

Congregation Beth El of Montgomery County

THE RABBI SAMUEL SCOLNIC ADULT INSTITUTE

FOUNDED IN 1977 IN MEMORY OF SAUL BENDIT

Spring 2020

"Fix a period for the study of *Torah*"
Pirkei Avot 1: 15

REGISTER ONLINE!
Register NOW for the Early Bird Discount.
Deadline: March 5

SIX TUESDAY MORNINGS
March 17, 24, and 31; April 21 and 28; May 5

SIX WEDNESDAY EVENINGS
March 18 and 25; April 1, 22, and 29; May 6

No classes April 7-8 and 14-15

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 42nd year, the Institute has received national and international recognition. The Spring program, running for six weeks, comprises 10 courses offered Wednesday evenings beginning March 18, and four classes offered Tuesday mornings, beginning March 17. 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
Experiencing *Talmud* for the First Time *Rabbi Fabián Werbin*	**Innovative Jewish Thinkers: Henrietta Szold** *Rabbi Greg Harris*
The Dynamics and Diversity of Jewish Music *Hazzan Abraham Lubin*	**George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda*: Philo-Semitism and Proto-Zionism in 19th Century England** *Adjunct Rabbi Mindy Avra Portnoy*
Jewish Bioethical Approaches to Contemporary Challenges: Addiction and Global Health/Human Rights *Dr. Toby Schonfeld*	**Grief as Righteous Anger in *Lamentations*** *Bex Stern Rosenblatt*
From Sepharad to Jamaica: The Unlikely Story of the Jews of the Caribbean *Dr. Naomi Daremblum*	**Jewish Resistance in the Holocaust** *Eric Gartman*
Jewish Approaches to Illness and Healing *Rabbi Evan Krame*	**What is Modern Judaism and the Jewish Cultural Identity?** *Dr. Jerome Copulsky*

Tuesday Morning Schedule

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

10:00 - 10:50 AM	11:10 AM - NOON
Grief as Righteous Anger in *Lamentations* *Bex Stern Rosenblatt*	**From Sepharad to Jamaica: The Unlikely Story of the Jews of the Caribbean** *Dr. Naomi Daremblum*
What is Modern Judaism and the Jewish Cultural Identity? *Dr. Jerome Copulsky*	**George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda*: Philo-Semitism and Proto-Zionism in 19th Century England** *Adjunct Rabbi Mindy Avra Portnoy*

Class Descriptions

Experiencing *Talmud* for the First Time

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

The *Talmud* is probably the most fascinating text produced by the Jewish people. It includes many amazing stories and lessons in its 2,711 pages. The *Talmud* covers all the topics you could imagine, given the time it was written: animals, houses, diseases, idolatry, relationships, war, drinks, and many more. The *Talmud* includes amazing stories and lessons. Discover topics that you never imagined from a Jewish perspective. We will dive into this engaging world by learning the basics of the *Talmud* and reading selected sections.



Page from Tractate *Zevahim* of the Bomberg Talmud. Courtesy of PBA Galleries

The Dynamics and Diversity of Jewish Music

Instructor: **Hazzan Abraham Lubin**, Wednesday evening



Jews have lived in every corner of the world. From Spain to Morocco, from Eastern to Western Europe, Italy, Yemen, and Ethiopia, Jews have developed distinct folk and liturgical musical traditions. These traditions have been influenced by acculturation and local musical traditions. Colorful examples will be illustrated with live and CD performances.

Jewish Bioethical Approaches to Contemporary Challenges: Addiction and Global Health/Human Rights

Instructor: **Dr. Toby Schonfeld**, Wednesday evening

In this course, we will explore two contemporary issues in health care from the perspective of Jewish bioethics. First, we will examine issues of addiction, particularly focusing on dependence on tobacco/vaping, opioids, and food. Then, we will apply the lens of Jewish bioethics to focus on issues in global health and human rights, including the Coronavirus and immigration, to round out our discourse.



