



# ROOT & BRANCH

Deepen Your Jewish Journey

A Jewish Federation  
of Greater Portland Initiative

## WINTER/SPRING 2026 CATALOG



**Jewish Federation**  
of Greater Portland





Root & Branch is a new initiative of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland that offers local adults opportunities to deepen their Jewish journey. Our programs offer an invitation into Jewish life as something to grow into, not something you need to already know.

Across our fall 2025 offerings, over half of attendees were new to the Federation, and many had never engaged in Jewish learning as adults. This reflects both the diversity and vitality of the local Jewish community, and a clear desire for entry points that are welcoming, flexible, and intellectually serious without being intimidating.

Facilitated by Dr. Yosef Rosen, the Federation's Director of Jewish Life and Learning, Root & Branch is designed for adults who are curious, searching, and often juggling full lives. Some participants come with deep Jewish backgrounds, others with fragments, questions, or long pauses in their Jewish journey.

Please browse through our Winter-Spring 2026 catalog and discover which program might offer a meaningful step along your Jewish journey.



**ROOT & BRANCH**  
Deepen Your Jewish Journey



# Overview of Offerings Winter—Spring 2026

## **Melton Courses are Back!**

- The Talking Golem: A Jewish Conversation on AI
- Social Justice: The Heart of Judaism in Theory and Practice
- Jewish Journeys: Collective Memories through Place and Time

## **Reset & Refresh:**

### **For Multi-Heritage Families & Young Couples**

- Young Families Cohort
- Young Couples Cohort

## **Jewish Grandparents**

- Jewish Grandparents Network Learning Fest
- Jewish Grandparents Circle

## **Zohar & Zhug**

## **A Day of Jewish Renaissance: Learning and Arts**



**ROOT & BRANCH**  
Deepen Your Jewish Journey





**UNPARALLELED  
EDUCATION  
UNFORGETTABLE  
EXPERIENCES**



**MELTON IS A TRUSTED VOICE FOR JEWISH COMMUNITIES AROUND THE WORLD**

**After a long hiatus, Melton is back in Portland!**

Now with more courses, more variability in length  
(10 session + 6 session long courses),  
and offered online.

These virtual courses are exclusive to the Greater Portland  
Area, include an in-person meetup, and are facilitated  
by Dr. Yosef Rosen.

The Florence Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning offers  
courses expertly crafted by Hebrew University scholars that  
stress depth and accessibility—they are designed for you to  
interact and engage with Judaism on your terms  
and questions.





## The Talking Golem: A Jewish Conversation on AI



### A TASTE OF MELTON

**On Zoom: January 7, 2026 | 12:00-1:00pm**

\$5 registration fee




Curious about the style of a Melton course?

Join us for this one-off to learn more!

Can machines ever be human?

This is a question the great minds of our age are asking. In this Taste of Melton session, we will ask whether an AI chatbot can ever truly be a chaver (friend) or even a Rav (teacher), and discover what sets us apart from the remarkable machines we are creating.





**Social Justice: The Heart of Judaism in Theory and Practice**



**Social Justice: The Heart of Judaism in Theory and Practice**

**Thursdays, 12:00-1:30pm | January 22 - March 26, 2026**

On Zoom, with an in-person celebratory meetup  
at the course's conclusion

Price: \$195, with discount-code: JFGP100SJ



Confronting wrongs and instigating systemic change is no small order, but it is an essential Jewish pursuit. This 10-part course highlights the Jewish call to action and offers a practical approach to achieving lasting change.

While challenges such as poverty, climate change, and systemic racism can feel overwhelming, the course helps participants step back to identify concrete Jewish strategies for local and global progress, offering a framework for taking a stand within one's own community and putting Judaism's core values into practice.





# Jewish Journeys: Collective Memories through Place and Time



**Jewish Journeys: Collective Memories through Place and Time**

**Fridays, 9:00-10:30am | April 17 - May 29, 2026**

On Zoom, with an in-person celebratory meetup  
at the course's conclusion

Price: \$119, with discount-code: JFGP60



Embark on a captivating exploration of Jewish history  
and culture.

This six-part course will take you on a journey through time and  
space, examining how our shared past shapes our present and  
future.

We will explore the hidden stories and untold narratives of  
Jewish communities in Greece, Spain, Morocco, Poland, and  
Israel.

Join us as we unravel the mysteries of the past and study the  
impact of collective memory on contemporary Jewish identity.





# YOUNG FAMILY EDITION

**January 11, 2026 - February 21, 2026**

Suggested donation of \$180 per family

 **REGISTER NOW**

Join a warm and welcoming community of families building meaningful traditions in multi-heritage homes.

Designed for families with children ages 0–5(ish), this whole-family program includes brunch and snacks at every session.

Over three Sunday mornings, parents enjoy guided conversations in their own track, while children engage in joyful, age-appropriate experiences led by experienced local Jewish early childhood educators.

You'll also enjoy a special, family-friendly Shabbat and Havdalah experience designed to bring Jewish ritual to life in a meaningful and accessible way.



# Reset & Refresh

A community-building experience  
for **young couples**.



**Monday Evenings 2026: April 20, May 4, May 18,  
June 1, June 8  
+ A Shabbat Experience: June 12-13**

Suggested donation of \$180 per couple



Reset & Refresh invites young couples of mixed heritage\*  
into a welcoming Jewish space for self-discovery,  
rejuvenation, deepening relationships,  
and building community.

This seven-session program uses Shabbat as a compass to  
explore Jewish life, deepen relationships, and make  
meaningful connections with other couples.

\*Being mixed heritage includes a myriad of combinations that cross  
religions, denominations, spiritual practice, race, ethnicity, and  
backgrounds. Participating couples might include two people who identify as  
Jewish and have varied Jewish lived experiences and a couple where one  
member identifies with another religion or is an agnostic,  
along with many other variations.



# Jewish Grandparents Network Learning Fest 2026

Jewish Grandparents Network  
 **LEARNING FEST 2026**



**Jewish Federation**  
of Greater Portland

The first global virtual gathering  
of Jewish grandparents

**Tuesday, January 27, 2026 3:00–6:30PM ET**

**Register Today**

[tinyurl.com/GPNFEST2026](https://tinyurl.com/GPNFEST2026)







## JEWISH GRANDPARENT CIRCLE

Five Wednesdays, 10:00-11:30am

February 11 – March 11, 2026

(In-Person, SW)



**REGISTER NOW**

This program is in partnership with the Jewish Grandparent Network and seeks to create communities of Jewish grandparents who will engage with Jewish text and traditions to explore the joys and complexities of grandparenting today. The five-session circle will encourage grandparents to reflect on their own grandparenting experiences through the lens of Jewish and other source texts.

It is open to all types of grandparents, bubbe and zayde, pops and nanas, Jewish, or grandparenting Jewish children. Best suited for grandparents with grandchildren ages 0-10.



Monthly Zohar Study

## Zohar & Zhug

Join for mystical learning and delicious spicy zhug  
(a Yemenite hot sauce). This will be a monthly program!  
Free to attend. Please RSVP.



[ahavathachimpdx.weebly.com/zohar-and-zhug](http://ahavathachimpdx.weebly.com/zohar-and-zhug)  
6686 SW Capitol Hwy

## ZOHAR & ZHOUG @ AHAVAT ACHIM

**Thursday Evenings, 8:00-9:30pm**

January 15, February 12, March 19, April 16, 2026

FREE



**REGISTER NOW**

Once a month, on Thursday night, join us as we study passages of the Zohar (in English), the classic work of Jewish mysticism, and savor the flavors of zhoug—a fiery, fragrant Yemenite schmear—on crackers, to add a bit of heat and joy to our conversations.

Whether you're well-versed in Kabbalah or just curious to taste these mystical texts (and the zhoug), you're warmly invited.





## **A Day of Jewish Renaissance**

**June 21, 2026, 10am-6pm**

Eastside Jewish Commons

**REGISTRATION COMING SOON!**

A Day of Jewish Renaissance is a full day of choose-your-own Jewish adventure, featuring the best of Portland's local Jewish teachers, artists, and creative voices. A collaboration between the Federation and Art/Lab, this festival brings Jewish learning, Jewish art-making, and Jewish community into the same space.

Across four time slots, you'll be able to pick from four different offerings each round: art workshops, two learning options, and one experiential option, such as a cooking class, movement, singing, etc.

Attend a lecture, join a hands-on arts workshop, take a cooking class, or pause to schmooze;  
come for what draws you, skip what doesn't,  
and leave recharged and inspired.