

26th Annual

TORATHON

2015

"Our Global Jewish Journey"



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



This year Torathon will begin with a cadre of noted Jewish musicians in concert, presenting a very special tribute to **Debbie Freedman**, America's leading singer and songwriter of Jewish religious songs and melodies marking the 5th anniversary of her death.

Following this, over the next three hours will be a wonderful evening of learning, in your choice of 30 classes, lectures, discussions, and workshops led by distinguished rabbis, cantors, Jewish community and organizational leaders. A dessert reception will close the evening.

Saturday, November 14, 2015

5:15 P.M. – 10:00 P.M.

Registration begins

Refreshments to follow.

CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL

15 Jamesbury Drive, Worcester, MA



THE STRENGTH OF A PEOPLE.
THE POWER OF COMMUNITY.

26th Annual TORATHON 2015

ONGOING from 5:15PM

Registration

- Some classrooms will have limited seating. Please be prepared with alternate choices.
- People will be available at registration tables to assist you with all the room assignments.
- New courses may be added following this printing.

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

5:50

Havdalah Service - Sanctuary

6:00

Debbie Friedman Tribute Concert



Join us as the Area's top Jewish musicians present a tribute concert marking the 5th anniversary yartzeit of Debbie Friedman, America's leading singer and songwriter of Jewish religious songs and melodies.

Tribute Performers Include:

ELLEN ALLARD
E.J. COHEN
SHARON BROWN GOLDSTEIN
SUE HOROWITZ
LISA MARCUS JONES
JEFF KLEPPER
SURI KRIEGER
JERI ROBINS
RACHEL REEF SIMPSON

10:00

Social Hour

Enjoy free kosher approved refreshments in the Social Hall.

ALEPH 7:10 PM – 8:00 PM

A1 THEODORE BIKEL

Theodore Bikel began his career on the Tel Aviv stage at age of 19 in a Hebrew production of Tevye the Milkman. By the end of his life, he had performed the role of Tevye over 2200 times, in various productions of Fiddler on the Roof. We will explore his life through photos, recordings and narrative, and will sing some of the songs he helped make famous. **CANTORIAL SOLOIST SHARON GOLDSTEIN, Congregation B'nai Shalom, Westboro**

A2 THE ROLE OF A JEWISH CHAPLAIN AS FIRST RESPONDERS

Fire chaplains provide spiritual and emotional support to Firefighters and their family members and are trained in Critical Incident Stress Management and suicide prevention. Rabbi Eiduson will discuss the lives of first responders and the role of a Jewish Chaplain especially in light of the current news & events regarding police officers in America.

RABBI JOE EIDUSON, Congregation B'nai Shalom, Westboro

A3 JON STEWART

Jon Stewart, born Jonathan Stuart Leibowitz, is noted for being a famous comedian, writer, producer, actor, and media critic. For 16 years, he was the host of Comedy Central, a satirical news program. This class will focus on his standup comedy and career prior to the Daily Show as well as some of the highlights from the show. A Jewish influence? Let's see.

EJ Dotts, Temple Beth Tikvah, Westboro

A4 WOMAN WORRIERS OR WOMAN WARRIORS: LEARNING ABOUT STRONG BIBLICAL JEWISH WOMEN AT WAR: HANNAH, Yael, AND JUDITH

What do Hannah, Yael and Judith do differently that separates them from the "normal role" for women during Biblical times? How does this apply to our lives today? Are there women today who stand out like Hannah, Yael and Judith?

RABBI AVIVA FELLMAN Congregation Beth Israel, Worcester

A5 WRITING YOUR OWN ETHICAL WILL

Ethical wills are precious spiritual documents, windows into the souls of those who write them, often parents writing letters to their children or grandparents to their grandchildren. Each person sums up what they have learned in life, and what they want most for, and from, their loved ones. Let's look at some famous Jewish ethical wills and begin to write our own.