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FROM SEPHARAD TO JAMAICA: THE UNLIKELY STORY OF THE JEWS OF THE CARIBBEAN

Instructor: **Dr. Naomi Daremblum**, Tuesday morning and Wednesday evening



Mikvé Israel-Emanuel Synagogue Curaçao, the oldest synagogue in the Caribbean, Wikimedia Commons

This course tells the story of the Jewish communities of the Caribbean, one that predates the better-known arrival of Jews to the Americas in the 19th century. This extraordinary history began as far back as the 16th century, after the tragedy of the Expulsion from Spain. The Jews from Sepharad were able to make a spectacular success of their exile and dispersal across the Ottoman Empire and some outposts in Europe. This was an advantage that allowed them to be crucial participants in the age of discovery and settling of the Caribbean, showing us a very different path to Jewish emancipation.

NOTE: This class will not meet Tuesday morning, March 17. The class will meet for an extra 10 minutes (11:10 AM—12:10 PM, Tuesday, each week beginning March 24. This schedule change does not affect Wednesday evening classes. Registrants may attend another class of their choosing on March 17.

JEWISH APPROACHES TO ILLNESS AND HEALING

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



Physical illness and healing are core spiritual concerns – and are a unique way to focus individuals, families and communities on life's Big Questions. Our course will explore Jewish approaches to illness and healing, using *Tanakh*, *Talmud*, Codes, *Hasidut*, liturgy and modern sources. We will mine tradition's depths to ask (and perhaps even answer): How does Judaism respond to illness? What tools can we offer amidst illness and healing (or not-healing)? What do the spiritual and psycho-emotional dynamics of illness and healing ask of us in our own journeys of faith and spiritual practice? What might these dynamics suggest about the soul and the flow of Jewish tradition?

INNOVATIVE JEWISH THINKERS: HENRIETTA SZOLD

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



Wikimedia Commons

Henrietta Szold is most well known as the founder of the women's organization Hadassah in 1912. Szold's achievements included scholarship with JTS rabbi and academic Louis Ginzberg, founding the *Ihud* political party in Mandate Palestine which was dedicated to a binational solution, and saving 30,000 children from the *Shoah* through *Youth Aliyah*. We will look at her life, which has been mythologized and celebrated, and discuss her impact on Zionism.

GEORGE ELIOT'S *DANIEL DERONDA*: PHILO-SEMITISM AND PROTO-ZIONISM IN 19TH CENTURY ENGLAND

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

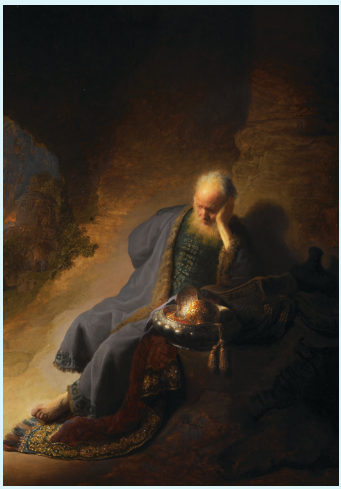


Romola Garai and Hugh Bonneville as Gwendolen and Mr. Grandcourt in the BBC adaptation of *Daniel Deronda*, courtesy of the BBC

This course, set in a historical context, will focus on George Eliot's (Mary Anne Evans) last book, *Daniel Deronda*. A writer who defied conventional Victorian images of women, Eliot, a non-Jew, also provided a unique perspective on Jewish life at the time, including the stirrings of proto-Zionism in England. This novel, while remarkably prescient, is also primarily a brilliant tale of moral choices and romantic tragedy and triumph. Our studies will be particularly timely in light of recent anti- Semitic incidents. Our main secondary sources will be two works by the late intellectual and cultural historian, Gertrude Himmelfarb (*The Jewish Odyssey of George Eliot* and *The People of the Book: Philosemitism in England from Cromwell to Churchill);* biographer Jennifer Uglow's *George Eliot;* and the 2002 BBC video, *Daniel Deronda.* No outside reading is required; excerpts will be discussed in class. *NOTE: This class will not meet Tuesday and Wednesday, May 5 and 6. The class will meet for an extra 10 minutes (11:10 AM-12:10 PM, Tuesday, and 8:40 PM-9:40 PM, Wednesday, each week beginning March 17-18. Registrants may attend another class of their choosing on May 5-6.*

GRIEF AS RIGHTEOUS ANGER IN *LAMENTATIONS*

Instructor: **Bex Stern Rosenblatt**, Tuesday morning and Wednesday evening



Jeremiah Lamenting the Destruction of Jerusalem, Rembrandt, 1630 (oil on oak panel), courtesy of the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam

How do we respond to the unimaginable? In this course, we will do a close reading of the *Book of Lamentations*, written in the wake of the total destruction of Jerusalem. Confronting truly horrifying texts, we will explore how we process trauma and what God's role is in the creation of trauma. We will examine the multiplicity of voices in the text responding to the destruction, from personified Lady Jerusalem's shock and disbelief to a dispassionate observer taking note of what has happened. Our reading will expose questions of how blame works and what happens when anger has no outlet.

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JEWISH RESISTANCE IN THE HOLOCAUST

Instructor: **Eric Gartman**, Wednesday evening



Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, Wikimedia Commons

Are the postwar charges of Jewish passivity during the Holocaust factually correct? The topic of Jewish resistance during the Holocaust has been misunderstood for many years. Only in recent decades have scholars begun to truly understand the extent and limits of Jewish revolts. We will examine the major episodes of armed Jewish resistance against the Nazis, including the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, the Treblinka and Sobibor revolts, and the Bielski Brothers. We also will look at why these particular actions occurred and if there could have been more armed uprisings. Our focus throughout will be to explain the situation from the perspective of the people involved and the options and possibilities open to them at the time, rather than from hindsight.

WHAT IS MODERN JUDAISM AND THE JEWISH CULTURAL IDENTITY?

Instructor: **Dr. Jerome Copulsky**, Tuesday morning and Wednesday evening



Felix Mendelssohn, Theodor Herzl, Rebbe Chaim Shaul Taub.
Encyclopedia Britannica and Wikimedia Commons

The modern world has created new possibilities for Jews. Modernity also poses profound challenges to the religion and to Jewish culture, creating a space for new forms of "Jewishness." What is the relationship between religious Judaism and secular Judaism? Through an analysis of various forms of literature and media, including autobiography, theological and philosophical writings, political treatises, fiction, and film, the course will explore the ways in which modern Judaism, Jewish identity and commitment are expressed with a focus on the connection between the religious and the secular.

EARLY ALERT FOR FALL 2020

Fall 2020 semester dates are Tuesday/Wednesday, October 13-14 through November 17-18.

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.

ACCESSIBLE CONGREGATIONS CAMPAIGN



DR. JEROME COPULSKY is a Jefferson Fellow at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History. 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.



DR. NAOMI DAREMBLUM, originally from Costa Rica, is a specialist in Latin American culture, art, and politics. After completing her Ph.D., she held teaching appointments at New York University and the New School. She has taught and written on a wide range of subjects, from the rise of Hugo Chavez in Venezuela to the literature of Isabel Allende. Her pieces have been published in magazines such as *The New Republic* and *Letras Libres*, one of the premier literary journals for Latin America. She is currently teaching courses on Latin American culture and politics at Montgomery College's Life Learning Institute.



ERIC GARTMAN is the author of Return to Zion: The History of Modern Israel (Jewish Publication Society, 2015). He has been 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. The grandson of a Holocaust survivor, he has lived and studied in Israel and traveled extensively throughout the Middle East, and he has taught in our Adult Institute.



RABBI GREG 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.

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RABBI EVAN KRAME 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 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.



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. 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, and has taught in our Adult Institute for many years. Hazzan Lubin served as editor of *The Journal of Synagogue Music* for ten years.



RABBI MINDY AVRA PORTNOY, currently serving as an Adjunct Rabbi at Beth El, was 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 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 American University, our Adult Institute, the Beth El Sisterhood's *Rosh Chodesh* program, and at other local venues.



BEX STERN ROSENBLATT is a faculty member at The Conservative Yeshiva in Jerusalem, where she teaches *Tanakh*. This year, she is serving as Mid-Atlantic Faculty-in-Residence for The Conservative Yeshiva, bringing *Beit Midrash* learning to universities, synagogues, and institutions on the East Coast. Her writing on Biblical narrative and on Biblical poetry can be found in *Mosaic* Magazine. Bex is also a graduate student at Bar Ilan University, specializing in Biblical narrative. She holds a BA from Williams College in History and German and is the recipient of a Fulbright Grant to Austria.



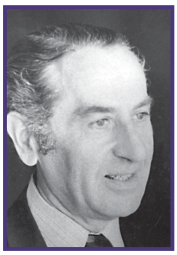
DR. TOBY SCHONFELD is a bioethicist with special expertise in research ethics, ethics education, clinical ethics, and the ethics of women's health care. She is currently the Director of Prime Review Board, an organization which promotes human subjects research by enhancing ethical and regulatory oversight, and in this role is responsible for the oversight, maintenance, and improvement of Prime's Human Research Protection Program. Dr. Schonfeld has worked in ethics at both the US Department of Veterans Affairs and the US Environmental Protection Agency. She is a former faculty member of both Emory University and the University of Nebraska Medical Center. She is also one of the five lay members on the Rabbinical Assembly's Committee on Jewish Law and Standards, which sets *halakhic* policy for Rabbinical Assembly rabbis and for the Conservative movement as a whole.



RABBI FABIÁN WERBIN joined Beth El as Associate Rabbi in the summer of 2015. Born and raised in Buenos Aires, Argentina, he completed two undergraduate degrees, in Bible and in Jewish Thought, at Haifa University in Israel and received his rabbinic ordination in 2003 from the Seminario Rabínico Latinoamericano in Buenos Aires. He also holds certification as elementary and high school teacher. Most recently, Rabbi Werbin served for seven years as Rabbi of Beth Israel Synagogue in Roanoke, Virginia. At Beth El, he teaches adult classes in Bible and Introductory Judaism and has taught in our Adult Institute.

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

Ken Feigenbaum
David Florin
Hazzan Asa Fradkin
Steven Frank
Judy Gann
Hilda Getz
Linda Goldsmith
Naomi Greenwood
Marilyn Hammerman
Rabbi Gregory Harris
Miriam Israel
Marcia Jeffries
Marci Kanstoroom (Acting Chair)
Rita Kopin
Rhoda Nichaman
Nancy Rosenthal
Mark Schifrin
David Schultz
Judy Scolnic
Mark Sobel
Maury Sterns
Ginger Teitel
Jack Ventura
Stephanie Ventura
Deborah Wassertzug
Rabbi Fabián Werbin

REGISTRATION AND OTHER INFORMATION

DATES FOR SPRING TERM: Classes will meet at Beth El on six Tuesday mornings, March 17, 24, and 31; April 21 and 28; and May 5; and six Wednesday evenings, March 18 and 25; April 1, 22, and 29; and May 6. No classes April 7-8 and 14-15. All classrooms are fully accessible by elevator.

REGISTRATION FORM: Please register online at: http://www.bethelmc.org/scolnic or complete and return the form on the next page and return it with your remittance to Congregaton Beth El, Attn: Scolnic Institute, 8215 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda, MD 20814. **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 MARCH 5 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 7:00 AM for Tuesday classes and after 5:00 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.

The Rabbi Samuel Scolnic Adult Institute

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COURSE FEE INFORMATION—

Early Bird registration – payment must be received by March 5, 2020:

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 March 6 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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Bethesda, MD 20814-1451

Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
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Suburban, MD
Permit No. 7007

REMINDER! Classes begin Tuesday and Wednesday, MARCH 17 AND 18.

