



Barbara & William B. Thalhimer, Jr. Religious School



# Parent Manual 2013-2014

RAMONA L. BRAND  
DIRECTOR OF  
EDUCATION  
R.BRAND@BETHAHABAH.ORG

MARTIN P. BEIFIELD, JR.  
RABBI  
M.BEIFIELD@BETHAHABAH.ORG

JESSE GALLOP  
ASSISTANT RABBI  
RABBI.GALLOP@BETHAHABAH.ORG

CHUCK ROTHENBERG  
PRESIDENT  
CROTHENBERG@HF-LAW.COM

RUSSELL M. FINER, FSA  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
R.FINER@BETHAHABAH.ORG

## Religious School Chair

MELISSA DEMLEIN  
MELISSA2556@COMCAST.NET

1111 W. Franklin St., Richmond, Virginia 23220  
TEMPLE: 804.358.6757 SCHOOL (SCHOOL HOURS): 804.359.4378  
FAX: 804.358.3451

## *Statement of Goals*

*The goal of the Barbara and William B. Thalhimer, Jr. Religious School is to enhance our children's knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of Judaism by providing a positive educational environment that will encourage a life-long commitment to the practice of our faith.*

*In ways that are appropriate for each child, it is our goal to teach:*

- ✧ *Jewish Identity & Values*
- ✧ *Family, Synagogue, & Community*
- ✧ *Shabbat, Festivals, & Holidays*
- ✧ *Hebrew & Prayer*
- ✧ *Covenant & Commandments*
- ✧ *Jewish Peoplehood & the Land of Israel*



URJ

*The Reform Movement has set the goal to develop and nurture Jews who:*

- ✧ *Affirm their Jewish identity and bind themselves to Am Yisrael.*
- ✧ *Bear witness to b'rit (the covenant between God and Jews) through mitzvot.*
- ✧ *Affirm their historic bond to Eretz Yisrael, the Land of Israel.*
- ✧ *Cherish and study Hebrew.*
- ✧ *Value and practice tefillah (prayer).*
- ✧ *Further the cause of justice, peace and freedom through chesed (loving-kindness).*
- ✧ *Celebrate Shabbat, festivals and ceremonies marking significant occasions in our lives.*
- ✧ *Esteem their own person, families and communities; and those of others.*
- ✧ *Express kinship with K'lal Yisrael by seeking the welfare of Jews throughout the world.*
- ✧ *Support and participate in the life of the synagogue!*

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# A Message From Ramona

Train a child in the way s/he ought to go,  
and even in old age, s/he will not depart from it.

Proverbs 22:6



## Connecting to our World through a Jewish Lens: Enhancing Jewish Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century

The Jewish landscape and culture has changed dramatically in the last 25 years. Our American Jewish community looks vastly different from that of a generation ago, with the increase of intermarriage, assimilation, technology, and shifting sense of “Jewish identity”. Jewish educational institutions, particularly the supplemental synagogue schools are grappling with the enormous shifts in the educational services for Jewish families. Jewish education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century requires a paradigm shift away from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century model that placed Jewish education in the bubble of the synagogue, assuming a cocooned Jewish community that required only Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation to take place in the supplemental school.

In order to face the challenges of 21<sup>st</sup> century Judaism, schools need to engage the participant in shared experiences, family learning and an ability to create relevant connections between personal Judaism, our greater community and the value of living Jewishly. Today’s Jewish family wants to find spiritual meaning, not just in the synagogue but in the inter-connected world in which we live. To this end, we are re-imagining Jewish education to provide opportunities for our students and their parents to find Jewish meaning and Jewish connection in our daily lives.

Additionally our goals are to provide our children with a love of Judaism, a connection to Israel, and the ability to attain a literate understanding of Reform Jewish practice and prayer. Our program offers classes from pre-school through 10<sup>th</sup> grade and an opportunity for 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> graders to work as Madrichim in the school. An involved Jewish child will become an engaged and connected Jewish adult.

B’shalom,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ramona".

Director of Education

# Programs for 2013-2014

## 5773-5774

We believe that Jewish education must be more than just textbook learning! To make the program more personally engaging, we offer an array of exciting family-based programs and dynamic youth groups.

