



Religious School
Parent Handbook
5779
(2018-2019)

SCHOOL HOURS

Sundays: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Kitah Gan - Kitah Zayin (K - 7th)

Wednesdays: 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Kitah Gimmel - Kitah Zayin (3rd - 7th)

Jr. Choir: Wednesdays 3:15-4:00 PM

Shalom!

Welcome to the 2018-19 (5779) school year for The Emanuel Synagogue Religious School. Within this handbook, we provide you with information about the when and how regarding our classroom instruction and related programs.

The Emanuel Synagogue offers a unique approach to education. We strive to educate every person at every age and stage of life. All of our programs are developed for, and oriented towards, building a Jewish community.

Our program has two guiding principles:

1. Jewish education never ends. Learning is a lifetime endeavor. We hope to instill in our students a desire to continue their Jewish studies beyond their time spent in our school. We also provide opportunities for parents and children to learn together through regular family education programs.

2. Jewish education should engender in its students a sense of pride in their heritage, and most importantly, a sense of belonging to a unique and caring community.

The religious school is governed by the Board of Trustees through the Education Committee of The Emanuel Synagogue. The Education Committee continually develops ideas and new programs to enrich the educational value for our students.

May this coming year be one of health and happiness for you and your family. May it also be one of great learning and growth for you and our entire community.

B'shalom,

Barbara Fink
Director of Youth and Family Learning
principal@emanuelsynagogue.org

MISSION STATEMENT

The Emanuel Synagogue Religious School is a vibrant community where educators foster a love of Judaism through child centered, meaningful learning opportunities. Families are encouraged to participate in every aspect of the process. Educators instruct students to apply Torah in today's world, and enable students to feel at ease in any synagogue's service. The Emanuel Synagogue's Religious School is a place where Judaism's values of love and respect for the world are shared through Tikun Olam projects and Mitzvot.

Goals:

Yehadut: Love of being Jewish

To develop an appreciation of Judaism, and a sense of pride in being Jewish, by providing a positive, experiential atmosphere for learning prayers, history, and holidays using art forms, music, cooking, and other projects.

Mitzvot: Living a Jewish Life

To engage with God, Torah, and mitzvot within the framework of the Conservative Movement and to incorporate them into our lives in a meaningful way.

Tikun Olam: Repairing the World

To develop a sense of Jewish responsibility towards all people throughout the world through tzedakah-charity and gemilut chasidim-acts of loving kindness.

Klal Yisrael: Israel-Land, People, State

To develop an appreciation and identification with Klal Yisrael and to foster a sense of community with Jews in Israel and around the world.

T'fillah: Prayer

To develop synagogue competence, including understanding the structure and meaning of Jewish prayer and the ability to participate in congregational services.

Ivrit: Hebrew: To develop basic Hebrew reading and writing skills.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Our Education Committee is continually re-examining the role of the religious school in our community. One of the goals of the Education Committee is to develop a document that reflects our community's beliefs and values with respect to educating ourselves and our children. We invite any interested congregants to join us. Please contact Education Committee Chairs, Lisa Sadinsky at lsadinsky@comcast.net or Deborah Zuckerman Goldberg at debzucknyc@yahoo.com.

POLICIES

Parents' attitude toward religious school affects a child's feelings and performance. Parents who did not have a positive Hebrew school experience may convey a negative attitude toward their children. Religious schools have changed greatly; ours offers stimulating and exciting learning activities. Please encourage your children to approach religious school as part of their overall education, to attend regularly, to be on time, and to come well equipped. We welcome your involvement in our many activities.

The Emanuel Religious School is committed to promoting Judaism as an active force in the hearts and minds of our children.

The following policies support our religious school objectives.

ATTENDANCE

We have so little time and so much to teach. It is important for our students to attend Religious School regularly. A youngster who is frequently absent has a difficult time keeping up and making progress. Excessive absences lower the status of Religious School in the eyes of the child and may negate our efforts to maintain standards. The following is our attendance policy:

1. A child who has had excessive absences will be required to make up work in order to complete the semester.
2. Parents will be alerted if there are excessive absences.
3. Please notify the school office if your child will be absent on any day.
4. If you must pick up your child early or drop off your child late, please come into the building and sign him/her in/out.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones are not allowed to be used during class time.

TZEDEKAH

Tzedakah (money donated for charitable causes) is collected every class period. We ask our students to participate in this and other tzedakah-related projects in order to develop their sense of responsibility to other people and to the Jewish and general community. Different institutions are selected to benefit from the tzedakah funds donated by our students.

BEHAVIOR

Students are expected to exhibit **כבוד** kavod (respect) for all people by using appropriate tone of voice and language. Students will be courteous and respectful to classmates, teachers, staff and visitors at all times. Students are expected to maintain the **קדושה** kedushah (holiness) of the **קהילה** Kehillah by taking care of all physical property. Students are expected to be students of **תורה** Torah (study of Torah) by following directions and positively contributing to the learning atmosphere. Students will leave the classroom only with permission from the teacher and will not use a cell phone when class is in session. Students will uphold **שמירת הגוף** Shmirat Ha'Guf (protecting the body) by keeping hands and feet to themselves.

