

SHIR AMI

Many voices. *One song.*

LIFELONG LEARNING 5777 • 2016-2017



The Jewish American Experience

The first Jewish community was established in what is now the United States in 1654 when twenty three Dutch Jews, recently expelled from Brazil where they had settled two decades earlier, arrived in New Amsterdam. Now, over 360 years later, over 5 million Jews call America home, often struggling with a balance between the values of our ancient Jewish tradition with those of a modern America. Over the course of this year, we will be looking at the Jewish experience in America from a historical, textual, and cultural perspective with classes taught by our Shir Ami clergy and special guests.

SHIR AMI

101 Richboro Road • Newtown, PA 18940
(215) 968-3400 • www.shirami.org

**The Lifelong Learning Committee and clergy of Shir Ami
invite you to be inspired and rekindle your knowledge
and love for Jewish Learning.**

Our programs are offered to strengthen our ties
to fellow congregants, our community, and our synagogue
and encourage us to learn and grow.

Please join us for any or all of our programs.
We look forward to learning together!



Shir Ami spends Shabbat at the Museum of American Jewish History

**Saturday, January 21
10:00am**

Please plan to join us for this very special morning as we celebrate Shabbat together with a morning of prayer and learning together! We will meet together for a brief intergenerational Shabbat service at the museum before breaking up for separate guided tours. Programs will be offered for families with children, kindergarten through third grade, fourth through sixth grade, and teenagers and adults without children. All will be invited to join in a community lunch in Center City after the morning activities. More details coming soon, but you won't want to miss this special day downtown with your Shir Ami family.



Leo and Shirley Slomovitz Scholar in Residence

Rabbi Sally Priesand

Friday, February 24, 2017

7:00pm service

"Reflections on my Life as a Rabbi"

Saturday, February 25, 2017

Chevrat Torah 10:15am

"Remembering Regina Jonas - the First Female Rabbi in Europe"



Rabbi Sally J. Priesand, America's first female rabbi, was ordained in June, 1972, by Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, Ohio. From 1981-2006, she served as Rabbi of Monmouth Reform Temple, becoming Rabbi Emerita upon her retirement.

Nationally, she has served on the Executive Board of both the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the Union for Reform Judaism. She also served as a member of the Board of Governors of HUC-JIR, as President of the Rabbinic Alumni Association, and for three years as editor of the CCAR Newsletter. In 2007, she invited her female rabbinic colleagues of all denominations to join her in donating their professional and personal papers to the American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati, Ohio, in order to document the history of women in the rabbinate.

She is the recipient of many awards and honors. The most recent include receiving, in 2009, the Elizabeth Blackwell Award from Hobart and William Smith Colleges and the Distinguished Alumni Award from the McMicken College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Cincinnati. In 2010, in honor of its 125th anniversary, GOOD HOUSEKEEPING MAGAZINE named her one of 125 women who changed our lives and our world. In 2013, she was honored by the Center for Holocaust, Human Rights and Genocide Education at Brookdale Community College at its annual awards dinner.

Rabbi Priesand, a native of Cleveland, Ohio, lives in Ocean Township, New Jersey.



Join **Rabbi Lance Sussman, Ph.D.**, historian of American Jewish History, college professor, and the senior rabbi at Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel located in Elkins Park for two special sessions on the history of Philadelphia's Jewish community.

William Penn's Christian Utopia and the Jews:

1700-1776

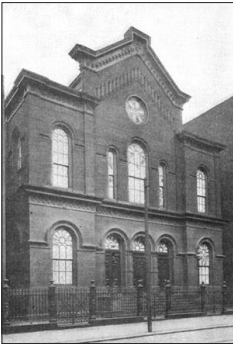
Thursday, November 3, 2016
7:30pm

Tuesday, November 8, 2016
11:00am (*video of Thursday, November 3 presentation)

Once Upon a Neighborhood: Jewish Life in Philadelphia 1920-1960

Thursday, March 16, 2017
7:30pm

Tuesday, March 21, 2016
11:00am (*video of Thursday, March 16 presentation)



A former home of the
Mikveh Israel Synagogue (c.1901)

The Jews of Rock and Roll

Sunday, November 6, 2016

9:30am

*Coffee and bagels will be available beginning at 9:00



Special Guest **Rabbi Brian Leiken** of Temple Beth Shalom in New City, NY has researched and written about the Jews of Rock and Roll. We hope that parents will join us after dropping off their kids at Hebrew School, and others will come as well, as Rabbi Leiken presents his research on the role of Jews in the development of Rock and Roll in America. The Shir Ami Men's Club will be providing bagels and coffee for all those in attendance.

