

KESHER KI RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

July 2011

Dear Parents,

5771-5772 promises to be an exciting year for all of us at **KESHER KI**.

A new school year at **KESHER KI Religious School** will start in September filled with dynamic and creative programs, engaging texts and imaginative learning. We welcome our students and their families to our **Kehilath Israel Synagogue** community.

Our goal is to provide the best quality Jewish education for your children in a stimulating and nurturing environment. We desire to build an environment for each child that creates a desire to learn and understand, as well as to practice the rituals of Judaism. We are guided in this task by the following tenets and principles of Traditional Judaism.

TIKUN OLAM - MENDING THE WORLD

TZEDEK TZEDEK TIRDOFF - SEEK THE SAME JUSTICE FOR OTHERS AS YOU DEMAND FOR YOURSELF

TORAH L'SHMA - THE STUDY OF TORAH FOR ITS OWN SAKE

KOL YISRAEL AREVIM ZEH LA'ZEH - WE ARE EACH RESPONSIBLE FOR ONE ANOTHER

To succeed we need your help. I want to take this opportunity to encourage all parents to be as active and supportive as possible in your children's activities at **KESHER KI Religious School** and the offerings of **Kehilath Israel Synagogue**. By doing so the more meaningful you and your children's experience can be. Here are just a few ways in which you can get more involved at the **KESHER KI Religious School**:

Join and support our Parent's Association

Encourage your child to attend our weekly Youth Shabbat Services

Attend Shabbat, Holiday and Sunday family education programs

I look forward to working closely with you and your family. Please feel free to speak with me throughout the school year with any thoughts, suggestions or concerns you may have.

A Happy and Sweet New Year to all.

Shana Tova U'mtoka!

Bob Gast

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MISSION STATEMENT

We at **KESHER KI Religious School** endeavor to nurture the child in the context of the Jewish family and the community. We appeal both to the child's intellect as well as the child's heart. Our goal is to light the fires of life-long curiosity and love of learning in all our students. We encourage children and families to participate in all aspects of religious ritual and celebration.

Educational Objectives

Ability to read Hebrew print and script

Acquisition of a basic Hebrew vocabulary which reflects important concepts in Prayer, Shabbat, Holidays and Holy Days and represents Hebrew as a living and vital language

Ability to use the Prayer Book at a variety of services

Basic knowledge of the structure and meaning of services

Mastery of selected songs and prayers

Understanding of the observance of Shabbat, Holidays and the Holy Days and their meanings

Ability to identify Jewish home symbols and understand their functions and origins

Understanding of the observance of Mitzvot, including Kashrut and Life Cycle events

Development of positive ethnic and religious identification

Commitment to "Kol Yisrael Aravim Zeh La'zeh": All Jews are responsible for one another

Knowledge of the Biblical texts

Ability to identify the historical context of Biblical texts and analyze the historical and spiritual role of the main characters

Understanding of moral lessons stressed in the Biblical Midrashim (legends)

Ability to identify various laws with their correct moral behaviors

Understanding of the application of Rabbinic Law in Traditional Jewish practices

Knowledge of Jewish history and the challenges faced throughout the ages

Upon completion of KESHER KI Religious School we desire that our students believe

In G-d, in a way that is meaningful and marvelous

In the Bible as a source of wisdom and guidance for living

In themselves as proud Jews

In Prayer as a source of personal comfort and community connection

In Mitzvot as an ethical and rational way of life

In the centrality of the State of Israel

In Shabbat as a positive personal and family institution

In the value of Tzedakah

In the Holidays as a way to identify and connect to the past, present and future

In the Home and the Family as a primary focus of Jewish expression

In our tradition as an expression of Jewish identity

KESHER KI RELIGIOUS SCHOOL ALEPH ALL-STARS and SHABBAT CLUB

KINDERGARTEN, FIRST and SECOND GRADES

Gan (Kindergarten)-SUNDAY

Over the course of the year, *Gan* students will learn three different subjects: Synagogue, *Mitzvot*, *Shabbat* and Holidays. Intertwined with each unit the class will learn songs, dances, and Hebrew vocabulary related to each subject. *Gan* will begin their Sunday mornings with *Modeh Ani* and *Shema* (our morning prayers). Students will sing the *Alef Bet* song as an introduction to the Hebrew language. During the year, *Gan* will also begin to identify certain key Hebrew letters and learn how to identify objects in the classroom and colors in Hebrew.