### Tot Shabbat (18 mos. - 5 yrs) A Little Latkes Program



For our future students who are aged 18 months to 5 years, we have special services designed to give them a fun and warm introduction to the synagogue, to *Shabbat*, to the holidays, and to Judaism. Friday night Tot Shabbat services begin with a dinner at 5:30pm followed at 6pm by age appropriate services in the sanctuary and concluded with an Oneg.

**Fridays: October 11, November 8, February 7,  
March 7, April 4 (Tot Shabbat in the Park)**

### Gesher Program (Kindergarten-7<sup>th</sup> Grade)



*Gesher* is the Hebrew word for “bridge” or “connection.” The *Gesher* program is designed to bring parents into the Religious School to share in a meaningful educational experience. Each grade will study one critical Jewish topic each year. Rabbi Beifield will first lead a discussion with parents centering on a particular Jewish theme. Following the adult education component, students and parents will participate together in a related activity. These hands-on projects will include field trips, crafts, and ceremonies.

|                      |                   |                 |                    |
|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Kindergarten Gesher: | <b>October 13</b> | Grade 4 Gesher: | <b>January 12</b>  |
| Grade 1 Gesher:      | <b>October 20</b> | Grade 5 Gesher: | <b>February 23</b> |
| Grade 2 Gesher:      | <b>November 3</b> | Grade 6 Gesher: | <b>March 2</b>     |
| Grade 3 Gesher:      | <b>October 27</b> | Grade 7 Gesher: | <b>March 9</b>     |

## Midweek Hebrew



Midweek Hebrew meets from 6:00pm - 7:15pm on Wednesdays at Beth Ahabah Religious School. A pizza dinner is offered from 5:30pm - 6:00pm before class. Students will be given additional practice in reading Hebrew, chanting, and understanding the prayers in the *siddur*. Students will be divided into skill groups. These students increase proficiency, progress faster through the Sunday Hebrew Program, and get a head start on their B'nai Mitzvah preparation skills.

### 2013-2014 dates for Midweek Hebrew

- October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
- November 6, 13, 20,
- December 4, 11
- January 8, 15, 22, 29,
- February 5, 12, 19, 26
- March 5, 12, 19, 26
- April 2, 9, 23, 30

## Youth Shabbat Service with Ruach Chadash

Our Youth Shabbat Services allow our young people to both experience and lead lively youth oriented Shabbat Services. Contemporary music, personal reflections and thoughtful worship engage our youth in prayer. Our musical ensemble, Ruach Chadash accompanies these services.

- January 10, 2014:** 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade Family Shabbat  
**March 28, 2014:** 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade Family Shabbat parallel service in Joel House  
**May 2, 2014:** 7<sup>th</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> grade Family Shabbat parallel service in Joel House

## Youth Groups



**JeRAFTY:** Our High School youth group for students in grades 9-12 is the JeRAFTY chapter of NFTY (National Federation of Temple Youth). This highly active group has a great year planned under the leadership of Rabbi Gallop. For information contact Rabbi Gallop at [rabbi.gallop@bethahabah.org](mailto:rabbi.gallop@bethahabah.org)

**Jr. JeRAFTY:** Jr. JeRAFTY is our middle school group for 6th - 8th graders. This group meets about once a month with social activities both at and away from the synagogue. Social outings, cookouts, Youth Shabbat services, shul-ins, food and get-togethers are all part of the fun. 8th grade students are encouraged to attend The Vent and Spring Kallah as a way to lead into NFTY participation. For information contact Ramona Brand at [r.brand@bethahabah.org](mailto:r.brand@bethahabah.org)

**Chaverim:** Chaverim is our social group for 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> graders who will meet at least twice a semester for a social event after Sunday school. Some events will be held at the temple, and some events will be held off site. Parent participation is strongly encouraged. If you are interested in assisting at a Chaverim event please contact Ramona Brand at [r.brand@bethahabah.org](mailto:r.brand@bethahabah.org)

## Youth Music Groups



**Ruach Chadash:** Our student musical ensemble invites all musicians, both instrumental and vocal to participate in great Jewish music. Students need at least one year of instrument lessons to join. This group plays for T'fillah, Youth Shabbat Services, community and family events. Conductor Hannah Piracha, leads this group in Klezmer, Ladino, Israeli, traditional, holiday, jazz music and more! For more information contact Hannah Piracha at [pirachahm@vcu.edu](mailto:pirachahm@vcu.edu)

