

## Grade 7 Education Program

The 7<sup>th</sup> Grade is a wonderful year in Jewish life – a year of learning and questioning and a year of *simcha*, celebration. Reaching the age of Bar or Bat Mitzvah is a significant milestone in the life of a Jew. The ceremony that marks this important occasion is a very special event, not only for the Bar or Bat Mitzvah student, but also for the entire family and our whole community.

Becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is not an end, but rather a transition from one stage of Jewish life to the next. That is why this year of learning is so important. The program designed for our 7<sup>th</sup> grade students and their families seeks to not only make the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony more meaningful and relevant, but also to help prepare the students for the Jewish life that lies ahead of them.

### Tuesday Evening Classes

Our 7<sup>th</sup> grade students will join together as a community on Tuesday evenings from 6:15 – 8:00 pm. We will begin the evening with a pizza dinner and an opportunity for the students to socialize with one another. Following dinner, students will take part in a variety of informal, experiential and hands-on programs designed to help them explore Judaism and their Jewish life. Also part of the Tuesday evening program will be a rotational Hebrew class taught by Rabbi Sternman which each student will take part in for a portion of the year. This class will help students stay on top of their Hebrew fluency and prayer skills.

### Shabbat Morning Study and Worship

Study is an essential part of Shabbat celebration. Each Shabbat morning from September through February, 7<sup>th</sup> grade students and their families will meet with one of the rabbis for an informal, participatory study of the weekly Torah portion. The goal is to enable our young people to develop a sophisticated approach to the process of text study, while deepening their knowledge of the important issues raised in our sacred writings. Students and their parents will explore the text, ask questions and search together to find meaning in the Torah. We hope you will take the opportunity of already being at the temple for Torah Study to stay on for the congregational service or for the *Havurah* service.

Bar & Bat Mitzvah ceremonies occur within the context of the weekly Shabbat morning service. This is why familiarity with the prayers, rituals and order of the service is essential. **The 7<sup>th</sup> grade program requires that students attend 12 Shabbat morning services and 4 Shabbat evening services.**

7<sup>th</sup> Grade students are expected to attend Torah Study on the following dates:

September 16 & 26  
October 17, 24 & 31  
November 7, 14 & 21  
December 5, 12 & 19  
January 9, 23 & 30  
February 6

While the Torah Study on February 6<sup>th</sup> will be the last one that 7<sup>th</sup> grade students are required to attend, you are encouraged and welcome to continue to study and pray with the congregation every Shabbat.

## **Havurat Noar** A Community of Youth

Havurat Noar is The Community Synagogue's exciting way for our high school students to participate in the life of our community. Our program offers opportunities for our students in grades 8 through 12 to learn with our clergy and educator through an engaging and dynamic curriculum. The mission of Havurat Noar is "to nurture a vibrant youth community where young people can develop and embrace their identities as Jews."

Classes will meet on Tuesday nights from 6:30 – 8:00 pm, beginning with a communal dinner and continuing with the core courses. Each grade has its own core course, ranging from *Tikkun Olam* to Torah to MTV Judaism. Each course is designed to be thought provoking and to deal with issues of modern teenage life. Our Havurat Noar students are also given the opportunity to serve as *madrichim*, or student aides, in our religious school classrooms. Any student who regularly participates in the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades can join *Kabbalat Torah* (Confirmation) in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

For more detailed information about Havurat Noar, please see the Havurat Noar Guide.