rabbi Mindy Avra Portnoy

CLASS DESCRIPTIONS

RABBINIC FABLES FROM THE *TALMUD* AND *MIDRASH*

Instructor: **Rabbi Fabián Werbin**, Wednesday evening



Exploring the world of the Talmud and Midrash is a fantastic adventure. It is incredible to discover the connections among Aesop, Mesopotamia, Rabbi Akivah, the Greeks and the world in which we live. Fables create a way to understand these texts and understand Jewish tradition and wisdom. The course will use materials from Rabbi Manes Kogan's *Fables from the Jewish Tradition*. Rabbi Kogan will introduce the book and teach the first class on March 1.

Copies of the book will be available to read in the Beth El library. The book can also be purchased online or at Beth El immediately before the first class on March 1 (\$20).

DOES THE SOUL SURVIVE?

Instructors: **Rabbi Emeritus William Rudolph**, Wednesday evening

What happens to our souls after death? This course explores traditional views and contemporary accounts on the subject of the immortality of the soul. The course will also include discussions of telepathy, near death experiences, past life regressions, reincarnation and the afterlife. This class is for both skeptics and believers.



A Soul Brought to Heaven, William-Adolphe Bouguereau, 1878, bougureau.org

AFTER THE EXPULSION: HOW SEPHARDIM SHAPED THE NEW WORLD AND SURVIVED

Instructor: **Jeffrey Kaplan**, Tuesday morning and Wednesday evening



Touro Synagogue, Newport, RI

In 1492-93, Jews were forced to leave the Iberian Peninsula as a result of the Spanish and Portuguese edicts of Expulsion. They took with them a legacy of loyalty to their Jewishness. This course will show how the descendants of these exiles from Iberia continued this legacy in colonial America and the new American republic.

The lives and in many cases colorful careers of a number of American Jews of Sephardi descent will be examined. We will see how Sephardi attitudes shaped early American Jewish communal life.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN: FIRST PERSON ACCOUNTS OF THE ORIGINS OF MODERN ISRAEL

Instructor: **Eric Gartman**, Wednesday evening



The Palestine Post, May 16, 1948,
Courtesy of the *Times of Israel*

of contemporary Israel as well as the Ashkenazic civilization from which most American Jews derive. Israel is always in the news. This class will deepen your understanding of how it all began.

JEWISH VALUES AND TRADITIONS IN ESTATE PLANNING

Instructor: **Rabbi Evan Krame**, Wednesday evening

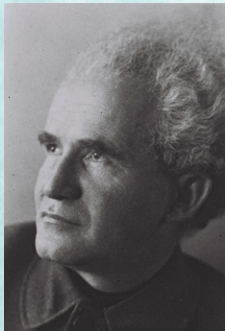
Planning for death and the passing of a legacy have long been a concern in the Jewish tradition. Stories of inheritance continue throughout the *Tanakh*: Jacob's living will, Zelophehad's daughters' inheritance, the internecine battles among King David's heirs, and more. The Rabbis of the *Talmud* shifted the focus of estates and inheritances to questions about legitimate heirs, gender identity and property ownership, issues that continue to challenge us today. We will review the texts and explore their impact on our own choices for wills and trusts and bequests.



Daughters of Zelophehad, Iris Wexler,
wexleriris.com

INNOVATIVE JEWISH THINKERS: DAVID BEN GURION

Instructor: **Rabbi Gregory Harris**, Wednesday evening
David Ben Gurion is called "Israel's founding father." During his youth in Poland, he was a leader of Zionist youth movements. He became a central figure in shaping the Jewish community of British Mandate Palestine through Israel's first two decades. During this class, we will explore Ben Gurion's decisiveness and pragmatism as Israel fought for its independence and survival. Forty-five years after his death, he remains a powerful presence within the lore of this young country, Israel.