Reforming Reform: A look at the creation and evolution of the Reform Movement in America

with **Rabbi Simon**

Thursday, October 27, 2016

7:30pm

Tuesday, November 1, 2016

11:00am



When the Reform movement was established in America over 130 years ago, what "Reform" meant is very different than it is today. During this session we will look at how we went from just being Jewish to having Reform, Conservative, Orthodox, and Reconstructionist, learn the differences between the American movements, and look at how our Reform movement has changed over time.

***All Thursday evening classes will be repeated the following Tuesday morning to ensure that as many members as possible are able to attend, learn, and contribute.**

Join **Rabbi Eric Goldberg** for these two sessions, looking at two very different dilemmas facing members of the American Jewish community.



The Ethical Dilemma of the Jewish Mobster

Thursday, November 10, 2016
7:30pm

Tuesday, November 15, 2016
11:00am

In 1929, Louis Fleisher, Harry Fleisher, and Henry Shorr attended services at Orthodox Congregation B'nai David in Northwest Detroit. On the surface this would not be noteworthy, except for the fact that all three men were members of Detroit's Purple Gang, a mostly Jewish group of mobsters. As Tablet Magazine asked: 'Why [would] gangsters who broke every law still go to services on Yom Kippur?' What about Meyer Lansky, "Bugsy" Siegel, Morris Barney, "Moe" Dalitz, Sam Cohen and other Jewish mobsters who helped kick-start the transformation of Las Vegas from desert to vacation capital? Are they heroes or anti-heroes? Come join us as we look at some of the most famous Jewish mobsters, their complex lives and how they both helped to build and tear down cities all over America.

The Ethical Dilemma of the Jewish Athlete: 'To play or not to play?'

Thursday, December 1, 2016
7:30pm

Tuesday, December 6, 2016
11:00am

This question is the one most often connected to Jewish athletes and the ethical dilemmas they face. The stories of how Sandy Koufax and Hank Greenberg answered this question are well-known. But there are other, more subtle, questions that have faced the Jewish athlete. For example, this past summer, Olympic superstar Aly Raisman was asked to throw out the first pitch at Fenway Park on a Friday night. Should she have done it? An Egyptian judo competitor refused to shake the hand of Or Sasson, an Israeli judo athlete in this year's Olympics. What should his response have been? Jewish tradition and text have much to offer on this subject and we will investigate the challenging world of being a Jewish athlete and what it is like to be a symbol of the Jewish people throughout the world.



In each of **Rabbi Paula Goldberg's** three sessions, we will look at Jewish wisdom, Responsa Literature, concerning three areas of great change for Jews coming to, and living in America. We will examine and compare the ways different streams of Judaism (Reform, Conservative, etc.) react to the changes in general American society.

Judaism's response to interfaith relationships

**Thursday, November 17, 2016
7:30pm**

**Tuesday, 22, 2016
11:00am**

Judaism's response to LGBT issues

**Thursday, December 8, 2016
7:30pm**

**Tuesday, December 13, 2016
11:00am**

Judaism's response to the changing role of women

**Thursday, March 9, 2017
7:30pm**

**Tuesday, March 14, 2017
11:00am**

From the Goldbergs to the Goldbergs: A look at Changing Attitudes toward Jewish Americans as seen in Television Sitcoms with **Rabbi Simon**

Part 1 - The Goldbergs - In this session, we will watch episodes of the 1950's sitcoms, and one of the first sitcoms ever in America, "The Goldbergs" starring Gertrude Berg. We will see how this show, featuring a Jewish immigrant family in the Bronx, not only survived but thrived while both tackling and avoiding controversial issues, representing the challenges of many Jewish families at the time.

Thursday, January 12, 2017
7:30pm

Tuesday, January 17, 2017
11:00am

Part 2 - The 70's - While most people remember Rhoda from Mary Tyler Moore, fewer may remember Bridget and Bernie. As America became more accepting of its diversity, we will look at how the Jewish sitcom character evolved as well.

