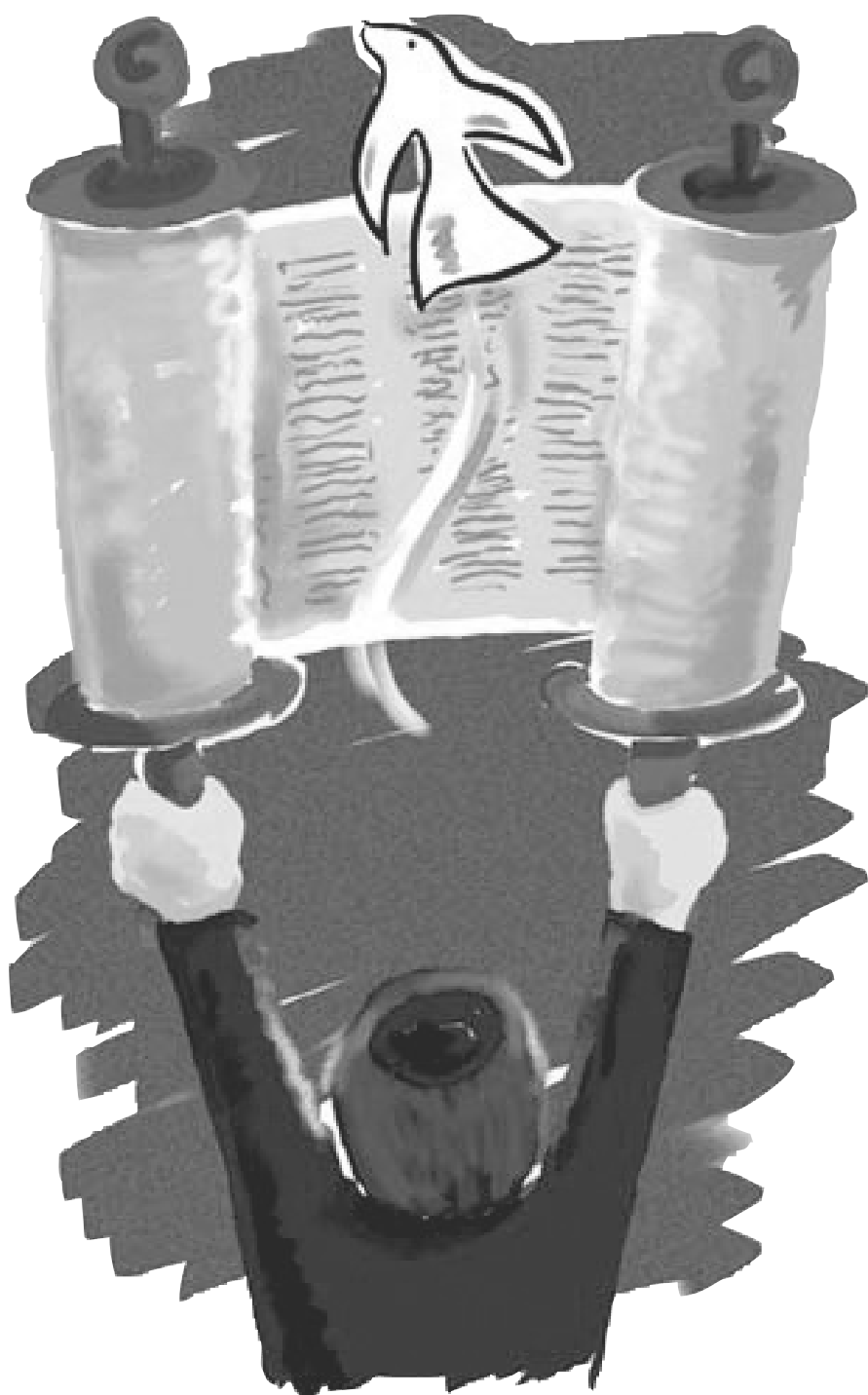




Torathon 2014



“My Jewish Search for Meaning and Purpose”

This year's Torathon will be headlined by Ron Wolfson, PhD who is an international scholar and author.

