



CONGREGATION
BETH ISRAEL

Basic Judaism – Fall 2025

Class Syllabus

(Zoom Link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85390495055>)

Assigned Books:

1. *What is a Jew? A Guide to the Beliefs, Traditions, and Practices of Judaism that Answers Questions for Both Jew and Non-Jew* by Rabbi Morris N. Kertzer, revised by Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman. (Kertzer)
2. *Living a Jewish Life: Jewish Traditions, Customs, and Values for Today's Families* by Anita Diamant (updated and revised edition). (Diamant)
3. *Settings of Silver: An Introduction to Judaism* by Stephen M. Wylen, Second Edition. (Wylen)

Calendar of Sessions and Assigned Readings:

Session #	Date	Topic	Faculty	Reading Assignment
1	August 26	Welcome and Introduction Session	Rabbi Samuel Rheins	<i>Kertzer</i> , Ch. 4 <i>Wylen</i> , Chs. 2-4
2	September 2	Spectrum of Denominations	Rabbi Samuel Rheins	<i>Kertzer</i> , Ch. 1 <i>Wylen</i> , Ch. 20
3	September 9	Sukkot and Simchat Torah	Rabbi Samuel Rheins	<i>Kertzer</i> , 219-222 <i>Diamant</i> , 164-170
4	September 16	High Holy Day Workshop	Rabbi Adrienne Scott & David Scott, RJE	<i>Kertzer</i> , 214-219 <i>Diamant</i> , 152-163
5	October 21	Wolff-Toomim, Distinguished Lecture Series Featuring Einat Wilf (In Person)	Einat Wilf (In Person)	None (This class will be in Person)
6	October 28	Jewish Music as Prisms through History (Online)	Cantor Kenneth Feibush	<i>Kertzer</i> , 60 <i>Wylen</i> , Ch. 6
7	November 4	Shabbat and Sanctity	Rabbi Samuel Rheins	<i>Kertzer</i> , 171-210
8	November 11	The Jewish Calendar and Holidays	Rabbi Samuel Rheins	<i>Diamant</i> , 139-151
9	November 18	Jewish Customs in Death and Mourning	David Scott, RJE	<i>Wylen</i> , Ch. 7
10	December 2	The Jewish Life Cycle	Rabbi Samuel Rheins	<i>Kertzer</i> , Ch. 8 <i>Diamant</i> , Ch. 4
11	December 9	Land, People, and State of Israel	Rabbi Samuel Rheins	<i>Kertzer</i> , 179-194 <i>Wylen</i> , Chs. 21-22
12	December 16	Chanukah	Rabbi Samuel Rheins	<i>Kertzer</i> , 179-194 <i>Wylen</i> , Chs. 21-22