HERB DAROFF, J.D., Congregation Beth Israel, Worcester

A6 TALMUDIC RESEARCH INSPIRES MAGGIE ANTON

This award winning author will describe how she was intrigued by the daughters of the great medieval commentator Rashi. Women who were learned, and even wore tefillin. She began to research them and their 11th-century French Jewish community. What she found was so amazing that she wrote a trilogy of historical novels about them - Rashi's Daughters.

MAGGIE ANTON, award winning author

A7 SPIRITUAL TECHNOLOGY YOU CAN USE: AN INTRODUCTION TO MUSSAR PRACTICE

Mussar provides an accessible pathway into Jewish spirituality which includes text study, meditation, silence and retreat, diary practices, chanting, contemplations, visualization, and doing for others. See how this practice provides us with a user friendly spiritual technology that we can use to make us more of the person we most want to be.

RABBI RACHEL GUREVITZ, Congregation B'nai Shalom, Westboro

A8 AT THE HEART OF RELIGION: IS BEING JEWISH GOOD FOR YOUR HEART?

Biblical and Rabbinic literature is replete with references to "the heart" as key to success in life. During this presentation, we will discuss the important role that the "heart" plays in Judaism and other faiths and explore whether practicing Judaism may benefit your cardiovascular health.

ELENA SALMOIRAGO-BLOTCHER is an Assistant Professor of Medicine and Epidemiology at the Brown University Medical School & School of Public Health.

A9 "WHAT'S IN THE WATER?" WHAT MAKES PARSHAT BESHALACH SO UNIQUE?

Parshat Beshalach is a particularly unique Torah portion. Everything from its unique calligraphy in the Torah to the liturgy contained in its verse, to the songs and stories told about it. In this class, we will explore visually, textually and musically what makes Parshat Beshalach so special. What IS the story behind the splitting of the sea?

CANTOR RACHEL REEF-SIMPSON, Temple Emanuel-Sinai, Worcester

A10 ISRAEL AND THE BDS MOVEMENT

The Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement (BDS Movement) is a global movement which claims it wants to bring Israel to the negotiating table but, in reality, it seeks to bring her to her knees by demonizing the Jewish State as a 21st Century Apartheid regime. What is the status of this effort and what is being done or should be done to fight it?

RABBI MICHAEL SWARTTZ, Beth Tikvah Synagogue, Westboro

BET 8:10 PM – 9:00 PM

B1 ISRAEL AND IRAN--THE LONG TERM "SHADOW WAR"

Learn about the historical backdrop to the once friendly relations between Israel and Iran, the nature of the Shiite religious ideology, and the increasing split between Netanyahu and some of his military and intelligence leaders over the nature of the Iranian Mullahs, and the likelihood of an ultimate, apocalyptic confrontation between the Jewish and Muslim state.

LARRY LOWENTHAL, National Senior Advisor to the American Jewish Committee

B2 THE IMPORTANCE OF TZITZIT

The talit or talis becomes a religious object when, according to the Torah, it has four tzitzit (fringes) attached to its corners. Why is the tzitzit so significant? How has its understanding and its holiness been retained over the ages? At the end of the session, each participant will learn how to tie their own tzitzit.

CANTOR JERI ROBINS, Congregation Beth Israel, Worcester

B3 DAVID AND GOLIATH

We will reread one of the Bible's most famous stories and deal with some important questions that students and scholars alike ask: Was David a weak little shepherd boy? Was Goliath really 9 ft. 9" tall? Why is the ancient Greek translation shorter than the Hebrew text? And what is the story trying to tell us?

PR EVERETT FOX, Allen M. Glick Professor of Judaic and Biblical studies, Clark University.

B4 'SIGNING' PRAYERS BRINGS AN EMOTIONAL HIGH.

Prayer can be visual as well as spoken. Learn familiar prayerbook blessings and songs in ASL, American Sign Language from E.J. whose passion is combining her loves of music, ASL, and Judaism. Her workshops are filled with signs, songs, stories, and giggles. No previous signing experience necessary. (Bring questions, enthusiasm, & sense of humor!)