**Etz Chayim:** Raise your voice in song with Musical Director Natan Berenshteyn. Young Singers (Grades K -4) are welcome to join the choir! Etz Chayim sings at Family Services and performs at other special events. For more information contact Natan Berenshteyn at [nberensh@hanover.k12.va.us](mailto:nberensh@hanover.k12.va.us)

## First Steps into Judaism: Schedule for 2013-2014

First Steps is a special program for three- and four-year olds. The program now meets twice a month from 9:15am-11:45am. There is special emphasis on stories and arts and crafts related to the holidays and other elements of Jewish life. Music, Library and other special events round out the fun. Temple membership is not required for enrollment.

Dates: Sept. 8, 22 Oct. 20, Nov. 3, 17, Dec. 8 Jan 5, 19, Feb. 2, 23 Mar. 9, 23 Apr. 6, 26, May 4

## Class Dinners & Shabbat Services



The best way for young people to learn about their religion and the synagogue service is by regular *Shabbat* attendance. To that end, Congregation Beth Ahabah has planned class dinners for students along with their families. Enjoy a lovely Shabbat dinner followed by Family services.

|                                   |              |                                     |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| Kindergarten and First Grade      | October 25   | Dinner at 6:00pm, Service at 7:00pm |
| Second and Third Grade            | September 27 | Dinner at 6:00pm, Service at 7:30pm |
| Fourth and Fifth Grade            | November 15  | Dinner at 6:00pm, Service at 7:30pm |
| Sixth and Seventh Grade           | January 10   | Dinner at 6:00pm, Service at 7:30pm |
| Eighth and Ninth Grade            | May 2nd      | Dinner at 6:00pm, Service at 7:30pm |
| Kindergarten through Second Grade | February 21  | Dinner at 6:00pm Service at 7:30pm  |
| Third through Sixth Grade         | March 28     | Dinner at 6:00pm, Service at 7:30pm |

## Special Needs Program

**Prachim:** Congregation Beth Ahabah is dedicated to the concept that every Jewish child is entitled to a Jewish education, and that education should be tailored to his or her needs and abilities. Since January 2001, we have had a self-contained class for students with an assortment of special needs – autism, Downs Syndrome, and others. Under the direction of Special Needs Coordinator Andrea Costanzo, each student has an individual plan and some may spend time with their age-appropriate class. Each student has a Madrich or Madricha who works individually with him/her.

# Holiday & Family Events

*Wednesday September 18*

## **Congregation Sukkot Dinner**

Every student will observe *Sukkot* by shaking the *lulav* and *etrog* in the synagogue *sukkah*. Dinner at 6pm, followed by a 7:00pm service. Etz Chayim sings.

*Wednesday September 25*

## **Congregation Simchat Torah Klezmer Service**

Dance with the Torah to the Klezmer music of *My Son the Doctor*. Service 6:45pm Hor D'Oeuvres and Drinks in the Sukkah 7:30pm service.

*Sunday November 24 and Friday November 29*

## **Family Chanukah fun**

Join us on Sunday, November 24 for a joyous family event featuring games, crafts and activities for young and old and, of course, delicious Brotherhood Latkes. Then bring your Menorah to our Chanukah/ Shabbat Service on Friday, November 29. Enjoy the lights while you listen to the music of Etz Chayim.

*Sunday December 8*

## **Electives Sunday**

Parents and students together dive into hands-on learning for a morning of fun in the Sunday School. Art, food, drama, Torah, and special field trips activities are featured. Reserve your space early for a special Jewish Art tour to the VMFA.

*Sunday, March 30 and Sunday April 6*

## **Passover**

A special two part Passover journey. Parents and students together will create take-home Seder items for use at your own table. Together we will all celebrate Passover at our annual School Wide Seder.

*Sunday April 27*

## **Mitzvah Day**

A wonderful opportunity for the entire family to participate in good deeds that benefit those less fortunate! Past projects have benefited the Faison School for Autism, Hospitality House, VCU Massey Cancer Center, Hebrew Cemetery and many more!

*Sunday, May 18*

## **Lag B'omer in the Park**

We'll celebrate the last day of Religious School with a Lag B'omer picnic and nature hike at Three Lakes Park and Nature Center. Hiking, tours of the Nature Center and Aquarium, field day games and picnic lunch are part of the fun.