David Ben Gurion,
gphoto.gov.il

JEWES AND CLASSICAL MUSIC

Instructor: **Hazzan Matthew Klein**, Wednesday evening

This course will examine the entrance of Jews into the artistic and social world of Western classical music, with a focus on both liturgical and non-liturgical works. We will explore Jewish access to classical music and the Jewish influences of individual personalities such as Rossi, Offenbach, Mahler, and Bernstein. We shall spend significant time evaluating the interface between Jews and classical music in the 20th century. Students may choose to supplement class studies by attending optional performances of contemporary Jewish classical music. These concerts by the National Philharmonic will be offered at Strathmore in March and April. Performance schedule and ticket costs will be provided in class.



Jacques Offenbach,
Wikimedia Commons

FROM OUR MOTHERS TO OUR DAUGHTERS: REVOLUTIONARY CHANGES IN THE STATUS OF JEWISH WOMEN IN THE PAST 50 YEARS

Instructor: **Rabbi Mindy Avra Portnoy**, Tuesday morning and Wednesday evening

This class will cover the remarkable changes which have taken place in the lives of Jewish women in the past 50 years. Topics will include ritual and liturgy, life-cycle events, *halacha*, new understandings and studies of Jewish women in history, differences among denominations, literature and theology, ordination as clergy, and organizational and institutional change. We will also examine stereotypes, issues of separation of public and private spheres (synagogue and home), equality vs. "separate but equal," and new role models for the next generations. What impact have these changes had on the Jewish world as a whole, and what issues remain?



Lila Kagedan, first woman ordained as an Orthodox Rabbi, *The Forward*

NOTE: This class will not meet March 14 and 15. Classes will meet for an extra 10 minutes (11:10 AM to 12:10 PM, Tuesday, and 8:40 PM—9:40 PM, Wednesday) for all other Tuesday and Wednesday sessions. Registrants may attend another class of their choosing on March 14 and 15.

SACRED SCHMUTZ: HOW THE CAIRO GENIZAH HAS REVOLUTIONIZED JEWISH STUDIES

Instructor: **Rabbi Steven Glazer**, Tuesday morning and Wednesday evening



Fragment of the Cairo Genizah,
Wikimedia Commons

In 1896, Rabbi Solomon Schechter of Cambridge University stepped into the attic of the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Cairo, Egypt, and there found the largest treasure trove of medieval and early manuscripts ever discovered. He had entered the synagogue's *genizah*—its repository for damaged and destroyed Jewish texts—which held nearly 300,000 individual documents dealing with every aspect of life and spanning a period of 1,000 years. This course will explore the fascinating story of that discovery as well as some documents and fragments, touching on areas from business to liturgy and everything in between. We shall see how Schechter's find, still being “unpacked” today, has forever transformed our knowledge of the Jewish past. *NOTE: This class will not meet Wednesday evening, April 5. The class will meet for an extra 10 minutes (8:40 PM—9:40 PM) for all other Wednesday sessions. This schedule change does not affect Tuesday morning classes. Wednesday evening registrants may attend another class of their choosing on April 5.*

TALKING TO GOD ON SHABBAT: THEMES IN FAMILIAR PRAYERS

Instructor: **Rabbi Avis Miller**, Tuesday morning and Wednesday evening

Unlike the *Torah*, which tradition considers to be of Divine origin, Jewish prayers are a human creation. In this class we will explore some of the recurring themes in major prayers of our Shabbat liturgy. We will ask what ideas the authors were trying to convey, what beliefs they were trying to emphasize, and whether Jews today still share those ideas and beliefs. How can we re-interpret these traditional prayer themes to find contemporary meaning? Among the themes we will discuss are gratitude, nature, revelation, angels, chosenness, soul/life after death, redemption/past history—Messiah/future, and the land of Israel.



My Jewish Learning

EARLY ALERT FOR FALL 2017

Fall semester dates are Tuesday/Wednesday, October 17 and 18 through November 28 and 29 (no classes Thanksgiving week).