Thursday, January 19, 2017
7:30pm

Tuesday, January 24, 2017
11:00am

Part 3 - Seinfeld and Beyond - From Seinfeld to today's Goldbergs, Jewish characters are often assumed to be Jewish but rarely address that Judaism. We will watch several scenes from more modern sitcoms, discussing whether or not this accurately portrays being Jewish in America today.

Thursday, January 26, 2017
7:30pm

Tuesday, January 31, 2017
11:00am

Great Jewish Americans

with **Rabbi Elliot Strom**



In the last decades of the 19th and the first decades of the 20th centuries, millions of Jews arrived in this country, the vast majority from Central and Eastern Europe. They came to this "goldeneh medinah" (golden country) to escape persecution, to lift themselves and their families out of poverty, to make a new start and give their children a chance at a life not available to them in the Old Country. But when they arrived here, they found the life of the immigrant was challenging indeed, the work back-breaking, and that there was often significant resistance, sometimes even hostility to these new "aliens."

A century and more later, the great-great-grandchildren of these new arrivals have achieved a degree of acceptance, integration, power and success unrivalled in our history. How did they do it? Over the course of these three weeks we'll take a look at three kinds of Jewish immigrants, each of whom had a different approach to integrating into American Life – the Image-Makers (like Harry Houdini, Groucho Marx, Hank Greenberg); the Activists (like Louis Brandeis, Emma Goldman, Sol Alinsky); and the Caregivers (like Jonas Salk, Emma Lazarus) – and to whom our generation of American Jews owes a tremendous debt.

**Part 1 - Thursday, February 16, 2017
7:30pm**

**Tuesday, February 21, 2017
11:00am**

**Part 2 - Thursday, February 23, 2017
7:30pm**

**Tuesday, February 28, 2017
11:00am**

**Part 3 - Thursday, March 2, 2017
7:30pm**

**Tuesday, March 7, 2017
11:00am**

Lunch and Learn

Ushpi-what???

Monday, October 17

11:45am

In honor of Sukkot, free lunch will be provided – please RSVP if possible so we know how many to plan for.

On this, the first day of Sukkot, Rabbi Simon will teach about the custom of “Ushpizin,” inviting guests into your Sukkah, but the traditional guests of “Ushpizin” have been dead for over 3,000 years. We will learn about the history of this tradition and talk about who our own “Ushpizin” would be today, all while enjoying lunch together in the sukkah (weather permitting). All attendees will have the opportunity to shake lulav and Etrog.

Save the Date - Topics to be announced.....

Thursday, December 15

Thursday, February 16

Thursday, April 20

Thursday, June 15

Even more opportunities for lifelong learning at Shir Ami....

Chai Mitzvah

Chai Mitzvah is an incredible opportunity for groups of congregants to teach and learn with one another. Meeting once a month, this group of 10-15 adult learners will not only broaden their Jewish knowledge, but also form a special chavurah, a bond of friendship with one another, as they challenge each other to rethink the way in which they look at their Jewish life. Participants also have the opportunity to take on an individual project (ritual, study, or social action) to further their own Jewish practice.

Chai Mitzvah is a Jewish life learning program introduced to us at the URJ Biennial last year. A group of our congregants are completing a pilot group in our synagogue, and it has been a rousing success. New groups can form at any time. The curriculum and more information can be found at www.chaimitzvah.org.

Whether you are interested in being placed in a group as a single or couple or have a group of 10-15 who would like to study together, please contact congregant Ivy Pearlstein at ivy@2000rus.com for more information.

Adult Hebrew and Adult B'nai Mitzvah

If you are interested in learning to read Hebrew and/or becoming an adult Bar/Bat Mitzvah as part of a group service, please contact Rabbi Simon.

Course Registration

Registration is required so that adequate space and material can be prepared. Courses are free for Shir Ami members. A donation is requested from non-members.

Name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

I am interested in: _____

Be A "Keeper Of Jewish Excellence"

"Get yourself a teacher, find someone to study with, judge everyone favorably."
- Pirke Avot

We extend an invitation for you to become a Keeper of Jewish Excellence. Supporting all of the important mitzvahs of learning and prayer allow us to continue our Lifelong Learning commitments.

\$500 \$250 \$180 \$100 other

Please make checks payable to Shir Ami

Mail to: Shir Ami - Lifelong Learning • 101 Richboro Road, Newtown, PA 18940