# POLICIES & PROCEDURES

## Attendance

Since we have so little time with your child, it is important that students attend class regularly so that we might be able to achieve our goal of providing a strong Jewish education. Late arrivals should report to the Religious School office to check in so that their attendance may be recorded.

- If advance notice of a student's absence is not possible, please call or email the teacher prior to the next class so that the teacher can provide any missed work. You can also call the Religious School Office at 804.359.4378 on Sunday mornings.
- If a student misses 7 or more classes, the parents will meet with the Director of Education. At the discretion of the Director, a project pertaining to the curriculum of the grade may be given.
- Due to content and necessary preparation for Confirmation, any 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade student missing 7 weeks of class might not be permitted to participate in Confirmation with the class. At the discretion of the Director, a project pertaining to the curriculum of the grade may be given.

## Arrival at 9:15 and Dismissal at 11:45

### Arrival:

Students should be in class by 9:15am promptly. Please do not arrive before 9:00am.

Parents should escort students in Kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade to class. Students in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and up may be dropped off in front of the Education Building on West Franklin St. Volunteers and staff members will supervise drop-off.

### Sunday Dismissal:

Kindergarten through 2nd grade students must be picked up in the classroom. 3rd through 7th grade students will be escorted by their teachers to wait at the curb. Children in grades 3 and up are permitted to pick up siblings in Kindergarten – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade with prior notice to your child's teacher and bring the younger child to the curb to wait for pickup. K - 2 students must be picked up by a parent if there is no older sibling. If you need clarification on this policy please contact Ramona.

Students will stay with the class during Religious School. No student may leave the premises without permission.

### Monday Dismissal:

Students will be dismissed directly to parents, either in person or in a car from the Joel House door. No student will be allowed to walk down the breezeway alone unaccompanied. All parents must pull cars up through the breezeway to pick up their students.

## Early Dismissal

If you need to pick up your child before 11:45am, please go directly to the Religious School office and a staff member will get your child.

## School Cancellations

School closings due to inclement weather will be announced various ways. The Director of Education will contact teachers regarding school closings. In case of inclement weather call the Temple office at 358-6757 and listen to the voicemail message. WWBT-Channel 12 will air closing information.

## Dress Code

Students are expected to attend in attire appropriate to the Temple, a school setting and the weather. Kippot are available for use during T'fillah.

## Cell Phone Use

To have a cell phone at Religious School is a decision made between parents and their child. However, if parents give permission for their child to bring a cell phone, the following procedures should be followed.

- Cell phones may not be used at any time during school hours unless specified for a class project.
- Cell phones should remain in the "off" mode during school hours.
- If a cell phone rings or is seen in use during school hours, the phone will be confiscated by an instructor. Parents will have to pick up cells phones personally from the Director of Education.
- Camera, internet, text messaging or any other function available on a cell phone is expressly prohibited during school hours unless specifically requested by a teacher for class use.
- Please discuss with your child the ramifications of sending inappropriate pictures or messages via cell phones.

*Congregation Beth Ahabah is not responsible for any lost, stolen or damaged cell phones.*

## Guests

Students are always welcome to bring guests to Religious School provided prior arrangements are made with the Director of Education.

## Homework

Hebrew homework will be given on a regular basis in grades 3 - 7. Weekly homework is an important component of our curriculum and assists your child in learning the prayers and language for Bar or Bat Mitzvah. It is expected that your child will complete weekly assignments and return them to class in a timely manner. Students will be responsible for bringing their Hebrew workbooks home and back to class. In the case of a lost book, families will be responsible for the cost of replacement.

## Withdrawal and Tuition Refund Policy

Parents need to give written notice to the Director of Education in the event a child will be withdrawn from the Religious School. Refunds will be available according to the following schedule:

Through the end of September, 2013 - Full refund minus a \$25.00 processing fee

From October through December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013 – 50% refund minus a \$25.00 processing fee

After December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013 – No refund

**No refunds of any kind are given in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah year.**

## Progress Reports

Student progress will be communicated twice yearly on a semester basis. A progress report will be completed by the classroom teacher and mailed home at the end of each semester. Teachers may also contact parents by phone or e-mail during the semester if any educational concerns arise. Please feel free to contact your classroom teacher or the Director of Education should you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's progress during the year.