If you need assistance or special accommodations in order to participate in the Adult Institute, please call 301-652-2606, ext. 349. A member of the Institute Committee will contact you. Designated parking spaces are available for persons with disabilities. Wheelchairs are available at the entrance to Beth El.



INSTRUCTORS



ERIC GARTMAN is the author of *Return to Zion: The History of Modern Israel* (Jewish Publication Society, 2015). He currently works as an intelligence analyst for the Department of Defense. Mr. Gartman did graduate work at the University of Virginia and the National Defense University after studying History as an undergraduate at the University of Arizona. He has lived and studied in Israel and traveled extensively throughout the Middle

East.



RABBI STEVEN GLAZER was a pulpit rabbi for 43 years and is currently Rabbi Emeritus of Congregation Beth Emeth, Herndon, VA. He was ordained at the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS), and has degrees from Columbia University, JTS, and Hebrew Union College. He is principal at Glazer Consulting, which offers consulting services for seniors, their families, and caregivers. Rabbi Glazer currently serves on the Ethics

Committee of Inova Fairfax Hospital and the faculty of The Uniformed Services University School of Medicine. A member of Beth El, he has taught at The George Washington, George Mason, and Baltimore Hebrew Universities, the Smithsonian Institution, and our Adult Institute.



RABBI GREGORY HARRIS, Head Rabbi of Beth El, joined the Beth El community in 2002. He was ordained at the Jewish Theological Seminary, where he received a Master's Degree in Jewish Education. Rabbi Harris received his B.A. in Political Science from The American University. He is a Past President of the Washington Board of Rabbis and teaches throughout the community. Rabbi Harris has been a Schusterman Rabbinic PEER

Fellow and a Washington Partnership Fellow. He has taught in our Adult Institute since joining Beth El. Rabbi Harris was the 2015 recipient of the Matthew Simon Rabbinic Award given by the Jewish Federation for leadership in the broader Jewish community.



JEFFREY KAPLAN, a retired attorney, is Archivist of Philadelphia's oldest Jewish institution, Kahal Kadosh Mikveh Israel, the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue (founded in 1740). He writes and lectures on Sephardi and American Jewish history. In addition to teaching in our Adult Institute, he has taught and lectured at the Jewish Study Center, the Georgetown Synagogue, Washington Hebrew Congregation, and the National Museum of

American Jewish Military History.



HAZZAN MATTHEW KLEIN is the Cantor of Congregation Beth El. Hazzan Klein was invested at the Jewish Theological Seminary, where he also received a Master's Degree in Sacred Music and concentrated in Pastoral Care & Counseling. He received his B.A. in Music *summa cum laude* from the College of William & Mary in Virginia. He completed a term as the cantorial representative to the Committee on Jewish Law and

Standards and currently serves on the Cantors Assembly's Executive Council. Hazzan Klein has lectured at several area universities and at rabbinical and cantorial schools across the denominational spectrum. He has taught in our Adult Institute since joining Beth El in 2011.



RABBI EVAN KRAME, currently serving as an Adjunct Rabbi at Beth El, was ordained by the *ALEPH* rabbinic program in January, 2015. He has also completed training as a spiritual advisor through the *ALEPH Hashpa'ah* program, developing skills in spiritual direction and engaging adults and seniors. Rabbi Krame, a member of Beth El, has been a service leader and educator throughout the Maryland Jewish community and he

has taught in our Adult Institute. His first and continuing career is as an estates and trusts lawyer. He is a graduate of the National Law Center at The George Washington University and holds a Master's Degree in taxation.



RABBI AVIS MILLER is President of the *Open Dor* Foundation, Inc., which reaches out to unaffiliated and marginally active Jews. She is also Rabbi Emerita at Adas Israel Congregation, Washington, DC, where she had the longest pulpit tenure of any woman in the Conservative movement. Past president of the regional Rabbinical Assembly (RA), she has twice chaired the national RA Committee on Outreach and Conversion.