DROP OFF/PICK UP PROCEDURES

We are very concerned about the safety of your children. Please help us make the drop-off and pickup as organized and safe as possible. Drop-off and pick-up will take place at our school entrance. Gan (pre-k and Kindergarten students) will be dismissed from their classroom. All other students will be dismissed through the Religious School door. Please drive slowly through the parking lot. Remember: Safety is always our first priority.

If your child is late please come into the school office to sign him/her in.

If your child must leave early, please send a note to Mrs. Gail Mackey. She will get your child from his/her classroom. You must sign your child out in the school office.

SNACKS

Please provide your child with a kosher snack. Only snacks with a hecksher (kosher symbol or fresh fruit and vegetables will be allowed in the school. Don't worry. If you forget we always have some on hand.

SHABBAT ATTENDANCE

To enhance understanding and comfort with Jewish liturgy, we strongly encourage students to strive for a level of Shabbat and holiday service attendance with their families.

Below is the benchmark we want children in each grade to meet. Attendance at Family services, Bar/Bat Mitzvah club or the main service fulfills the requirement.

Students and their families who reach these goals will be honored at the end of the school year.

There will be a binder in the Sanctuary with a page for every student. When you enter the service place a sticker on the date you attended services.

We anticipate that your child may be invited to services at other synagogues; however, they will not count towards his/her attendance levels. This is the best possible way for students and families to internalize the order, purpose, and spirit of our Emanuel Synagogue services. This also fosters the feeling of community within all of us.

Each student is responsible for "signing in" at each service. We must emphasize how important it is that you not merely drop off your child for services, but that you attend with him/her. If this is to be a meaningful experience for both the student and parent(s), it must be accomplished together as a family. This is a marvelous opportunity to model Shabbat behavior, if you have not done so before. It will help your child learn what it means to become a ritually responsible adult.

Benchmarks:

K-2 nd grade	should attend at least 6 services
3 rd grade	should attend at least 7 services
4 th grade	should attend at least 8 services
5 th grade	should attend at least 9 services
6 th grade	should attend at least 10 services
7 th grade	should attend at least 11 services

The recognition levels are:

Meeting your grade level benchmark: Ice Cream Sundae Party

Attending 15 Services: Same as above and awarded a certificate of recognition at a special Shabbat service.

Attending 20 Services: Same as above and receive a special gift

Attending 25+ Services: Same as above and honored on a special plaque, "Member of Rabbi's Roll"

SNOW DAYS

We follow the West Hartford Public Schools. If there is no school we will not hold school. We will also send an email and post on our website if we have to close due to snow. It will also be announced on NBC Connecticut and WFSB.

COMMUNICATION

We know you are swamped with emails so we try to keep our updates pertinent and meaningful. Please check your child's Hebrew School folder for flyers and make sure you are aware of the homework students are assigned, and help to make sure students complete the assignments. Teachers will send out updates on what is happening in the classroom periodically to parents. The school office will send emails with upcoming programs and ways to participate in the larger Emanuel Community.

8th GRADE AND BEYOND

The Emanuel Synagogue has once again formed a partnership with JTConnect. Classes take place here at Emanuel on Sundays from 10:30 am - 12:00 pm, Mondays at Beth El Temple from 7-8:40 pm. We encourage every teen to attend. In order to be a madrich/a (teen aide) in our religious school, Emanuel teens must enroll in JTConnect directly. For more information, please contact Eric Maruer at eric@jtconnect.org or register at jtconnect.org

YOUTH GROUPS

JR. USY

Students are encouraged to participate in our Youth Groups. These groups provide opportunities to socialize outside of our classrooms with other Jewish kids from around West Hartford and other areas of Connecticut. Jr. USY is for kids in 6th - 8th grades. USY is for teens in the 9th - 12th grades. If you are interested in joining either group, please contact Jason Kay at jasondavidkay@gmail.com

STAFF

We have a wonderful staff committed to helping your child grow Jewishly. We also hire Madrichim (Teen aides) to help out in our classrooms on Sunday mornings from 9-10:30 and sometimes on Wednesday afternoons too!

Class	Teacher	Madrichim
Gan (pre-k and K)	Mrs. Debbie Mehlman	Saige Beatman Zoe Friedman
Aleph/Bet (1st and 2 nd grade)	Mr. Erik Martin	Jared Beatman Rebecca Diaz-Matos Avery Schiff
Gimel (3 rd grade)	Mrs. Jennifer Molinari	Ben Bomzer Harrison Heller Joshua Waitsman
Daled (4 th grade)	Ms. Sarah Baden	Aaron Schlossberg Ben Smith Sam Sorkin
Hay (5 th grade)	Mrs. Robin Rosenthal	Michael Cherny Dara Sadinsky Lillian Schulman
Vav (6 th Grade)	Mrs. Nancy Fichman Cantor Sanford Cohn	Lillian Black Lana Piekarsky
Zayin (7 th grade)	Ms. Shir Lerman Rabbi David Small	Adam Godel Yonah Goldberg Natalie Goodman
Resource Room	Mrs. Ruth Cion	Simon Rosenberg
Hebrew Through Movement	Mrs. Carolyn Topol	
Music	Mrs. Fern Cohen	
Library	Mrs. Beth Katten	
Office	Mrs. Barbara Fink Mrs. Gail Mackey	Sam Ward