## Shabbat Service Attendance

Students are asked to attend a minimum number of services per school year. Shabbat services include Friday night services, beginning at 7:00 or 7:30pm during the school year, and Saturday morning services, beginning at 10:30am, when there is a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. This will allow the students and families to become more comfortable with the service structure in preparation for Bar or Bat Mitzvah and will help develop a greater sense of community.

Third and Fourth graders should attend **5** Shabbat services and/or Holiday services a year.

Fifth, Sixth and Seventh graders should attend **7** Shabbat services and/or Holiday services a year.

**It is the responsibility of the students attending services to fill out the attendance slip in the lobby.**

The Religious School administration will record attendance each Monday. A student must sign in to have that attendance count toward his or her requirement. Attendance at services from other congregations is allowed to count toward attendance goals. Students must give the service insert with a parent signature to the Director of Education.

## Behavioral Expectations and Discipline Policy

We expect every student to respect the Temple, Sanctuary, and school property; to work cooperatively with staff and fellow students; to observe classroom rules; and to participate in class activities. We will not tolerate the behavior of any student who destroys or defaces Temple or personal property; who engage in verbal or physical abuse, who leave the school grounds, or who takes items belonging to the Temple or to others.

Students who are unable to follow class rules and/or who engage in disruptive or inappropriate behavior will be sent to the office. The student will remain in the office until the Director of Education is available.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Referral:** The teacher, student and Director of Education will discuss the code of conduct and expectations.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Referral:** Parents will be notified. The student will be unable to return to class until he or she has signed a behavior contract with a parent, the teacher and the Director of Education.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Referral:** The parent must attend class with the student for a period of weeks to be determined by the Director of Education. The Director of Education and teacher(s) will meet with the Rabbi to determine further disciplinary action. Considerations to suspend the child will be addressed.

## The Role of the Parent

On Sunday Mornings, our office is staffed at 804-359-4378.

To be effective, Jewish education **MUST** be a partnership between the school and the home. The following are ways that you, the parent, can become a fully active partner in this process.

In order to achieve and maintain the quality of programs offered by the Religious School, we must have the assistance of all of our school parents:

- Working with your child to ensure Hebrew homework and/or Judaics home projects are completed in a timely manner
- Helping set up for the model *seder* at Passover
- Helping support a special Family program, such as Tu B'shevat, Passover or Mitzvah Day
- Providing transportation/chaperoning on field trips, if applicable
- Honoring the teachers
- Bringing your children to Religious School with regular attendance

The Religious School committee will coordinate the efforts of the parents and teachers in each grade. This may be accomplished by developing phone trees, coordinating parent volunteers for events, and by contacting parents for special needs within the classroom.

The Religious School Committee is a committee established by the Board of Managers of Congregation Beth Ahabah. The responsibilities of the Religious School Committee are broad in scope and can influence all aspects of the Religious School program, as needed and as requested by staff, parents, students, and other congregants. The Committee membership represents a cross-section of the Beth Ahabah community (parents, students, teachers, staff, clergy and congregants).

The Religious School Committee is currently:

- Monitoring, reviewing, developing, and updating the strategic plan.
- Reviewing the Parent Handbook annually,
- Reviewing the curriculum and identifying needs/concerns,
- Overseeing the program, faculty, and student evaluation processes,
- Addressing individual and/or group concerns, suggestions, and recommendations,
- Chair committees to plan and implement special school programs.
- Planning for the future of the Religious School.

For more information about the committee, contact Melissa Demlein at [melissa2556@comcast.net](mailto:melissa2556@comcast.net)

## Hebrew Program

### **Primary Hebrew:**

Kindergartners, First, and Second Graders attend Primary Hebrew classes for 20-30 minutes each week. The goal of Primary Hebrew is to introduce and familiarize your children with the Hebrew alphabet, introduce them to the sound and look of Hebrew and to be introduced to both prayer and conversational Hebrew vocabulary.

The Primary grades provide an introduction to the aleph-bet and beginning Hebrew vocabulary in a fun environment with games and songs while gaining recognition of holidays and ritual symbols and practices.

### **Hebrew Instruction:**

Formal Hebrew instruction begins in Third grade and continues through Seventh grade. Students spend an hour each Sunday morning with a Hebrew teacher. We currently use the Shalom Uvrachah for Kitah Alef and Kol Yisrael series for Kitah Bet – Kitah Hay. A weekly T'fillah service for all students reinforces their fluency and prayer understanding. Two of the goals of a "prayer based curriculum" are to make students feel comfortable in the prayer service and to give them skills to understand and participate in life-cycle events and home rituals. This is the keystone of our Hebrew program.

Multi-sensory learning is the foundation for the Primary department's Hebrew program. The Primary grades (kindergarten through second grade) are crucial years in the Jewish development of a child. These are the years that the child is most receptive to basic attitudes and values. The Primary program is highly active and interactive. Through crafts, games, music, and Hebrew, the Primary child builds a strong foundation upon which the rest of his/her Jewish education will be built.

At each grade level the students should be learning the following prayers while maintaining their knowledge of those previously learned.

| <b>Kindergarten</b>     | <b>First Grade</b>         | <b>Second Grade</b>                    |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Shema                   | Motzi                      | Second and Third Questions of Passover |
| Shabbat Candle Blessing | Bar'chu                    | Mi Chamocha                            |
| First Line of Kiddush   | First Question of Passover |  |

Hebrew and prayer are strongly emphasized, and it is our expectation that every student will be able to read the siddur and have a good beginning familiarity and understanding of the prayers in our liturgy.

Though not required, we **strongly urge** students in these grades to attend Midweek Hebrew (Wednesdays from 6:00pm-7:15pm). Test results have shown that attendance at Midweek Hebrew makes a significant difference in the student's grasp of the material and adds another day of reinforcement that is crucial when learning a language.

At each grade level the students should be learning the following prayers while maintaining their knowledge of those previously learned:

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>Kitah Aleph:</b> | Fourth Question of Passover, Aleph Bet and Vowels  |
| <b>Kitah Bet:</b>   | Brachot for food, Vitzivanu prayers, Shabbat Brachot, Kiddush                              |
| <b>Kitah Gimel:</b> | Barchu, Shema, Mi Chamocha, Yotzer/Ma'ariv, V'ahavta                                       |
| <b>Kitah Dalet:</b> | Avot V'Imahot, Gevurot, K'dushshah, Shalom Rav   |
| <b>Kitah Hey:</b>   | Prayers for opening the Ark, Torah and Haftarah Blessings, Alienu, Kaddish, V'zot Ha Torah |

## School Curriculum

**First Steps:** An introduction to Judaism for our youngest learners. The curriculum focus is on "What is Jewish?" Each class is a stand-alone lesson on a holiday, value or life cycle event. The class is designed to provide young learners with a familiarity of and identification with Jewishness.

**Kindergarten:** "My Jewish Self, My Jewish World." The curriculum covers holidays, Mitzvot, the Jewish community, music, family, community, holiday and ritual practice and an introduction to Aleph Bet.

**Grade 1:** "Our Torah, Our People": The First grade curriculum centers on the stories from the Torah. Students will learn about the Torah stories concentrating on Jewish values, history, God and how they relate to our students as Jews. First graders will also review holidays, rituals and traditions.

**Grade 2:** "My Jewish Year, My Jewish Life": The second grade curriculum centers on the cycles of the Jewish Year and Jewish Life. Students will learn about the Holidays and about Life Cycle events and how they connect them to God, the Jewish People and their own lives. Second graders will continue their instruction in Aleph Bet. Learning through Jewish Literature will enhance curriculum.

Visits to the library introduce students in grade **K-2** to a wide variety of Jewish literature. Visits from the Music Specialist introduce kindergarteners to ritual and cultural Jewish music.

**Grade 3:** "Jewish Heroes, Then and Now" will focus on strengthening individual relationships with God and learning about Torah stories with related stories. *Menschlikeit* (being a good person) will be studied through the performance of good deeds in the home and in the community. Heroes and Heroines of Judaism are studied through Torah stories and modern figures.

**Grade 4:** “God is Holy and I am Holy” The fourth grade curriculum will center around study of Jewish Life Cycle events and as well as refine the understanding of *kedushah* (holiness) and apply this knowledge to how ritual objects, symbols, prayer and our behaviors can make moments and places special, holy and closer to God.

**Grade 5:** “Ahavat Zion: Love of Israel”. The fifth graders learn in-depth about the Mitzvah of *Ahavot Tziyon* or “Love of Israel.” The study of the history, land, culture and cities of Israel will be studied in an exciting year-long journey to Israel.