Rabbi Miller conducts High Holiday services at 6th and I Historic Synagogue in Washington, DC, and also teaches classes elsewhere in the area as well as in our Adult Institute. In July 2010, the *Forward* named Rabbi Miller on its initial list of the most influential women rabbis in the United States.



RABBI MINDY AVRA PORTNOY, currently serving as an Adjunct Rabbi at Beth El, has been a rabbi with Temple Sinai for 25 years and is now Rabbi Emerita. She previously was Director of the B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation at The American University, and an originator and former national co-coordinator of the Women's Rabbinic Network. Rabbi Portnoy, a graduate of Yale University, was ordained in June 1980 by the Hebrew Union

College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York City, where she also received an MA in Hebrew literature. She was among the pioneers for women in the rabbinate. Among her various publications are five children's books, including *Ima on the Bima: My Mommy is a Rabbi*. She has taught at The American University, in our

Adult Institute, in Beth El Sisterhood's *Rosh Chodesh* program, and at other local venues.



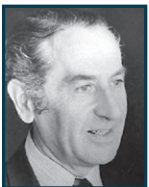
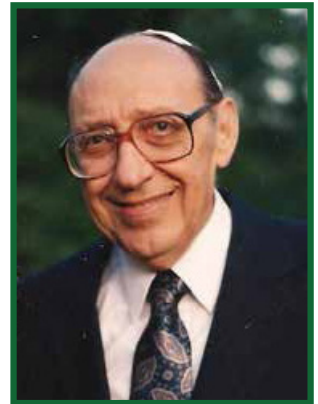
RABBI WILLIAM RUDOLPH is Rabbi Emeritus of Beth El since 2015, after 32 years of service. He has taught in the Adult Institute since 1983. In his semi-retirement, additional duties include rabbinic leadership for the Fauquier Jewish Congregation, a creative role in the community's new Ramah Day Camp, and serving as President of the Board of the new Jewish Millennial Engagement Project. Rabbi Rudolph received the Matthew Simon Rabbinic Leadership Award from the United Jewish Communities, an honorary Doctor of Divinity Degree from the Jewish Theological Seminary, and the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington's "Campaigner of the Year" award.



RABBI FABIÁN WERBIN joined Beth El as Associate Rabbi in the summer of 2015. He was born and raised in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He completed two undergraduate degrees, in Bible and in Jewish Thought, from Haifa University in Israel. He received his rabbinic ordination in 2003 from the Seminario Rabínico Latinoamericano in Buenos Aires. Most recently, he served for seven years as Rabbi of Beth Israel Synagogue in Roanoke,

Virginia, and he holds certification as an elementary and high school teacher. He has taught in our Adult Institute and is also teaching adult classes in Bible and Introductory Judaism at Beth El.

RABBI SAMUEL SCOLNIC (1923-2012) ז"ל served as Beth El's first full time Rabbi for 32 years, and as Rabbi Emeritus until his death in 2012. He founded the Saul Bendit Adult Institute and taught in the Institute from its inception in the Fall of 1977. The Institute is now known as the Rabbi Samuel Scolnic Adult Institute. Rabbi Scolnic held advanced degrees from the Jewish Theological Seminary. He was the founder and first President of the National Association of Retired Conservative Rabbis. He taught and lectured widely at area synagogues and at the Isaac Frank Jewish Public Library and other venues. Rabbi Scolnic received the Sheva R. and Marver R. Bernstein Master Teacher Award from the Foundation for Jewish Studies.



SAUL BENDIT (1913-1976) ז"ל was a resident of our Washington community for 37 years and an active participant in both Jewish and non-Jewish affairs. He had a deep love for Jewish culture and was very proud of his people and his faith. We are deeply indebted to his late wife Tanya and their family for underwriting the Adult Institute for many years after its inception.

THE RABBI SAMUEL SCOLNIC ADULT INSTITUTE COMMITTEE
FOUNDED IN 1977 IN MEMORY OF SAUL BENDIT

Jack Ventura, Chair
Al Fox, Chair Emeritus z"l

Stanley Baldinger	Rhoda Nichaman
David Florin	Irwin Pernick
Steven Frank	Mark Schiffrin
Sara Gordon	David Schultz
Marilyn Hammerman	Judy Scolnic
Rabbi Gregory Harris	Howard Stein
Mindy Hecker	Ginger Teitel
Miriam Israel	Stephanie Ventura
Larry Jarvik	Rabbi Fabián Werbin
Hazzan Matthew Klein	Lew Winarsky
Rita Kopin	

REGISTRATION AND OTHER INFORMATION

DATES FOR SPRING TERM: Classes will meet at Beth El on six Tuesday mornings, February 28, March 7, 14, 21, and 28, and April 4; and six Wednesday evenings, March 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29, and April 5. All classrooms are fully accessible by elevator.

REGISTRATION FORM: Please register online at: <http://www.bethelmc.org> or complete and return the form below with your remittance. **Online** registration is available for members and non-members.

REMITTANCE: If registering online, follow payment instructions. If registering by mail, please make check payable to BETH EL.

IMPORTANT: FOR EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT, PAYMENT FOR REGISTRATION MUST BE RECEIVED EITHER ONLINE OR BY MAIL, BY FEBRUARY 17.

Advance registration helps to ensure that:

- The course you want will have sufficient enrollment.
- Classrooms of adequate size will be assigned for your course.

PLEASE MAKE A NOTE of the courses for which you register; registration acknowledgments are not sent.

MINIMUM REGISTRATION REQUIREMENT: Ten students.

IF WEATHER IS SEVERE: Classes will not meet when Montgomery County Schools are closed because of inclement weather. Information on Rabbi Samuel Scolnic Adult Institute closing will be available on a taped message after 7 AM for Tuesday classes and after 5 PM for Wednesday classes; call 301-652-2606. As soon as the message starts, press "3" to retrieve closing information.

THE EVENING MINYAN WILL START AT 8:20 PM (rather than 8:00) on evenings when Institute classes are scheduled.

QUESTIONS? Call 301-652-2606, Ext. 349, or send an email to samuelscolnic@bethelmc.org.

THE RABBI SAMUEL SCOLNIC ADULT INSTITUTE
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COURSE FEE INFORMATION—

Early Bird registration – payment must be received by February 17, 2017:

Wednesday evening classes:

- Each 6-week, 50-minute course (or five 1-hour sessions)... \$35/member; \$40/nonmember

Tuesday morning classes:

- Each 6-week, 50-minute course.....\$30/member; \$35/nonmember

Regular registration – payment received on February 18 or later:

Wednesday evening classes:

- Each 6-week, 50-minute course (or five 1-hour sessions)...\$40/member; \$45/nonmember

Tuesday morning classes:

- Each 6-week, 50-minute course.....\$35/member; \$40/nonmember

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

REGISTER ONLINE OR COMPLETE THIS FORM — *PLEASE PRINT*

Registrant(s) home address:

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip + 4** _____ - _____

Home Phone _____

Please register me (us) for the following course(s)

1. Registrant's name _____ Beth El member? _____

Course(s) Tues, AM _____ \$ _____

Tues, AM _____ \$ _____

Wed, PM _____ \$ _____

Wed, PM _____ \$ _____

For urgent class information: E-mail _____

Phone: _____

2. Registrant's name _____ Beth El member? _____

Course(s) Tues, AM _____ \$ _____

Tues, AM _____ \$ _____

Wed, PM _____ \$ _____

Wed, PM _____ \$ _____

For urgent class information: E-mail _____

Phone: _____

Enclosed is a check, payable to BETH EL, for a total of: \$ _____

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8215 OLD GEORGETOWN ROAD
BETHESDA, MD 20814-1451

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REMINDER! Classes begin Tuesday and Wednesday, FEBRUARY 28 AND MARCH 1.

