



## Federation Midreshet Fall 2021 Session

*Classes begin on Wednesday 10/6 and Thursday 10/7. Vaccination required to attend in person*

### **Wednesdays, 9:30-10:45**

#### **F1. Israel: It's Never a Dull Moment**

Each day Israel is front and center in the news. This course will deal with contemporary issues in Israeli society: Learn about the Israeli political system: Who are the new players in the coalition? Explore the issue of BDS and Ben and Jerry's, Discuss Israel's response to the pandemic, Examine the question of "Is there a chance for a peace agreement with the Palestinians?" and delve into other topics as they arise. Guest speakers will enhance our learning.

**12 sessions in person or online (hybrid- please specify preference when registering)**

**Cost: \$210**

**Instructor: Leslie Goldress**

### **Wednesdays, 11:00-12:15**

#### **F2. While the (Second) Temple Stood: Jews and Judaism from 516 BCE – 70 CE**

Although not well documented in comparison with later periods of Jewish history, the Second Temple period is known to us through a number of sources—anonymous works as well as writings by known authors, such as the Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria and the historian Flavius Josephus; the collection of texts discovered in the caves of the Judean Desert, known as the Dead Sea Scrolls and others.

We will look at the historical evidence to reconstruct a picture of how Jewish culture emerged out of life under the Persians, Greeks and Romans and, much like contemporary Jews, made an ancient religion meaningful in an ever-changing world.

**10 sessions in person or online (hybrid- please specify preference when registering)**

**Cost: \$180**

**Instructor: Sharon Halper**

### **Wednesdays, 6:00-7:00 PM**

#### **F3. Being my best self**

In life's journey, it is crucial to refine our character and be our best selves. But where to start? Judaism provides wisdom and tools for overcoming negative traits, like anger, and growing positive ones, like gratitude. Each session in this evening series will address a personality trait that we want to either develop or defeat, and give participants the tools to refine themselves. The character traits we will focus on include, overcoming anger, expressing gratitude, defeating anxiety, and having a listening ear.

Participants are encouraged to bring something to write in for journaling.

**4 sessions online only**

**Cost: \$60**

**Instructor: Rabbi Daniel Graber**

**Thursdays, 9:30-10:45**

**F4. Midrash as Literature**

Midrash is a Hebrew word for “Biblical interpretation.” Over the centuries, Jewish interpreters have used close reading, Hebrew wordplay, and imagination to recover legends, address major theological questions, and adapt to social trends while preserving historical continuity. Through our study of midrash, we will expand our understanding of the Hebrew Bible’s complexity, spirituality, and homiletic potential. We will focus on aggadic (narrative) midrash and will look at the historical circumstances surrounding the midrash we read all in order to come and appreciate the texts as a rich form of literature.

**12 sessions in person or online (hybrid- please specify preference when registering)**

**Cost \$210**

**Instructor: Rabbi Brian Leiken**

**Thursdays, 11:00-12:15**

**F5. Diving Deep into the Book of Genesis**

You are probably familiar with the stories of the first book of the Torah. In this class we will read closely, questioning the text to develop a more complex understanding of the characters and their motivations, and to discover messages for us today.

Class will be participatory. Students should bring a copy of the Tanakh (Hebrew Bible) or Torah text in Hebrew/English or just English with them to class each week. (No knowledge of Hebrew required.)

**6 sessions in person or online (hybrid- please specify preference when registering)**

**Cost: \$110**

**Instructor: Rabbi Jill Hackell**

## Instructor Bios

**Leslie Goldress** has taught Melton and Midreshet since their inception in Rockland. A Jewish educator for over 40 years, she has a graduate degree from the Jewish Theological Seminary. Leslie served as Educational Director of the NCJC for over 20 years. She has taught Dramas of Jewish Living, a Florence Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning core class, Melton graduate courses on American Jewish Experience, Contemporary Jewish Issues, Israel, and the Development of the Jewish Denominations.

**Rabbi Daniel Graber** is in his second year as Assistant Rabbi of the New City Jewish Center where he fosters a caring community and engages adults in meaningful study. He received ordination from the Jewish Theological Seminary as well as a Masters of Arts in Jewish education from JTS's William Davidson School. Rabbi Graber has a passion for Jewish texts and finding relevance in them for modern readers.

**Dr. Rabbi Jill Hackell** received her M.D. degree from Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and practiced pediatrics for several years. She worked for over 20 years in the pharmaceutical industry, where she did clinical research on new vaccines for children. She was ordained at the Academy for Jewish Religion (AJR), a pluralistic rabbinical school. Rabbi Hackell is the rabbi at the West Clarkstown Jewish Center. She also teaches Jewish Bioethics at AJR, secular Bioethics at Dominican College in the Graduate Nursing program, and has taught a wide range of subjects at the Federation Midreshet since 2012.

**Sharon Halper** has been in the field of Jewish education for three decades, first in the field of informal youth education and as a Reform congregational educator and then as a Melton Adult Mini-School Teacher and Director. Sharon has also served as regional educator for the Union for Reform Judaism.

**Rabbi Brian Leiken** has been the Senior Rabbi at Temple Beth Sholom since June of 2012. He is passionate about social justice, Jewish history, and the study of modern American Judaism. As the religious leader of Temple Beth Sholom, Rabbi Leiken has transitioned the temple into a relational synagogue, one that is built upon the inter and intra-relationships between the clergy and its members. He attended the Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion where he was ordained in May of 2007.



Jewish Federation  
& Foundation  
OF ROCKLAND COUNTY

**Federation Midreshet Fall 2021 Registration (September 29 Deadline)**

There is no extra charge for spouses sharing an online screen

Financial need scholarships are available. For more information, contact Barry Kanarek at [bkanarek@jewishrockland.org](mailto:bkanarek@jewishrockland.org) or (845)362-4200 ext 170.

**[To register directly, click here or go to jewishrockland.org/midreshet-fall-2021](http://jewishrockland.org/midreshet-fall-2021)**

To register via mail, complete the following information and send with payment to Jewish Federation & Foundation, 450 W Nyack Rd, West Nyack 10994

Please register us for the following Federation Midreshet courses.

<u>Course Name</u>	<u>Instructor</u>	<u>Tuition</u>	<u>In Person vs Online</u>
1. _____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____

Tuition covers course-related expenses such as teacher salaries. Please consider a voluntary contribution to the Federation 2021-22 general campaign (thank you!): \$\_\_\_\_\_

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate your choice of payment:

\_\_\_ Check enclosed, payable to Jewish Federation of Rockland County for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Charge my credit card: \_\_\_ Visa \_\_\_ MC \_\_\_ AmEx

Acct. # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ CV Code \_\_\_\_\_

Questions? Contact Barry Kanarek at [bkanarek@jewishrockland.org](mailto:bkanarek@jewishrockland.org) or (845)362-4200 ext 170.