**Grade 6:** “Eizehu Gibor: Living Jewish Values” Are you a Muggle with Morality? The Harry Potter series of books are used to help 6<sup>th</sup> graders learn how Jewish values can shape their lives and help them to envision themselves as everyday heroes and heroines

**Grade 7: Section 1:** “Challenges and Changes” students learn about American Jewry, studying the Jewish contributions to the United States’ history, culture and geographic movement. There is a special focus on Jewish life in Virginia. Visits to Beth Ahabah Museum and Archives and the Hebrew Cemetery are part of the curriculum.

**Section 2:** “Intolerance, Heroism and Social Justice” students study the Holocaust, its causes and effects. Students are introduced to the modes of intolerance that were used against the Jews and others by the Nazis.. Students will learn about the heroism, resistance and humanity displayed by many victims and survivors. Social Justice is examined as students learn to be “upstanders” not “bystanders”. The class culminates in a trip to the Holocaust Museum.

## Confirmation: Grades 8-10

Eighth grade, Ninth grade, and Confirmation Class (tenth grade), called *Midrasha*, meet on Monday evenings from 6:30pm – 8:30pm in the Joel House.

The goal is to help guide the students to think Jewishly about themselves, about God, about life and about their responsibility to heal the world. An exciting program of core classes and electives make up the program which combines formal and informal education.

Rabbi Beifield, Rabbi Gallop and Director of Education, Ramona Brand, teach these classes

### Monday Night Schedule:

|                  |                           |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| 6:30pm - 7:00pm  | Pizza Dinner (Joel House) |
| 7:00pm - 7:45pm  | Core Classes              |
| 7:45-pm - 8:30pm | Elective Classes          |



**The Barbara & William B. Thalhimer, Jr. Religious School of Congregation Beth Ahabah**  
**SCHOOL CALENDAR FOR 2013-2014**

**Dates may change due to circumstances – check Temple bulletins and school mailings for updates**

| Sunday (Religious School) |                                      | Monday (Midrasha) |  | Wednesday (Midweek Hebrew) |                     |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|--|----------------------------|---------------------|
| 8-Sep                     | <b>First Day</b>                     | 9-Sep             |  | 11-Sep                     |                     |
| 15-Sep                    | <b>no class YK</b>                   | 16-Sep            |  | 18-Sep                     |                     |
| 22-Sep                    |                                      | 23-Sep            | <b>First Day</b>                               | 25-Sep                     |                     |
| 29-Sep                    |                                      | 30-Sep            |  | 32Oct                      | <b>First day</b>    |
| 6-Oct                     |                                      | 7-Oct             |  | 9-Oct                      |                     |
| 13-Oct                    | <b>K Gesher</b>                      | 14-Oct            | <b>no class</b>                                | 16-Oct                     |                     |
| 20-Oct                    | <b>1<sup>st</sup> gr. Gesher</b>     | 21-Oct            |  | 23-Oct                     |                     |
| 27-Oct                    | <b>3<sup>rd</sup> gr. Gesher</b>     | 28-Oct            |  | 30-Oct                     | <b>no class</b>     |
| 3-Nov                     | <b>2<sup>nd</sup> gr. Gesher</b>     | 4-Nov             |  | 6-Nov                      |                     |
| 10-Nov                    | <b>Synagogue Tour Grades 1&amp;2</b> | 11-Nov            | <b>no class</b>                                | 13-Nov                     |                     |
| 17-Nov                    |                                      | 18-Nov            |  | 20-Nov                     |                     |
| 24-Nov                    | <b>Hannukah party</b>                | 25-Nov            |  | 27--Nov                    | <b>no class</b>     |
| 1-Dec                     | <b>No class</b>                      | 2-Dec             |  | 4-Dec                      |                     |
| 8-Dec                     | <b>Electives Sunday Grades 4-7</b>   | 9-Dec             |  | 11-Dec                     |                     |
| 15-Dec                    |                                      | 17-Dec            | <b>Winter Break</b>                            | 18-Dec                     | <b>Winter Break</b> |
| 22-Dec                    | <b>Winter break</b>                  | 24- Dec           | <b>Winter Break</b>                            | 25-Dec                     | <b>Winter Break</b> |
| 29-Dec                    | <b>Winter break</b>                  | 31-Dec            | <b>Winter Break</b>                            | 1-Jan                      | <b>Winter Break</b> |
| 5-Jan                     |                                      | 6-Jan             |  | 8-Jan                      |                     |
| 12-Jan                    | <b>4<sup>th</sup> gr. Gesher</b>     | 13-Jan            |  | 15-Jan                     |                     |
| 19-Jan                    |                                      | 20-Jan            | <b>no class</b>                                | 22-Jan                     |                     |
| 26-Jan                    |                                      | 27-Jan            | <b>no class</b>                                | 29-Jan                     |                     |
| 2-Feb                     |                                      | 3-Feb             |  | 5-Feb                      |                     |
| 9-Feb                     |                                      | 10-Feb            | <b>no class</b>                                | 12-Feb                     |                     |
| 16-Feb                    | <b>no class</b>                      | 17-Feb            | <b>no class</b>                                | 19-Feb                     |                     |
| 23-Feb                    | <b>5<sup>th</sup> gr. Gesher</b>     | 24-Feb            |  | 26-Feb                     |                     |
| 2-Mar                     | <b>6<sup>th</sup> gr. Gesher</b>     | 3-Mar             |  | 5-Mar                      |                     |
| 9-Mar                     | <b>7<sup>th</sup> gr. Gesher</b>     | 10-Mar            |  | 12-Mar                     |                     |
| 16-Mar                    |                                      | 17-Mar            |  | 19-Mar                     |                     |
| 23-Mar                    |                                      | 24-Mar            |  | 26-Mar                     |                     |
| 30-Mar                    | <b>Passover Program Primary</b>      | 31-Mar            | <b>no class</b>                                | 2-Apr                      |                     |
| 6-Apr                     | <b>School-wide Seder</b>             | 7-Apr             |  | 9-Apr                      |                     |
| 13-Apr                    | <b>Spring Break</b>                  | 14-Apr            | <b>no class Passover</b>                       | 17-Apr                     | <b>Spring Break</b> |
| 20-Apr                    | <b>Spring Break</b>                  | 21-Apr            |  | 23-Apr                     |                     |
| 27-Apr                    | <b>Mitzvah Day</b>                   | 28-Apr            |  | 30-Apr                     | <b>Last Day</b>     |
| 4- May                    | <b>Awards Ceremony</b>               | 5-May             | <b>10<sup>th</sup> grade only</b>              | 7-May                      |                     |
| 11-May                    | <b>No class Mother's Day</b>         | 13-May            | <b>Confirmation class dinner and blessings</b> | 14-May                     |                     |
| 19-May                    | <b>Lag Bomer Celebration</b>         | 20-May            |  | 21-May                     |                     |
|                           |                                      |                   |  |                            |                     |

## Class Dinner Dates

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Kindergarten/First Grade (Consecration) | October 25   |
| Second/Third Grade                      | September 27 |
| Fourth/Fifth Grade                      | November 15  |
| Sixth/Seventh Grade                     | January 10   |
| Eighth/Ninth Grade                      | May 2        |
| Kindergarten through Second Grade       | February 21  |
| Third through Sixth Grade               | March 28     |

## Gesher Dates

|               |             |
|---------------|-------------|
| Kindergarten  | October 13  |
| First Grade   | October 20  |
| Second Grade  | November 3  |
| Third Grade   | October 27  |
| Fourth Grade  | January 12  |
| Fifth Grade   | February 23 |
| Sixth Grade   | March 2     |
| Seventh Grade | March 9     |

## Who to contact



**Ramona Brand** is our Director of Education. Call her at 358-6757 or email her at [r.brand@bethahabah.org](mailto:r.brand@bethahabah.org) to discuss your child or to offer feedback and suggestions about the Religious School



**Rabbi Jesse Gallop** is available at 358-6757 or by email at [rabbi.gallop@bethahabah.org](mailto:rabbi.gallop@bethahabah.org).



**Russ Finer**, Executive Director, is available at 358-6757 or by email at [r.finer@bethahabah.org](mailto:r.finer@bethahabah.org).



**Rabbi Martin P. Beifield, Jr.** is available at 358-6757 or by email at [rabbi@bethahabah.org](mailto:rabbi@bethahabah.org)