Following the keynote will be a wonderful evening of study and discussions featuring the area's distinguished rabbis, cantors, educators and community leaders.

Generously supported by

The Siegel Family Cultural Fund in memory of
Bernice and Albert Chaiken & Arthur Siegel

and

The Rotman Family Foundation in memory of
Murray Rotman

Saturday, November 8, 2014

16 Cheshvan 5775

5:20 P.M. – 10:00 P.M.

Registration begins

Refreshments to follow.

CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL

15 Jamesbury Drive, Worcester, MA



Jewish Federation
OF CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS

THE **STRENGTH** OF A PEOPLE.
THE **POWER** OF COMMUNITY.





REGISTRATION ONGOING 5:20 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.

Please Note:

- Some classrooms will have limited seating. Please be prepared with 2nd and 3rd choices in mind.
- People will be available at the registration tables to assist you with all the room assignments.
- New courses may be added following the printing of this brochure.

Please check for any changes at the registration tables, or online at jewishcentralmass.org/torathon



5:50 P.M. Havdalah Service in the Sanctuary

Followed by Torathon Keynote Address

“Does Judaism change your life?”
The Jewish search for meaning and purpose.”

Dr. Ron Wolfson is a Fingerhut Professor of Education for the Graduate Center for Education of the American Jewish University in Los Angeles. He is co-founder and co-president of Synagogue 3000, an institute whose mission is to catalyze excellence in synagogue life. A pioneer in the field of Jewish family education, Dr. Wolfson is a member of the Consortium for the Jewish Family. He is a frequent scholar in residence for synagogues and communities.

ONGOING

Information tables representing many of our local synagogues, agencies and institutions will be available for your interest in the Social Hall.

Social Hour Starting at 10:00 P.M.

Enjoy free coffee and desserts in the Social Hall.
Vaad Kosher Approved

Torathon 2014

ALEPH 7:00 P.M. – 7:50 P.M.

A1 MOSHE’S MOMENTS OF LEADERSHIP – “HELP ME GOD”

Forty years of responsibility. What can we learn from Moshe’s style? How did he mature? Using the Torah text, we will analyze Reb Moshe as “the community organizer” and “paradigm of inclusion.” What did he learn from his father in law?” What did he teach his brother? Four incidents when Moshe asked God for a binding legal decision? Let’s discuss what all this can mean for us today?

RABBI MOSHE EDELMAN is past National Director of Leadership Development for United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. In 1978, as rabbi of the North Shore Jewish Center in Port Jefferson, Long Island, he created the very first Torathon!

A2 150 YEARS OF WORCESTER’S JEWISH HISTORY

From peddlers and shopkeepers to industrialists, politicians, and renowned rabbis, Worcester’s Jewish history has a rich and varied story to tell. Join in as a great, local Jewish history buff, our own Rabbi Blotner takes us on a historical journey from “the beginning” all the way to the better known haunts of Water Street and “the west side, Worcester.”

RABBI YAKOV BLOTNER, Congregation Shaarai Torah West.

A3 PETE SEEGER AND JEWISH CULTURE

Pete Seeger was a humanitarian and a social activist. Through his music, he changed the world and brought people together in a powerful way. Come on a journey using Seeger’s music and make connections to Jewish values in our lives. Come ready to sing and enjoy! (song sheets provided)

SUE HOROWITZ, noted singer and songwriter of Jewish contemporary music

A4 ANTI-SEMITISM: NEW FACTS ABOUT AN OLD DILEMMA

Join this ADL official in examining The Global Anti-Semitism Index which is the most extensive such poll ever conducted, involving 102 countries and territories. It provides important insights into national and regional attitudes towards Jews, the levels of acceptance of anti-Semitic stereotypes and knowledge of the Holocaust. Local manifestations of Anti-Semitism will also be discussed.

MELISSA GARLUCK, Eastern Civil Rights Counsel, Anti-Defamation League of New England

A5 WE’RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER- OR ARE WE?

