

Welcome to Kehilla School

Dear Friends,

Kehilla is a Jewish Renewal synagogue, with the dual mission of renewing Judaism and renewing the Jewish soul. Our services are marked by rhythmic singing, English accessibility, meditation, and a commitment to social action. Kehilla's approach integrates a focus on deep spiritual experience, higher concern for egalitarianism and inclusiveness, and a progressive political outlook. This is reflected in the myriad opportunities for congregants to participate in the acts of *Tikkun Olam* – healing and repairing the world.

Kehilla Community meets for Shabbat services every Saturday morning. Sometimes we celebrate a Bar/Bat mitzvah or other *Simcha* (joyous occasions). We meet on Friday evenings, *Erev Shabbat*, with the following monthly schedule: first Friday night for a community-wide Kabbalat Shabbat, a song-filled and soulful evening of ecstatic prayer and contemplation, second Friday night for School/Family Shabbat, third for Havurah Shabbat (not at the shul), and fourth Friday, Tot Shabbat (for children ages 2-5) and their families.

At Kehilla School we teach Hebrew, Torah, ethics, history, and Jewish culture. We draw from both ancient and evolving traditions to bring greater Jewish awareness and joy to our lives. The younger students work primarily at recognizing and letters, and become familiar with some basic words and concepts. The upper grades use a Hebrew textbook geared toward adult learners, "Prayerbook Hebrew The Easy Way." Our aim is that by 4th grade our students are proficient in decoding Hebrew so that they may begin to deepen their vocabulary and connection with the prayers in preparation for bar/ bat mitzvah. We strive to create an environment in which each student connects to Jewish Community and feels valued.

We recognize the limitations of trying to teach Hebrew with one 45-minute lesson each week. We do our best to provide a solid foundation and some students find it beneficial to have private tutoring.

We strive to meet students where they are, to create lessons that connect to their lives. Our classes focus on heroes, culture, and Jewish identities. Although we graduate our students at the end of 6th grade most continue their studies in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah program the following year. Many of our Bar and Bat-Mitzvah students go on to Midrasha or JYCA (Jewish Youth for Community Action) to extend their Jewish learning during high school.

Every class is encouraged to form a *Havurah*, a friendship group that meets outside of school. These groups often meet to celebrate Shabbat or other holidays. It is very important that Jewish education not be limited to a two-hour time slot every week, but that the students have an opportunity to bring their learning home, to have a place in the world where their Jewish learning makes sense. Please ask for resources or contacts if you are interested.

Registration in Kehilla School requires membership in Kehilla Community Synagogue. School enrollment forms will be available to new and non-members in April, with a return date in mid-May.

I hope that you will plan to participate with the community.

B'shalom,
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