EJ COHEN, M.A., M.ED., CI, CT, Certified ASL Interpreter/Educator and Judaic Educator

B5 THE MOST INFLUENTIAL JEWISH LEADER OF OUR TIME

A number of recent bestselling books point to the late Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson z'l (the Rebbe) as being unique in how he dramatically changed the dynamics of Jewish life today. Who was this man? What did he say or do that so profoundly impacted all kinds of Jews (and non-Jews) around the world? Come and learn.

RABBI YAKOV BLOTNER, Congregation Shaarei Torah West and Certified Prison Chaplain

B6 SECRETS FROM THE JEWISH BEDROOM

The Rabbis of our tradition viewed the Torah as their starting point to declare that there is no aspect of life which is devoid of holiness. Take this crash course on anything you ever wanted to know about Jewish intimacy; From the hole in the sheet to whole truth. Find out the best kept Jewish marriage secret from Torah's timeless wisdom.

DVORA GREEN, Chabad of Westboro

B7 ISRAELI DANCING

Learn traditional and some not so traditional Israeli dances. Dances from the days of the first Israeli pioneers consist mainly of circle and partner dances of Eastern Europe with Arab and Yemenite influences. Maybe we'll mix in some contemporary steps, too. Let's have fun!

REENA AND SAUL SLOVIN, Congregation Beth Israel, Worcester

B8 THEOLOGICAL RELEVANCE OF "MONSTERS" IN JEWISH SUPERSTITION AND HOW THEY OVERLAP WITH POPULAR CULTURE OF THEIR TIME

Demons, vampires, dragons, and more have not only been popular in American culture, but are prevalent in Jewish literature and superstition as well. Their presence even has a theological purpose. Let's wrest these "monsters" from their hiding places, see what questions they try to answer and debate their meaning.

RABBI VALERIE COHEN, Temple Emanuel-Sinai, Worcester

B9 LIES, MYTHS, AND DECEPTION: THE PROBLEM OF "KNOWLEDGE" DURING THE HOLOCAUST

How did the Nazis use language to deceive their victims? To what extent were Jews aware of their intended fate? This doctoral student and this Holocaust survivor will present a fascinating program addressing ways in which information regarding the "Final Solution" was manipulated by Holocaust perpetrators and interpreted by their victims.

SIMON GOLDBERG, Doctoral student Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies.

THEA ASCHKENASE, Holocaust survivor and local author of "Remembering – A Holocaust survivor shares her life".

B10 GRANDPARENTING of INTERFAITH FAMILIES

When children intermarry, parents and grandparents wonder how they will connect to their grandchildren. This session will give grandparents and prospective grandparents the opportunity to share and acquire helpful tools for building relationships with their grandchildren around Jewish learning and identity.

RABBI JILLIAN CAMERON, Director Interfaithfamily.com/Boston

GIMEL 9:10 PM – 10:00 PM

C1 WHAT DO THE WORDS OF THE SH'MA MEAN: DISCOVERING THE MYSTERY IN THE FAMILIAR

The Sh'ma is the first prayer most of us learned. Sometimes it is the only prayer people know. Why is it so important? What are its origins? What do the words actually mean? Why is it placed where it is in the service? What about the extended Sh'ma including the paragraphs that follow it?

RABBI CHERIE KOLLER-FOX, President of NewCAJE

C2 "SIBLING RIVALRY- TORAH STYLE"

What do Cain & Abel, Jacob & Esau, Rachel & Leah Joe and his Bros have in common? OK, yes they are all siblings. But what's with all this animosity. Exploring troubled sibling relationships in Genesis.

RABBI SURI KRIEGER, Westboro

C3 PARENTING THROUGH A JEWISH LENS

Our leaders will discuss developmental milestones and challenges of parenting tweens and teens at the various stages of their lives. Each stage will include parenting strategies and support grounded in the rich texts and history of Jewish tradition.

GAIL EPTSTEIN, M.S Ed., JF&CS and RABBI AVIVA FELLMAN

Congregation Beth Israel, Worcester

C4 BEYOND TRUMP AND CLINTON: HOW THE 2016 ELECTIONS WILL SHAPE THE US-ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

With partisanship at an all-time high, shifting demographics and the upcoming elections heating up, come hear an "off the record" briefing on the current state of affairs between Washington D.C. and Israel. The briefing will focus on AIPAC's strategy across the United States and how the 2016 elections will likely shape the future relations between the two allies.

JACK GOLDBERG, Regional Representative, AIPAC

(American Israel Public Affairs Committee)

C5 WOMEN AND THE TALMUD

This award winning author will discuss the research behind her newest novels Apprentice and Enchantress which takes place in 4th-century Babylonia. There, Talmud is being created by the rabbis to innovate and rejuvenate Judaism after the destruction of Jerusalem's Holy Temple. But what's this about sorcery and magic?

MAGGIE ANTON

C6 "MINDFULNESS" IN MYSTICAL JEWISH THOUGHT

We will learn how to live a life free of stress, worry, and anxiety based on what we learn from the ancient wisdom of the Torah all the way up to contemporary Chassidic masters. Session will include some mindfulness exercises. Enjoy!

RABBI MICHOEL GREEN, Chabad of Westboro

C7 ISRAEL TODAY

As the relationship between Israel and the US continues to evolve and Israel's position in the world has become more complex, how do young Israelis feel about this situation? How do they see their future in a world that seems to be aligned against them? What can they do about it and what can we do to help? Join us for this insightful dialogue.

HOWARD BORER, Executive Director of Jewish Federation of Central MA,

OMRI EYAL and LIHI REGEV 2015 – 2016 Young Israeli Emissaries.

C8 MACHENA YEHUDA – EASY CONVERSATIONAL HEBREW

All you know are a few words in Hebrew but you'd love to "hold your own" in a brief conversation in Hebrew. Here's your chance as we shop Jerusalem's great farmers market of Machena Yehuda. We may even stop for lunch. Try it. You'll have so much fun!

ZIVA ROSENHAND, local Hebrew and Judaica educator.

C9 KUMSITZ – LET'S SING ALONG

A "kumsitz" is a social gathering in Israel 'round a campfire, which usually happens at night, on the beach or in a field, inevitably with a guitar present and coffee and usually food to cook on the fire. While our kumsitz will not have a campfire, come join Ellen Allard and our community of musicians for this fun time of singing old favorites and popular Israeli songs.

ELLEN ALLARD, musician, educator and song writer

joined by the other Tribute musicians.

C10 WHY AM I ALWAYS HUNGRY?

People assume that the laws of keeping Kosher are based on health. Such is not the case. They are a chok (mitzvot or commandments for which the reason is not obviously known) yet they have been scrupulously observed for over 3000 years. In our discussion, Kabbalah or Jewish mystical tradition will shed a fascinating light on this subject. Enjoy!

CHANA FOGELMAN, Yeshiva Achai T'mimim, Chabad of Central NE



TORATHON 2015

Get your tickets today!

**Seating is Limited,
Don't be left out of this exciting event!**



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

Brochure and tickets are available at these locations

Agudat Achim

268 Washington St. Leominster

Beth Tikvah Synagogue

44 Oak Street Westboro

Boroughs Jewish Community Center

45 Oak Street, Westboro

Chabad of Westboro

54 South Street Westboro

Clark Hillel

950 Main Street Worcester

Community Center

45 Oak Street Westboro

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

661 Salisbury Street, Worcester

Temple Israel

107 Walnut Street Athol

Worcester Jewish Community Center

at the Frances & Jacob Hiatt Bldg.
633 Salisbury St. Worcester

Yeshiva Achei Tmimim

22 Newton Avenue Worcester

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

Advance Tickets

on or before
Thursday, November 12, 2015
\$20

High School & College Students

\$5 in advance
\$10 at the door

**Tickets
at the Door**
\$25

For Additional Information and Transportation Assistance, call

**The Jewish Federation of
Central Massachusetts
(508) 756-1543**