In this session we will explore some striking similarities and differences among American Jews as found in the 2013 Pew Research Center Survey. For example, 95% of all Jews agree that they re “proud to be Jewish,” but only 28% say that “being part of a Jewish community” is essential. What do the findings mean? Should we be optimistic or worried about the future? Or both? Join this fascinating discussion.

SHARON KREFETZ PhD is the Andrea B. and Peter D. Klein ‘64 Distinguished Professor in the Political Science Dept. of Clark University. A past President of Cong. Beth Israel, she is an active member of the greater Worcester Jewish community and currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Jewish Federation of Central MA.

A6 UNDERSTANDING LOSS IN THE JEWISH TRADITION

Then God said to Moses: “Carve yourself two tablets of stone like the first-ones, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke.” (Exodus 34:1) As human beings, all of us will experience brokenness some time in our life, whether through illness, divorce, death, or the many other losses that touch our lives. However, Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk, a Hassidic rebbe taught, “There is nothing so whole as a broken heart.” Jewish tradition understands that within this brokenness also lies our capacity for wholeness/shleymut - which comes from the word shalom.

MARSHA FRANKEL, LICSW, ACSW, is the Clinical Director of Senior Services and Director of Mental Health at Jewish Family & Children’s Service

A7 WRESTLING WITH TRADITION

How do we reconcile community values and norms with our own beliefs about ritual and tradition? Join the excitement as we dive into two dynamic stories around Jews wrestling with this question and use them to explore your own ideas around the common tension between community practices and individual needs.

ETTA KING, A master teacher and storyteller, is the Education Program Director of Jewish Women’s Archives

A8 JEWISH PARENTING – WHAT’S CHANGED? WHAT’S STILL THE SAME?

As grown children, we know we are commanded to “honor our parents,” but as parents, Jewishly, what is our obligation to our children? In this session we will utilize chevruta (small, interactive group) text study and engage in real conversation about how, through a variety of ways, we can provide a strong Jewish foundation for our children. Let’s learn together.

RABBI AVIVA FELLMAN, Congregation Beth Israel, Worcester

A9 EVERY PERSON COUNTS: THE DIVERSITY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY AND WELCOMING THEM IN.

Join us in a conversation, sharing stories from the community, to get us thinking about what welcoming diversity in the Jewish community can look like. Bringing awareness to ethnic, sexual, gender, family, disability, and economic diversity; these are just some of the variations and differences that we need to respond to in order to make our congregations a house for all peoples.

RABBI RACHEL GUREVITZ PhD, Congregation B’nai Shalom, Westboro

A10 BLESSINGS – THE JEWISH WAY TO APPRECIATING LIFE

This unique session will involve traditional text study led by Jewish educator and Medical Researcher, Elena Salmoirago-Blotcher, followed by mindfulness practice with noted psychotherapist, Elana Rosenbaum. We will discover together the mitzvah of “blessing” (Heb. “Levarech,”), its sources in Jewish Law, and when cultivated, “how a blessed mind” can enhance our everyday life.

ELENA SALMOIRAGO-BLOTCHER MD PhD Alpert School of Medicine of Brown University. A native of Italy, she lived in Israel where she studied and taught extensively.

ELANA ROSENBAUM MS, LICSW is adjunct faculty at the renowned Stress Reduction Clinic at the Univ. of Mass. Medical School

BET 8:00 P.M. – 8:50 P.M.

B1 GOD SHOPPING: AN EXPLORATION IN THE MARKETPLACE OF THEOLOGICAL BELIEFS

Looking on from afar, or within each one of us? Answering our prayers, or deaf to our pleas? A physical being or a Source of life energy? What God ideas do you ‘buy’ and which ones do you leave on the shelf? And what difference do our beliefs make to how we make meaning of our lives, our world, the questions we ask, and the answers we find?

