



CONGREGATION BETH EL OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

THE RABBI SAMUEL SCOLNIC ADULT INSTITUTE

FOUNDED IN 1977 IN MEMORY OF SAUL BENDIT

Spring 2018

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

REGISTER ONLINE!
Register NOW for the Early Bird Discount.
Deadline: February 22

SIX TUESDAY MORNINGS
March 6, 13, and 20; April 3, 10, and 17

SIX WEDNESDAY EVENINGS
March 7, 14, and 21; April 4, 11, and 18

No classes March 27 and 28

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 beginning its 41st year, the Institute has received national and international recognition. The Spring program, running for six weeks, comprises 10 courses offered Wednesday evenings beginning March 7, and four classes offered Tuesday mornings, beginning March 6. 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

<p>The Jews of Argentina <i>Rabbi Fabián Werbin</i></p>	<p>Innovative Jewish Thinkers: Ze'ev Jabotinsky <i>Rabbi Greg Harris</i></p>
<p>Is the Love Affair with Israel Over for American Jews? <i>Rabbi Emeritus William D. Rudolph and Guest Speakers</i></p>	<p>Contemporary Approaches to Jewish Prayer <i>Hazzan Asa Fradkin</i></p>
<p>Celebrating Leonard Bernstein on his Centennial <i>Hazzan Emeritus Abraham Lubin</i></p>	<p>A Time to be Born, A Time to Die, and a Time to Love: The Biblical Books of Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs <i>Rabbi Mindy Portnoy</i></p>
<p>Jews and Slavery in the New World <i>Jeffrey Kaplan</i></p>	<p>Is Anti-Zionism Anti-Semitism? <i>Dr. Jerome Copulsky</i></p>
<p>From Egypt to Mount Sinai: Revisiting the Spring Pilgrimage Festivals <i>Rabbi Avis Miller</i></p>	<p>Jewish Resistance in the Holocaust <i>Martin Sieff</i></p>

TUESDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

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

10:00 - 10:50 AM

11:10 AM - NOON

<p>Celebrating Leonard Bernstein on his Centennial <i>Hazzan Emeritus Abraham Lubin</i></p>	<p>Jews and Slavery in the New World <i>Jeffrey Kaplan</i></p>
<p>From Egypt to Mount Sinai: Revisiting the Spring Pilgrimage Festivals <i>Rabbi Avis Miller</i></p>	<p>A Time to be Born, A Time to Die, and a Time to Love: The Biblical Books of Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs <i>Rabbi Mindy Portnoy</i></p>

CLASS DESCRIPTIONS

THE JEWS OF ARGENTINA

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

This class will study the Argentinian Jewish community. When did they arrive and why did they come? Are they Ashkenazi or Sephardic? Are the Jews of Argentina religiously Conservative, Orthodox, or Reform? Are they politically conservative, liberal, or Socialist? Are they pro-Israel? How does their overall approach to Judaism differ from that of American Jews? Have any Jewish Nobel prize winners been born and raised in Argentina? We shall also note some important events impacting the history of Jews in Argentina. What about the large influx of Germans (including many infamous Nazis) both pre-WWII and post-WWII under the Peron dictatorship? Why were Jews disproportionately victims of the forced "disappearance" among tens of thousands of Argentinians during 1976-1983? What events led to the AMIA bombing of the Buenos Aires Jewish Community Center in 1994 and to the murder in 2015 of Alberto Nisman who was investigating the AMIA bombing? What is the Iranian connection? Let's get to know about Jewish Argentina with Rabbi Werbin, born and raised in Argentina.



Central Synagogue of Buenos Aires,
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

IS THE LOVE AFFAIR WITH ISRAEL OVER FOR AMERICAN JEWS?

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



The early and strong support of American Jews, in political, financial, and psychological ways, was instrumental in the founding of the State of Israel and its growth and military strength. Many American Jews seem tired of automatically supporting Israel, even angry. The factors contributing to this may include political leadership, the settlements, and threats to religious pluralism. Will Israel be OK without as much support from American Jews?

Will we be OK with less attachment? This course, fitting with the synagogue theme for the year, aims to provide historical and philosophical answers to these important questions, with guest speakers addressing some of the specifics.

CELEBRATING LEONARD BERNSTEIN ON HIS CENTENNIAL

Instructor: **Hazzan Emeritus Abraham Lubin**, Tuesday morning and Wednesday evening



leonardbernstein.com

Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990) was the iconic American composer, conductor, pianist, educator, and humanitarian. He expressed his strong Jewish identity in many of his musical works and in his active support of the State of Israel. In celebration of his 100th birthday, the course will explore and illustrate his life and works with live videos and CD recordings, specifically as it relates to his pride as a Jew.

