

CENTER FOR SMALL TOWN JEWISH LIFE



December 2020/Kislev 5781

Dear Friends,

Kislev is the month in the Hebrew calendar that leads up to the winter solstice. In Maine especially, we know that this means short days and long, dark nights. As we are all tucked in at home, we at the Center are planning a selection of programs to kindle light in the darkness and cast a glow on our tradition and beautiful community. During this inward-facing time of year we hope you find restful moments and an enduring sense of connection and solidarity with Jewish community across the state.

See you soon,
The Center Staff

A Maine Hanukkah Celebration

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 5:30 PM

CELEBRATE THE FESTIVAL OF
LIGHTS WITH MUSIC AND MORE
FROM OUR MAINE RABBIS!



~Co-sponsored by the Jewish Community Alliance of Southern Maine~

Hanukkah is on the horizon, and we're dreaming of warm *sufganiyot*, blazing *hanukkiyot*, and gathering as a statewide community. You'll have to make your own fried treats, but we hope you'll join us to celebrate the Festival of Lights! Cantor Sheila Nesis will lead us in a spirited havdalah, and then we'll light candles with Rabbi Darah Lerner—don't forget to bring your *hanukiah*! There is a Hanukkah play in the works, written just for this celebration and

performed by rabbis from across the state. And we'll enjoy music from Rabbi Sruli and Rebbetzin Lisa. We cannot wait!

[Register Here](#)



JEWISH YOUTH CONNECTION

PROGRAMS FOR TEENS
TO CONNECT,
LEARN, AND TRAVEL

TRIVIA NIGHT FOR TEENS!

Sunday, December 13, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Join your friends in the Jewish Youth Connection, our statewide teen group, for a great night of learning and trivia competition! Winner gets bragging rights for the rest of the year. Register using the link below, and we'll send you the Zoom link the day of. We miss hanging out together and are excited for this opportunity to connect!

[Register Here](#)

How the Talmud Prepares Us to Handle Anything

**SUNDAY DECEMBER 20
4-5:30 P.M.**

**AN INTRODUCTION TO THE
TALMUD WITH RABBINICAL
FELLOW FRANKIE SANDMEL**



Join Rabbinical Fellow Frankie Sandmel for this introduction to the Talmud. We'll dive into a theory of change—a theology of flexibility—and how the Talmud teaches us to move through the world with resilience and connection. We'll explore a little history, a little theology, and a little about how and why Talmud study has been a central Jewish spiritual experience throughout history. In particular, we'll look at the Talmud as a text that comes from, and speaks to, those of us who exist on the margins of society. No experience or Hebrew

necessary. If you've always wanted to try Talmud study but weren't sure how to start, this class is for you!

[Register Here](#)



Winter Funtensive!

~FOR KIDS~

EACH DAY, DECEMBER 28-31
FROM 9-10 A.M.

As the winter weather looms, we know that we'll miss our annual travel, visits, and parties. But we're here to offer some fun Jewish learning and to connect with each other over Zoom! We will offer songs, stories, Hebrew games, and crafts, and every day will have a color, a letter, and a number. The fun will last from 9-10 a.m., and the program is free, though of course your support is appreciated. Generally recommended for kids 4 - 11, but all are welcome! We suggest that kids have paper, crayons or markers, and a snack with them as needed. You'll receive an email each morning with the day's link and information.



[Register Here](#)

Let's Learn Together on Facebook



Get Ready for International Day of

Hebrew: We're counting up to International Day of Hebrew, the birthday of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, who was integral in modernizing the language. It comes every year on the 21st of Tevet, which this year is January 5. We've invited students, lay leaders, and educators from across Maine to teach a letter a day. Check the Center's Facebook page daily (except Shabbat) starting December 9 for a one-minute mini-Hebrew lesson. This is great practice for kids on vacation from Hebrew School—or for anyone who loves to learn Hebrew!



10 Minutes of Hanukkah: Starting on December 10, rabbis and rabbinical fellows from around the state will share bite-sized Hanukkah teachings on Facebook. There will be a new post each day of Hanukkah (except Shabbat). Check out the Center's Facebook page to learn about women and the Hanukkah story, *Adam HaRishon*, how the Talmud says we should light candles, and more!

[Check Our Facebook Here!](#)

The Next Six Months of Maine Jewish Life

What have we done well, what could we do better, and what programs would you like to see in the next six months? Share your brilliant ideas! We need your input as we plan the Center's winter and spring programming for the Maine Jewish community. Please take three minutes to fill out the quick survey linked below.

[Fill Out the Survey Here](#)



In the Community

Virtual Mission to Tbilisi, Georgia with the JFNA
Thursday, December 10, 11- 12 p.m EST



The Jewish Federations of North America's Network of Independent Communities, in collaboration with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, is excited to present our second virtual mission, exploring Tbilisi! We've worked with the Jewish community here as one of our partnership communities in the former Soviet Union since 2002.

As we immerse ourselves in this experience, we will learn just what makes the Jewish communities in Georgia so special to us. We'll learn about the amazing history of the Georgian Jews, who trace their history back thousands of years. We'll also meet the newer arrivals, predominantly Ashkenazi Jews, who settled there after World War II.

Join us as we:

- Observe the impact we've made on seniors at the Hesed Center
- Meet with Georgian leadership for an update about the pandemic
- Enjoy a walking tour of Tbilisi
- Learn about delicious Georgian food
- Experience some Georgian dancing
- Celebrate the first night of Hanukkah with the Georgian Jews

[Register Here](#)

[The Center for Small Town Jewish Life](#)



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