RABBI RACHEL GUREVITZ Ph.D, Congregation B’nai Shalom, Westboro

B2 ISRAELI DANCING

Learn traditional Israeli dances from this very talented Israeli dance couple. Dances from the days of the first Israeli pioneers consist mainly of circle and partner dances of Eastern Europe, Arab and Yeminite origin. Perhaps we’ll mix in some more contemporary steps too. Let’s have some fun!

REENA AND SAUL SLOVIN, Congregation Beth Israel, Worcester

B3 ISIS: AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELIGIOUS PSYCHOLOGY OF JIHAD

Be prepared for a lively discussion on this top news story of the day. We will focus on the following questions: How can we understand the ISIS atrocities? What are the major challenges facing America and its allies in its struggle to defeat and destroy this threat to Western Civilization? And, how concerned is (or should be) the State of Israel?

LARRY LOWENTHAL, National Senior Advisor to the American Jewish Committee

B4 PERILS AND PLEASURES IN “JOINING THE TRIBE”

Join Margo Smith for a conversation about joining the Jewish community. What is the process of conversion? What challenges do these members of our community face? How do we tackle the “gray areas” of interfaith-family-living in our day to day lives? Everyone is welcome to this discussion of transition and support.

MARGO SMITH, Clark University

B5 HAVE THE JEWS HAD “THE SECRET” ALL ALONG?

Everyone is searching for “the secret” to finding happiness and fulfillment in their lives. Does Judaism have what everyone is looking for? Can real trust (bitachon) be the real powerhouse behind the effects of positive thinking? Let’s explore three Torah perspectives on positive thinking, and see how the mitzvah of “Shmitah,” the observance of the laws of the Sabbatical Year is the ultimate expression of true trust.

RABBI MICHOEL PHILLIPS, served 25 years as Principal of Judaic Studies at the Yeshiva Academy and currently teaches at the N.E. Hebrew Academy of Brookline

B6 ALL OF JUDAISM ON ONE FOOT

Jewish life cycle, from birth to death dictates certain practices and traditions that deem those points in our lives as special. Much of it is rooted in our Torah and further amplified by centuries of Rabbinic teaching and life experiences. This class will be ideal for anyone looking to understand “the basics” and other answers to life’s difficult questions. Can we do it all in an hour? Come and see.

RABBI JOE EIDUSON, Education Director, Congregation B’nai Shalom, Westboro

B7 LET’S SPEAK HEBREW!

All you know are a few words in Hebrew but you’d love to be able to speak it. This is for you. Join this lively and fun session led by one our most talented, native Hebrew speaking Israeli educators as she gears this session for beginners and intermediate beginners of spoken Hebrew. Try it...you’ll love it.

ZIVA ROSENHAND, Local Hebrew and Jewish Educator

B8 SULZER, LEWANDOWSKI, AND THE BIRTH OF CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

How did our music evolve from cantorial nusach to congregational singing? The first critical step in that change was unwittingly made by the great German/Austrian composers of the 1800’s (Sulzer, Lewandowski, et al). Their choral interpretations of the nusach became some of our most enduring congregational melodies. How did our music get from there to here? Listen, learn, sing along!

LISA MARCUS JONES, Cantorial Soloist, Congregation B’nai Shalom, Westboro

B9 NOW IT’S OUR TURN! THE FUTURE LEADERS OF ISRAEL SPEAK UP!

We in Central Mass. are fortunate to have two young (pre-army) emissaries from Israel spending the year teaching in our community. What are the unique experiences of young Israelis that are pulling at them? When all is said and done, should we feel reassured or worried about the future? Join in the discussion.

TAL LIVNI and **AVIV JERBY** are this year’s Israeli Emissaries to the Jewish Federation of Central MA.

Discussion Moderator: **HOWARD BORER**, Executive Director of the Jewish Federation of Central Massachusetts

B10 APPRECIATING SEDER (ORDER) ALIGNMENT THROUGH THE PRACTICES OF MUSSAR & YOGA

Mussar is a time-tested Jewish practice for refining one’s qualities of heart and soul, leading to deeper connections and compassionate behavior. Seder is a soul quality that enables us to clear our environment and our spirit. Order is connected to aligning our bodies, mind and soul in space. After studying and reflecting on a Jewish text we will embody the insights gained through gentle, stress-less Yoga that can be done from a chair, or on the floor. Mat or a blanket optional. No prior experience necessary.