JEWIS AND SLAVERY IN THE NEW WORLD

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

Slavery was an established institution in the New World, including the United States, the West Indies and South America. This course will illuminate Jewish involvement with slavery, not only in this country, but in the Caribbean and South America as well. Jewish ownership and treatment of slaves, Jewish participation in the trans-Atlantic slave trade, and Jewish slave dealers all will be discussed. We will also learn about Jewish attitudes toward slavery, both in favor and against it, and the extent to which other factors influenced Jewish views on slavery. In discussing Jews and slavery, attention will be paid to the islands of the Caribbean and to Suriname (formerly Dutch Guiana). In Suriname, we will see Jews in a very different light from what we would expect.



Triangular slave trade, image by John Monnpoly, modified by SimonP, wikipedia.org

FROM EGYPT TO MOUNT SINAI: REVISITING THE SPRING PILGRIMAGE FESTIVALS

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



Beginning with Biblical and rabbinic texts, we will trace the origins and evolution of spring holidays and practices, including Passover, the *Omer*, and *Shavuot*. How and why have these traditions changed since Temple times, and what is their relevance for us today? Which of our observances such as conducting a *seder*, counting the *Omer*, and eating dairy on *Shavuot* serve as commemorations, and which are re-enactments? What Jewish values and enduring universal principles have come to be reflected in these holidays?

Moses Showing the Ten Commandments, 1865, Gustave Doré, artbible.info

INNOVATIVE JEWISH THINKERS: ZE'EV JABOTINSKY

Instructor: **Rabbi Greg Harris**, Wednesday evening

Returning to our survey of early Zionist thinkers, this course focuses on the life of Ze'ev Jabotinsky, a Russian Jew who served as a journalist, orator, activist, and soldier. Born in Odessa in 1880, he was aware of the pogroms and was a strong advocate of Jewish defense efforts in Europe and establishing a Jewish State in British Palestine. He became a leading figure in the Revisionist Zionism movement which believed in maximalist borders of Israel. He formed the Jewish Legion in WWI and fought for Jewish immigration, legal and illegal, into Palestine. Echoes of Jabotinsky's philosophy still resound in Israel today.



Ze'ev Jabotinsky, JNS.org

CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES TO JEWISH PRAYER

Instructor: **Hazzan Asa Fradkin**, Wednesday evening



Courtesy of the Jewish Yoga Network

The Jewish prayer landscape is changing and developing at an astonishing pace, with spiritual renewal at the center. Contemporary Jewish prayer may seek this renewal through many practices, including meditation, mindfulness, Buddhist and Hindu practices, Jewish rock services and communal outreach. We've gone from formal services, to a tapestry of offerings that cover a broad spectrum of spiritual experiences aimed at reenergizing our prayers. Come see what's happening and driving these new forms of prayerful expression.

A TIME TO BE BORN, A TIME TO DIE, AND A TIME TO LOVE: THE BIBLICAL BOOKS OF ECCLESIASTES AND SONG OF SONGS

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

Two of the most relevant and challenging books of the Hebrew Bible (in the third section, "Ketuvim" or "Writings") are the books of *Kohelet* (*Ecclesiastes*) and *Shir ha-Shirim* (*Song of Songs*). Both are associated with pilgrimage festivals, and both were traditionally ascribed to the authorship of King Solomon. *Song of Songs*, due to its secular, erotic nature, needed to be allegorized by the rabbis to gain access to the Biblical canon. *Ecclesiastes* also troubled traditional believers, with the author's skeptical approach to life and his apparent melancholy ("vanity of vanities, all is vanity"). Both became part of the canon, aided by their alleged Solomonic authorship. We will study the substance of the texts, traditional *Midrashim*, and contemporary commentaries. We will also discuss the books' meaning and relevance for our own lives today.



Song of Solomon by Slavujac, biblicalartist.net

IS ANTI-ZIONISM ANTI-SEMITISM?

Instructor: **Dr. Jerome Copulsky**, Wednesday evening

In this course, we will shed some light on and disentangle the issues involved in this debate. We will begin by discussing the term “anti-Semitism,” its invention in the late 19th century to denote a specific kind of opposition to Jewry, and its expansion to cover all forms of Jew-hatred. We will then examine how Zionism emerged around the same time as a response to the rise of nationalist politics and the associated anti-Jewish sentiment and activities. We also will discuss the various forms of anti-Zionism that emerged and the ideologies that informed and shaped them and began to achieve some success.



Graphic by Nikki Casey, *The Forward*

JEWISH RESISTANCE IN THE HOLOCAUST

Instructor: **Martin Sieff**, Wednesday evening



This course will cover a wide range of topics on how Jews resisted during the Holocaust. These will include the Warsaw Ghetto revolt (distinguishing fact from fiction); Treblinka – “Defiance in Hell”; Belorussia – modern Belarus – the greatest resistance; why there was so little armed Jewish resistance in some locations, and why and where resistance was disproportionately high; the most numerous warriors - the 700,000 Jews in the Red Army; and the Jewish role in the liberation of Auschwitz.