KITAH ALEF (1st Grade)-SUNDAY

Alef students begin to explore issues about G-d and how we as Jews have a belief in one G-d. They will discuss G-d's creations, how we as Jews thank G-d, and how we communicate with G-d each day through our prayers. *Alef* will begin their Sunday mornings with *Modeh Ani* and *Shema* (our morning prayers). Throughout the school year, *Alef* students will learn key letters in the Hebrew Alphabet and extend their emerging vocabulary, including learning to count in Hebrew.

KITAH BET (2nd grade)-SUNDAY

Just as it is written in Genesis, "In the beginning," so too is this a new beginning for *Kitah Bet* students. At the moment *Bet* students enter their classroom, they will feel as if they have entered the land of Israel. Over the course of the year, they will have the chance to meet the people that live in Israel and travel to different cities all over the land. Each child will shop for clothing at the *shuk* (market), learn Israeli dances, celebrate *Yom Ha'atzmaut* and eat *falafel* on the local streets. They will also be taught how to read the language of the people through street signs, food, and clothing. Of course, as we also celebrate the holidays, they will be celebrated Israeli style! In conjunction with their studies on Israel, 2nd grade students will begin their study of Hebrew reading and writing (print) skills. The children are introduced to the Friday evening *Shabbat* service and learn prayers such as *Shema* and *Ve'ahvta* and *Shalom Aleichem*.

KESHER KI RELIGIOUS SCHOOL and JUNIOR CONGREGATION

THIRD, FOURTH, FIFTH, SIXTH and SEVENTH GRADES

KITAH GIMEL (3rd Grade)-SUNDAY and TUESDAY

Just as it is written in Genesis, "In the beginning," so too is this a new beginning for *Kitah Gimel* students. In *Kitah Gimel*, students begin attending KESHER KI Religious School on Tuesday afternoon in addition to their studies on Sunday mornings. *Kitah Gimel* children continue the Hebrew reading and writing skills they have learned in *Kitah Bet*. Over the course of the year, the students will learn how to read and write in Hebrew and participate in weekday *tefillot* (prayers). Students will also be taught prayers from the Friday evening service including *Kiddush*, *L'cha Dodi* and *Shalom Aleichem*. In conjunction with their Hebrew studies, students will explore the Book of Genesis and Exodus. As each chapter in Genesis and Exodus is taught, students will be introduced to a variety of Biblical characters and the lessons they have taught us. These lessons will help to link students to the history of the Jewish people. During the course of the year, students will learn of legends and tales that Rabbis wrote after the Bible to help explain stories from the Bible.

KITAH DALET (4th Grade)- SUNDAY and TUESDAY

Students will continue to progress in their Hebrew reading and writing throughout the year. *Kitah Dalet* will be introduced to Hebrew script writing. A variety of prayers will also be learned during the year which will reinforce the students Hebrew reading skills. Students will continue to learn such prayers as *Ashrei*, *Barchu* and *Hatikvah*. In addition to Hebrew and Prayers, students will study the Books of Leviticus, Numbers, Prophets and Kings which helped to shape our Jewish history.

Holidays such as *Sukkot*, *Pesach* and *Shavuot* will be taught in conjunction with their Bible studies. The students will also research the geography of Israel and how it relates to our Biblical history. Students will study the history of such cities as Jerusalem, Tzfat, Haifa, Tiberias and Beer Sheva.

Our *Dalet* students also learn about the mitzvah of *tzedekah*. At the conclusion of this unit, parents and children will join together for a family program and explore various charities together.

KITAH HEY (5th Grade)- SUNDAY and TUESDAY

Imagine a class where students are taught about ethical behavior and the way we, as Jews, are taught to live. Over the course of their *Hey* year, students will study the Rabbinic time period (500 B.C.E. to 500 C.E.) and what laws were written for the Jews and why. They will look at *Pirkei Avot* (*Ethics of our Fathers*) and the lessons *Pirkei Avot* taught us. What was happening during the time period when Rabbi Hillel, who lived over 2,000 years ago, told us, "If I am not for myself, who will be?" Also during this time period two very significant holidays were established, *Hanukkah* and *Purim* -- both the Maccabees (*Chanukah*) and Esther (*Purim*) lived during this era. During *Rosh Chodesh* (the Jewish new month) students will learn about the new month. In addition to their studies of ethics and history, students will continue to build upon their Hebrew and *Tefillot* skills from previous years. Students will continue to practice their Hebrew reading and script writing. They will also continue to learn prayers such as the second part of the *Shema*, parts of the *Ma'ariv* service, and *B'rachot* in the *Amidah*.

KITAH VAV (6th Grade)-SUNDAY and TUESDAY

Kitah Vav students will be given a taste of our Jewish roots during different time periods in this grade including, the book of Deuteronomy. This experience will give them the opportunity to begin to think as a Jewish adult and feel a deep connection to our history as a people.

Throughout the school year, students will explore the American Jewish Immigration experience. The year will begin with a look at the beginnings of European Jewry and the development of the *Ashkenazic* and the *Sephardic* cultures. The students will have the opportunity to learn about this time period through the use of maps, the internet and other media. Our year will continue with the Jewish American Immigration experience. Students will explore the history of the Jews and where they settled in America. They will learn about the past three centuries and how the experiences of the Jews have shaped America today.

KITAH ZAYIN (7th Grade)-SUNDAY and TUESDAY

As 7th grade students become a *B'nai Mitzvah* and a part of the community, they will study *Torah* and *Mitzvot* as part of their Judaic studies. The school year will begin with discussions about various *Mitzvot* and how we, as Jews, are commanded to help others. The year will continue with the study of *Torah* and interpretations of Biblical stories. In addition to their Judaic studies, 7th grade students will learn about various points in Jewish History. They will learn about the history of the Jews during the Holocaust and how this time period shaped our lives, as Jewish people. During the next semester, students will connect the Holocaust and the establishment of the State of Israel. They will learn about our ancestral homeland and how it affects our lives as Jewish people. As part of the 7th grade curriculum, *Zayin* students participate in *Mitzvah* projects with their families throughout the school year. This is part of their ongoing commitment to Judaism and becoming a part of the adult Jewish community.

ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS, SHABBAT CLUB and JUNIOR CONGREGATION

The **KESHER KI Religious School** formal classroom setting is complemented by a variety of Enrichment Programs that are a key part of **KESHER KI Religious School** for each enrolled child. Students and families enrolled in the **KESHER KI Religious School** are required to participate in our Enrichment Programs over the course of the year. Enrichment Programs are organized into the following three categories:

- **Classroom-based Learning**. Electives vary by grade. Topics include Israeli Dancing, *Kashrut* and Cooking, Jewish History Book Club, Conversational Hebrew, Nature and Judaism, All about Israel, and Jewish Sports Heroes.
- **Synagogue-wide Programs**. These programs are designed to engage the whole family in the **Kehilath Israel Synagogue** experience. Friday night services and dinners, *Shabbat* morning services and luncheons, Holy Days, Holidays, *Chanukah*, *Purim*, *Simchat Torah*, *Yom Ha'atzmaut* celebrations are just a few examples of the lively opportunities **Kehilath Israel Synagogue** offers to children and families in our congregation.
- **Family Activities**. We encourage the **KESHER KI Religious School** community to expand their Jewish educational experiences beyond the school and the synagogue. Performing *Mitzvot* as a family, conducting Jewish rituals as a family at home, and being a part of Jewish community activities are highlights of family togetherness. Details on the **KESHER KI Religious School Enrichment Programs** will be available throughout the school year.