RABBI CAROL GLASS, Mussar teacher; Spiritual Director Chaplain at Rhode Island Hospital
RAHEL WASSERFALL, Ph.D is an anthropologist and a yoga instructor trained in the Iyengar tradition. Rahel has taught yoga classes nationally and internationally.

GIMEL 9:00 P.M. – 9:50 P.M.

C1 MUSIC FOR OUR SOULS

Join us for a joyful, participatory sing-along session in the “camp” tradition. If you’ve been to Jewish camp, you know how uplifting song sessions are: if you haven’t, you are in for a treat. No musical talent necessary...just bring an open heart.

SUE HOROWITZ, Noted Singer, songwriter of Jewish Contemporary Music

C2 JEWISH PAPER CUTTING

Jewish paper cutting is a traditional form of Jewish folk art made by cutting figures and sentences in paper or parchment. It is connected with various customs and ceremonies, and associated with holidays and family life, decorating ketubot (marriage contracts), Mizrachs, and ornaments for festive occasions. Join this very talented artist as she guides you to making your very own special, Jewish paper cut art.

MIRI SHARON, Beth Tikvah Synagogue, Westboro

C3 THIS WEEK’S ELECTIONS AND THE U.S.- ISRAEL ALLIANCE

With the Middle East in a cataclysmic state of turmoil, American support for the Jewish state is more vital than ever. In this exclusive off-the-record briefing, AIPAC’s New England Synagogue Initiative Director will evaluate the recent election results and share a Washington perspective on what is occurring in the Middle East and evaluate the current state of U.S.- Israel relations.

ELON STRICKER, is AIPAC’s (American-Israel Public Affairs Committee) New England Synagogue Initiative Director

C4 THE ART OF CHASSIDIC STORYTELLING

Explore the wondrous world of Chassidic storytelling! From ordinary peddlers and wagon drivers of the shell to great rabbis of modern times, these stories provide timeless lessons of life that can certainly impact our 21st Century existence. Join this Chassidic teacher as he opens an inner window to the soul.

RABBI MICHOEL GREEN, Chabad of Westboro

C5 THE TOP MITZVOT (COMMANDMENTS) FOR JEWISH SURVIVAL

According to some findings of the 2013 Pew Report, Jewish survival in the USA may seem “doomed.” Can the observance of certain Mitzvot help our community to move from “survive” back to “thrive?” If so, which 4 of the 613 Mitzvot are the most important for that success? You choose first, and then Reb Moshe aided by the rabbinic text “Sefer Ha-Chinuch” will offer his best thoughts.

RABBI MOSHE EDELMAN is the rabbi in residence for the HAZAK(USCJ) Week of Learning. He serves as a scholar in residence in synagogues across North America.

C6 IRAN: UNFILTERED, THROUGH THE EYES AND LENS OF MICHAEL BLOCH

“It’s dangerous...Aren’t you scared?...They hate Americans!” Those were the comments Michael Bloch heard from family and friends before he departed on a two week visit to Iran this past April. Were they justified? Are those perceptions real? Using his photography as a backdrop, Michael will share his eye-opening experiences and learnings after meeting everyday Iranians as well as top religious, business, and academic leaders.

MICHAEL BLOCH, Westboro Jewish Community

C7 ONE FAMILY – TWO FAITHS

In an interfaith marriage a number of Jewish partners try to balance a mutual respect for their partner’s religion, while at the same time trying to explore and connect to their own religious roots. How do both partners navigate these choppy waters? What can our Jewish community, rabbis and synagogue do to help? An open discussion

RABBI VALERIE COHEN, Temple Emanuel Sinai, Worcester

C8 MEL BROOKS, THE IMMENSELY TALENTED AND IRREVERENT JEWISH COMIC

Melvin James Kaminsky was born on June 28, 1926 in Brooklyn, New York to Russian Jewish immigrants. His world renowned talented work usually contains many Jewish references and jokes that both tickle our fancy and sometimes disturb us. Just what is “Jewish” about this famous Jewish comedian? Hear about his life, see and enjoy “classic clips” from his work. Let’s learn a little and laugh a lot!