Photograph of Jewish resistance women, 1943, included in the *Stroop Report of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising*, Wikimedia Commons

EARLY ALERT FOR FALL 2018

Fall semester dates are Tuesday/Wednesday, October 9/10 through November 13/14.

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



DR. JEROME COPULSKY is a former Special Advisor at the Office of Religion and Global Affairs at the U.S. Department of State. His essays, stories, and reviews have appeared in such places as *The New York Times*, *The New Republic*, *Religion Dispatches*, *Tablet*, and *The Jewish Review of Books*. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago's Divinity School. Dr. Copulsky has taught in our Adult Institute.



HAZZAN ASA FRADKIN joined Beth El in July 2017. He was ordained by the H.L. Miller Cantorial School of JTS in May 2007, where he earned the degrees of Hazzan and Masters in Sacred Music. At the Miller School, he was class president and founder and Chair of the School's *Tzedakah* Concert Committee. He holds an undergraduate degree in Vocal Studies from Indiana University's School of Music. At IU, he became actively involved in Hillel and also graduated with a Certificate in Jewish Studies. He previously served as Hazzan at Temple Shalom in Greenwich, CT. Hazzan Fradkin has taught in our Adult Institute.



RABBI GREGORY HARRIS, Head Rabbi of Beth El, joined the Beth El community in 2002. He was ordained at JTS, where he also 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 is the Chair of the Pastoral Care Committee at the Charles E. Smith Jewish Life Communities and a past recipient of the Matthew Simon Rabbinic Award given by the Jewish Federation for leadership in the broader Jewish community. He has taught in our Adult Institute since joining Beth El.



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 ABRAHAM LUBIN, the Hazzan Emeritus of Beth El, continues to be active in the wider Jewish community. He has officiated at High Holiday and other services for the past several years in Cincinnati, Annapolis, and Washington, DC. He is Secretary of the Cantors Assembly Foundation and a past president of the Cantors Assembly. Hazzan Lubin was awarded an honorary Doctor of Music degree by JTS, and will be presented the International Cantors

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Assembly's "Hazzanic Excellence Award" at their Spring 2018 Convention in Florida. He holds a "hazzan" degree from Jews' College, London, and a Master of Music degree from DePaul University. He lectures on Jewish music, and has performed in the U.S., Canada, Israel, Spain, Argentina, and the former Soviet Union. Hazzan Lubin served as editor of *The Journal of Synagogue Music* for ten years. He has taught in our Adult Institute for many years.



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 JTS, and the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington's "Campaigner of the Year" award.

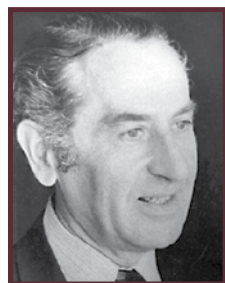


MARTIN SIEFF is the Washington correspondent of the *Jerusalem Report* magazine and Professor of Transnational Threats at BAU University in Washington. He is also a Senior Fellow at The American University in Moscow. He is the author of several books including *The Politically Incorrect Guide to the Middle East* (2008) and *Cycles of Change: The Patterns of U.S. Politics from Thomas Jefferson to Barack Obama* (2015). Mr. Sieff is a former Managing Editor, International Affairs for United Press International. He has received three Pulitzer Prize nominations for International Reporting and is a member of Beth El. He has bachelor's and master's degrees in modern history from Oxford University, and has taught in our Adult Institute.



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) z"l 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) z"l 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
Hazzan Asa Fradkin	Donna Saady
Steven Frank	Mark Schiffrin
Judy Gann	David Schultz
Sara Gordon	Judy Scolnic
Marilyn Hammerman	Ginger Teitel
Rabbi Gregory Harris	Stephanie Ventura
Miriam Israel	Rabbi Fabián Werbin
Marcia Jeffries	Lew Winarsky
Rita Kopin	

REGISTRATION AND OTHER INFORMATION

DATES FOR SPRING TERM: Classes will meet at Beth El on six Tuesday mornings, March 6, 13, and 20, and April 3, 10, and 17; and six Wednesday evenings, March 7, 14, and 21, and April 4, 11, and 18. There are no classes on March 27 and 28. 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 BY FEBRUARY 22 EITHER ONLINE, BY MAIL, OR HAND-CARRIED TO THE BETH EL OFFICE.

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 scolnicinstitute@bethelmc.org.

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COURSE FEE INFORMATION—

Early Bird registration – payment must be received by February 22, 2018:

Wednesday evening classes:

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

Tuesday morning classes:

- Each 6-week, 50-minute course..... \$35/member; \$45/nonmember

Regular registration – payment received on February 23 or later:

Wednesday evening classes:

- Each 6-week, 50-minute course\$45/member; \$55/nonmember

Tuesday morning classes:

- Each 6-week, 50-minute course..... \$40/member; \$50/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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REMINDER! Classes begin Tuesday and Wednesday, MARCH 6 AND 7.

