

September 2018

24 Elul 5778

Dear Parents,

Welcome back for the beginning of a great new school year. Let me introduce myself. I am Rabbi Stephanie Wolfe, the new Rabbinic Educator for Temple Shalom Emeth Religious School. I am from Pittsburgh and just moved to Boston last year. I was ordained as a rabbi in 1995 from Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion. Currently, I am in my final year of a joint masters' program in Jewish Education and Jewish Studies at Hebrew College in Newton. I live in the heart of Waltham, right by the center commons. I believe that our first responsibility in Jewish Education is to plant a love of Judaism in every person we touch.

We are excited about our teaching staff, many of whom are returning teachers. Our new curriculum will be presented at the parents' meeting on the first day of classes. Together with members of the education committee and Rabbi Abramson, we have spent a significant amount of time this summer working on ways to make the upcoming school year fun and educational at the same time. We look forward to sharing this creativity with all of our families.

We are happy that two great program tracks will be added or restored to our school curriculum this year. The first is **Family Education**. We will be having a family education day for each class to encourage families to engage together. These dates are specially marked on the yearly calendar (last page). Our second track will be **Extra-curricular activities**. This is separate from Jr. SEFTY and geared towards students in 1st – 5th grades and sometimes their families, although anyone is welcome. Each month there will be a special activity or program after school on a Sunday morning from 11:00 – 12:30 (times may vary). These will include cooking, arts & crafts, and other activities that the students choose. Parents will sign-up separately for each event and there may be a small fee for certain events to cover costs and supplies.

I am looking forward to a terrific year ahead. Please take a moment to introduce yourself to me when we meet. It may take me a few times to remember everyone. If you have any questions or concerns as the year progresses, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone or e-mail.

B'Shalom,

Rabbi Stephanie Wolfe

TEMPLE SHALOM EMETH RELIGIOUS SCHOOL
MISSION STATEMENT

Temple Shalom Emeth Religious School strives to provide a meaningful, engaging, formal, informal and family education program for grades K-10 within a safe, warm and caring environment. Our goal is to develop and inspire a community of educated and *menschlich* Jewish children, knowledgeable about and committed to the philosophy and practices of Judaism.

Our approach is not simply to teach about Judaism, but to create a stimulating, interactive program to enable our students and their families to experience the joy of Jewish living. The study of Jewish rituals, Hebrew, the holiday cycle, Torah, prayer and ethics, along with Jewish history, Israel and music, are key components of our program. This curriculum prepares our children to understand and live by the Jewish values of *Torah*, *Avodah* (Worship) and *Gimelut Chassidim* (Social Justice).



GUIDE TO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL AT TEMPLE SHALOM EMETH (TSERS)

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Our goal is that all classes at TSERS begin on time (9:00 am on Sundays & 4:00 pm on Tuesdays). Please arrange for your child's arrival at least 5 minutes before the start time. This allows students to go to their classrooms and get settled so that we maximize the little time we have.

Beginning this year, a few safety changes are in place. First, please either walk your child into the main building or remain in the parking lot until you see your child enter. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of the class and students arriving late will be marked tardy.

Dismissal will be from the main building at 11:00 am or 6:00 pm. If your child is staying for an after-school activity and you will not be joining him/her, please be sure to send a note (or text or e-mail to Rabbi Stephanie). The responsible adult needs to come into the building to retrieve students on both Sundays and Tuesdays (no more carpool lane). You (or someone listed on your pick-up form) will sign the children out before leaving. Please notify us when your child is going home with someone not listed on your form.

ATTENDANCE

At Temple Shalom Emeth, we place a high value on learning and being part of a learning community. Consistency and participation are very important to a child's education. Excessive absences will require the completion of all make up work in order to progress to the next grade. Any exceptions are at the discretion of the School Director. Please notify your child's teacher if he/she will be absent.

BEHAVIOR

Given the short amount of time that we come together each week, mensch-like (ethical, honorable) behavior is necessary to ensure a safe, enriching and positive experience for your children. Teachers, along with their students, will set up basic classroom rules, or a covenant, to facilitate a productive learning environment. When problems arise, the teacher will remind the student of what behaviors are acceptable within the classroom. If a student continues to have problems, s/he will be sent to Rabbi Stephanie and she will contact parents to help resolve the problem.

We do not allow fidget spinners in the school. Please speak to Rabbi Stephanie if your child has attention issues and they will be addressed. If your child has a cell phone, please remind him/her that it must be stored away during class time unless the teacher requests that it be taken out.

CALENDAR

At the end of this booklet you will find a listing of Sundays and Tuesdays from September through early May. Each date has next to it whether there is school or not and any special events that will be taking place.

CLASS SCHEDULES

This year, we will be following a set schedule for classes to provide organization to our program. Exceptions to this schedule will be determined by Rabbi Abramson and/or Rabbi Wolfe.

Pre-K through 2nd grade Sundays only:

9:00 – 9:55	classroom time
9:55 – 10:05	snack in social hall
10:05 – 10:40	classroom time
10:40 – 11:00	services for Pre-K through 2 nd grade (place TBD)

3rd through 7th grade: Sundays and (Tuesdays)

9:00 – 9:55 (4:00 – 4:40)	Judaics for 3 rd /4 th	Hebrew for 5 th /6 th /7 th
9:55 – 10:05 (4:40 – 4:50)	Snack for all	
10:05 – 11:00 (4:50 – 5:30)	Hebrew for 3 rd /4 th	Judaics for 5 th /6 th /7 th
(5:30 – 6:00 Tue only)	Services for grades 3-7	

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Our staff is trained in the proper procedures for emergency situations. If there is an emergency involving your child or the entire school, you will be notified as soon as possible. Please be sure that we have a signed emergency medical care release form (part of the registration) on file for your child. In cases of emergency when you need to reach us during a religious school session, call Rabbi Wolfe at 412-478-5005. If there is no answer, call the synagogue at (781) 272-2351.

HOMWORK

Our goal is to engage our children in important discussions and to provide challenging activities. In order to obtain a knowledge base from which to draw information and formulate thoughtful opinions, students may be expected to complete small, weekly assignments. Every student in grades 3-7 will be able to access his/her Hebrew program electronically. Practice reading should be done for 10 minutes at least 3x per week. Students who are absent will be able to access the material covered in class and complete the work by themselves. This keeps our students confident and up-to-date when they return to the classroom.

ILLNESS

If your child becomes ill while s/he is at religious school, s/he will be removed from his/her classroom and taken to the office. We gladly dispense Band-Aids and TLC, however, we cannot give any medication to a student (including Advil and Tylenol). When necessary, we will contact the parent or others listed on the child's medical/ emergency release form to pick the child up.

SHABBAT SERVICE PARTICIPATION

Students participate in a class service each year. This is an important learning experience for the students so we hope that you and your family will attend these services when your child's class can be together. If you cannot make a specific service, please let Rabbi Abramson know in advance.

Class services: All begin at 6:30 pm

Nov. 3, 2017 – 6th/7th grades

December 15, 2017 – 5th grade (Chanukah)

January 26, 2018 – Pre-K/K (Tu B'Shevat) February 9, 2018 – 1st/2nd grades

March 23, 2018 – 3rd/4th grades

You are also encouraged to attend the following special services with your family:

Special services:

September 21-23, 2017 – Rosh HaShanah

September 29/30 – Yom Kippur

October 6, 2017 – Sukkot/Consecration

October 13, 2017 – Simchat Torah

March 2, 2018 – Purim

April 2, 2018 – Congregational Passover Seder

STUDENT INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

KIDDUSH CLUB

Designed to encourage regular attendance at Shabbat Services, the Kiddush Club recognizes and rewards those students who attend *Shabbat* services at Temple Shalom Emeth on a consistent basis. Little treats will be given to at services for any student who attends a service which is not his/her class service.

Students are reminded each week during services to sign their names on the Kiddush Club list that is posted on the Temple office door.

A special treat will be given in January for those students who have attended four Shabbat Services. Those students who have reached a total of nine Shabbat Services during the school year will be recognized at the Staff Appreciation Shabbat service.

MITZVAH HONOR SOCIETY

Our task in the world is to strive for holiness. As each of us reaches out to the three pillars of our tradition (Learning, Worship, and Acts of Loving-Kindness), we help to bring holiness into our personal life and the world around us. To help each student engage in these practices, the Mitzvah Honor Society program provides a variety of actions each month for students to participate. Families will receive a guide to participation at our first session. We encourage every student to be involved with this program. Special recognition for students who complete one action per month will be given at the Staff Appreciation Shabbat service.

TZEDAKAH

The practice of tzedakah (righteous giving) is an ongoing theme of our program. Children will be asked to bring money to contribute to their class tzedakah fund each week. Please arrange for your children to earn a little money each week so that s/he is really contributing part of him/ herself. At the end of the year, the students will decide how to disburse the funds.

WEATHER CLOSINGS

During the winter, we may need to close school due to poor weather. On Sundays, this decision will be made by 7:30 a.m. Notification will be made e-mail or text message directly to each family at approximately 7:45am. On Tuesdays we will follow the Burlington School District.

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL CALENDAR 2017-2018

September 17 First day of school (students and parents) 24 School	September 19 School 26 School
October 1 School followed by Sukkah Decorating 8 No School 15 School 22 School 29 School	October 3 School 10 School 17 School 24 School 31 No School
November 5 School 12 No school 19 School with Family education for 5 th grade 26 No School	November 7 School 14 School 21 No School 28 School
December 3 No School (city-wide teacher training) 10 School - Family Ed for grades 1/2 17 School with Hanukkah party 24 No School 31 No School	December 5 School 12 School 19 School 26 No School
January 7 School 14 No School 21 School - Family Ed for grades 3/4 28 School	January 2 No School 9 School 16 School 23 School 30 School
February 4 School with Family education for grades 6 & 7 11 School 18 No School 25 No School	February 6 School 13 School 20 No School 27 School
March 4 School followed by Purim celebration 11 School with Family Ed for Pre-K/K 18 School 25 School (Passover program)	March 6 School 13 School 20 School 27 School
April 1 No School 8 School 15 No School 22 No School 29 School	April 3 No School 10 School 17 No School 24 School
May 6 Last Day of School (parents & students)	May 1 School