EJ DOTTS, Beth Tikvah Synagogue, Westboro

C9 REDEFINING JEWISH HEROES

How many famous Jews or Jewish heroes can you name? Who are the people who inspire you the most? No matter what your current knowledge is of Jewish historical figures, you are guaranteed to discover some stories you have never heard before as you explore photographs, articles, timelines, and historical documents from trailblazing Jews throughout history.

ETTA KING, A master teacher and storyteller, is the Education Program Director of Jewish Women’s Archives.

Social Hour Starting at 10:00 P.M.

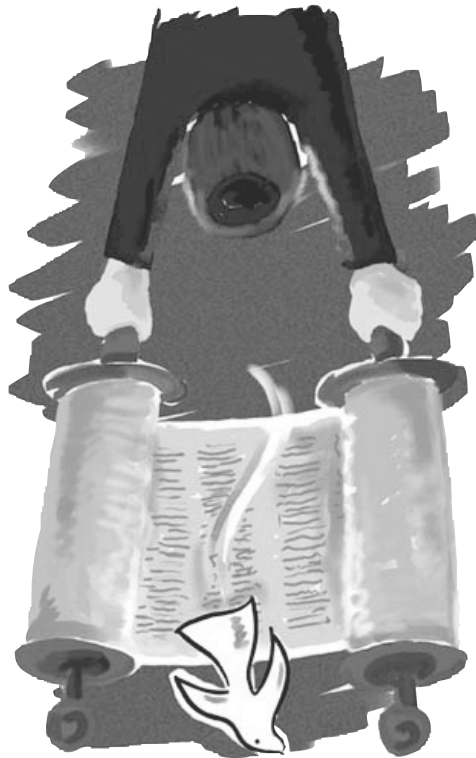
Enjoy free coffee and desserts in the Social Hall.
Vaad Kosher Approved



Saturday Evening, November 8, 2014

“My Jewish Search for Meaning and Purpose”

Torathon
2014



The Jewish Federation of Central Massachusetts
633 Salisbury St., Worcester, MA 01609

Limited Seating ... Don't Be Left Out Of This Exciting Event!

Get Your Tickets Today!

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Torathon
2014

Brochure and tickets are available at these locations, or
www.jewishcentralmass.org/torathon

Agudat Achim
268 Washington St.
Leominster

**Beth Tikvah
Synagogue**
44 Oak Street
Westboro

**Chabad
of Westboro**
54 South Street
Westboro

Clark Hillel
950 Main Street
Worcester

**Congregation
Beth Israel**
15 Jamesbury Dr.
Worcester

**Congregation
B'nai Shalom**
117 E. Main Street
Westboro

**Jewish Federation of
Central Massachusetts**
633 Salisbury Street
Worcester

**Shaarai Torah
West**
835 Pleasant Street
Worcester

Temple Emanuel Sinai
280 May Street
Worcester

**Boroughs Jewish
Community Center**
45 Oak Street
Westboro

**Worcester Jewish
Community Center**
at the Frances & Jacob Hiatt Bldg.
633 Salisbury St. Worcester

**Yeshiva
Achei Tmimim**
22 Newton Avenue
Worcester

Temple Israel
107 Walnut Street
Athol

**Purchase Torathon tickets and view classes online at
www.jewishcentralmass.org/torathon**

Advance Tickets
(on or before Thursday, November 6, 2014)
\$20

**Tickets
at the Door**
\$25

**High School &
College Students**
\$5 in advance \$10 at the door

**For Additional Information and Transportation Assistance
Call The Jewish Federation of Central Massachusetts
(508) 756-1543**



Jewish Federation
OF CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS

