

KB's curriculum emphasizes four aspects of Humanistic Judaism:

- **IDENTITY**

Children learn about their Jewish background through a range of classroom experiences, so they can create for themselves an identity as humanistic Jews.

- **COMMUNITY**

Through integrated experiences in Sunday School and the larger KB community, the children develop a sense of community and shared goals, helping each other work together to strengthen their classroom and the KB community.

- **CARING**

Children learn about and act upon the Jewish tradition of caring and concern for others through cooperation, respect for others, and active social service.

- **ACCEPTANCE OF DIVERSITY**

Children learn to create a positive Jewish identity in a multi-cultural world, an identity that respects the diversity within the Jewish tradition and those of other cultures; that prepares us to cooperate and resolve conflicts with others in a world where we all accept each other.

Because many children come from families which have a broad range of Jewish backgrounds, and/or which have combined two or more religious and cultural traditions, the curriculum attempts to combine these elements in a way that builds a positive Jewish identity without rejecting other traditions.

Incorporating these Principles into the Classroom Setting

Our teachers and curriculum will seek to model for our children a respect for the following values:

- Rationality
- Decision-Making
- Courage
- Creativity
- Generosity
- Trust
- Hope
- Tikun Olam

SUMMARY OF CURRICULA

Our Sunday School morning starts with a Mifgash, or all-school assembly, where we promote community building and inter-grade and staff connection by singing, listening to stories and sharing moments together. Music classes are integrated into the curriculum as well as family projects.

GAN Y'LADIM: PRE-K, KINDERGARTEN, GRADE ONE

Jewish Holidays And Symbols

The colorful expression of the Jewish holidays enable our children to experience their identity in a positive way. Both seasonal changes and historical memory combine to provide the aesthetics of the annual calendar. Poetry, music and legend are the artistic vehicles for associating the regular changes of nature with events in the Jewish past. The repeated cycle of the seasons also highlights the religious experience of those aspects of life that never seem to alter.

Emphasis is on Jewish symbols which provide concrete visual expression and are intended to enable the children to feel a sense of group identity. Children will learn about Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Shabbat, Hanukkah, Tu B'shvat, Purim, Passover and Yom Ha'atzmaut from a Humanistic Jewish perspective. Students will learn through group projects, stories, dramatic play, arts and craft, cooking, games and songs.

KITAH BET AND GIMEL: GRADES 2 & 3

These curriculum are alternating, so that students get one each year.

Jewish Leaders In Early Biblical Times

The ethical example of famous Jewish teachers and leaders in ancient times helps our children find worthy heroes with whom they can identify. Personalities like Abraham, Moses, Jacob and Joseph present through their biographies, the moral virtues of courage, loyalty and honesty. The events of their lives and the lives of many other biblical figures enable our children to identify Jewish achievement with humanistic values.

This curriculum will focus on the study of Bible heroes and heroines, and decide what heroic qualities we have in ourselves and in people we know today. We will continue to study the holidays, and begin to explore Humanistic Jewish values. Learning will occur through participation games, arts and crafts, music, cooking, group projects, and reading of children's books. We will create artwork and assemble a booklet recording our learning and discussions about Biblical stories,

Mitzvot and Humanistic Values. The focus will be on having fun while we learn!

Jewish Leaders In Later Biblical Times

Every hero must make choices -- many difficult, some seemingly impossible. These choices, and a person's actions that follow, make a hero.

As exciting as their predecessors, Jewish leaders of the later biblical period afford the opportunity to study many Jewish personalities. The individual heroes who evidence a humanistic tendency are chosen for study. If they sought to solve their problems through reliance on human effort and reason, they are morally interesting. We will study about Samson and Delilah, Ruth, Samuel and Saul, David and Goliath and Solomon. Students will decide what heroic qualities our heroes had, which one we have in ourselves and in people we know today.

Learning will occur through participation games, arts and crafts, music, cooking, group projects, and reading of children's books. We will create artwork and assemble a booklet throughout the year recording the Biblical stories learned and how those relate to them and their heroes. Their own booklet will be a product of their humanistic Judaism discussions and learning. The focus will be on having fun while we learn!

KITA DALET AND KITA HEY : GRADES 4 & 5

These curriculum are alternating, so that students get one each year.

Jewish History and HerStory

The Many Faces of Judaism

This class explores some historical snapshots and ethical dilemmas that shaped the history and herstory of Jewish people in the United States – from the first coming of Sephardic Jews to the New World, up to the present day. As a community we'll focus less on facts and dates, and more on the people who shaped this story. We'll include games, small group conversations, projects, snack, some guest speakers, films – and a final project that will likely be a book review or a brief biography of someone involved in this story. We'll use a text (*Let Freedom Ring*) and I will assign some homework each week – usually some reading from the text and an interview or activity that involves parents, family or your community. We'll weave some review and discussion of the key Jewish holidays throughout the year. We will also have weekly music time with Zach!

Turning Points in Jewish History

The story of Judaism is many stories, spread over 5,000 years. Earlier classes at Kahal B'raira have focused on the first millennia of Jewish history; this class begins at the time of the fall of the Temple (576 C.E.) and moves forward. Our class will focus on five themes:

- Which Judaic values have survived and thrived over the past 2,000 years?
- How has Judaism contributed to and learned from other cultures?

- How is Humanistic Judaism one step along this journey? What aspects of Humanistic Judaism appear throughout our ethics, culture and her/history?
- How do our holidays reflect humanist Jewish values and his/herstory? What foundational values and ways of being do humanists commit themselves to? How do we live out/ practice these values in our every day lives?
- How do values of Tzedekah and Tikkun O'lam appear in our his/herstory?

The Jewish people are much more than “survivors” or “victims” of his/herstory: at each turning point, Jews have contributed to the cultures around them. We will look at key moments in Jewish his/herstory as turning points. We'll read, talk and do projects. We will get to know each other's stories and we will learn what it means to be a Humanist Jew in the context of this 5,000 year journey. Each of us will contribute to our understanding, as we each contribute to our her/history.

KITA VAV AND KITA ZION: GRADE 6 & 7

Through Our Jewish Lens: A Jewish Experience Throughout History

What Is Judaism?

This year will be focused on answering big questions about Judaism, and answering the question “What is Judaism?”. Students will explore different Jewish movements and theology, including humanism. Students will also explore cultural Judaism – Jewish literature, Jewish languages, Jewish music, and Jewish food. We will also have sessions exploring Jewish activism, and Israel. We will include many opportunities to explore the meaning, and history, behind a Bar/t Mitzvah ceremony, which will combine with out of class preparation for those choosing to have a Bar/t Mitzvah ceremony, and provide background for those not having a Bar/t Mitzvah ceremony. We will have plenty of opportunities to ask questions, and find an answer together to “What is Judaism?”

Identity And Ethics

We will use traditional texts from Torah, Talmud and rabbinic commentaries – along with contemporary “texts” that include stories, music and film. These texts will help us explore and connect rabbinic traditions and ways of knowing (dialogue, questions, and the continual evolution of our tradition) with contemporary voices and approaches to age-old conversations about family, responsibility, forgiveness, healing (Tikkun Olam), environmental care, freedom, truth-telling, community, social justice and activism (Tzedakah).

Our theme for the coming year centers on identity and ethics. What does it mean to be a Humanistic Jew in a contemporary society? What are our responsibilities as Humanists? How do we fit into the broader story of Judaism?