

IGNITE! Tikkun Leil Chanukah : A New Festival of Jewish Culture & Learning

Saturday, December 17, 2022

6 PM - 12 AM | Hosted at Holy Blossom Temple (1950 Bathurst Street)

Suggested donation: Adults \$20 (plus light kosher food available at extra cost onsite)

NB: Only some sessions (those marked "hybrid") will be broadcast to home viewers.

SCHEDULE IN A NUTSHELL - ADULT PROGRAM

5:30 PM	Doors Open
6:00 - 6:30 PM	Communal, Intergenerational Havdalah in the Atrium
6:45 - 7:45 PM	First Session Choices
7:45 - 8:30 PM	Snack Break in the Atrium
8:30 - 9:30 PM	Second Session Choices
9:45 - 10:45 PM	Concert hosted by Ashkenaz Festival in the Mishkan
11 PM - 12 AM	Third Session Choices

SESSION DESCRIPTIONS AND PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

Schedule is subject to change.

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HAVDALAH 6:00 - 6:30 PM

In person

Everyone gathers in the Holy Blossom Atrium for a musical, multi-generational Havdalah ceremony to usher in the evening.

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FIRST SESSION CHOICES: 6:45 - 7:45 PM

Moroccan Chanukah Traditions: Making Sfinj & Exploring Chanukah Customs

With Lily Ohana & Chaim Grafstein

The traditions and customs of North African Jews often feature highly localized and unique elements which shape their celebration of different holidays. Together, we will learn about some of these customs and rituals for Chanukah, and find appreciation for the differences and similarities between how we celebrate holidays in an increasingly globalized Jewish world. We will end the session with hands-on deep frying (and eating!) of Sfinj, the traditional Moroccan Chanukahdelight. (Sfinj will be kosher.)

Lily Ohana was born in Israel to Moroccan immigrants. She lives in Toronto and is a Science, Math and Judaics educator, currently teaching in the TDSB. **Chaim Grafstein** is a PhD student at the University of

Toronto's Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations. His research examines how Rabbi Yosef Messas's book *Naḥalat Avot* attempts to shape the socio-political life of Moroccan Jews.

Put A Little Yiddish In Your Chanukah

With Sharon Power

Hybrid Session

Put a little *khanike* in your Chanukah! Learn how to make latkes, sing a Chanukah song, tell the story of the victory of the Maccabees, and celebrate the Festival of Lights – all in Yiddish. Everyone is welcome!

Sharon Power has been teaching Yiddish language and literature at various community institutions in Toronto since 2011. She is also a translator and is currently webmaster for the UJA Committee for Yiddish. Her true passion is sharing her love of Yiddish and being inspired by her wonderful students.

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Chanukah's Biblical Backstory

With Rabbi Ed Elkin

Hybrid Session

Chanukah is not a biblical holiday. We know about it from the apocryphal books First and Second Maccabees as well as from isolated reflections in rabbinic texts. Nevertheless, the Hebrew Bible does record the backstory leading up to Chanukah, chapters 7-12 of the book of Daniel. This text, as we shall see, was composed *before* the rededication of the Temple altar in 164 BCE, the event that Chanukah celebrates. Come learn the historical backdrop for the holiday of Chanukah, as reflected in the apocalyptic visions of the Book of Daniel.

Rabbi Ed Elkin has been spiritual leader of the First Narayever Congregation since the year 2000.

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Dark Room, Bright Lights: Hand-Processed Film Developing Workshop

With Aaron Rotenberg

In person session

In this experimental workshop, we'll capture light and shadow on black and white celluloid film, and experience bringing images out of the dark in a makeshift darkroom. We will shoot some 16mm motion picture film, demonstrate how to develop it, dry it off and run it through a projector for a short film screening, all in one hour. As we work, we'll chat about capturing light, viewing negatives, artistic process and embracing unknown outcomes.

Aaron Rotenberg, among his many leadership endeavours, is the Spiritual Leader of Annex Shul, a rabbinical student at ALEPH, and Hesed Intern at Beth Tzedec Congregation. He spends his summers as the Educational Manager of Heart to Heart, a society-building summer camp program for Jewish and Palestinian teens. He has an MFA in Film Production from York University and enjoys spending time developing film in the dark.

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Chanukah Song Circle

With Aviva Chernick and Cantor Sidney Ezer

In person session

Come to sing some familiar songs and to learn a new one or two. Warm up the voice and the heart for Chanukah together with us as we sing songs from around the Jewish world. Hosted by Beth Tzedec Congregation.

Aviva Chernick is a singer, meditation teacher and prayer leader who is Artist in Residence on the leadership team at Beth Tzedec and is the founder and director of NeySHEV, Jewish meditation community. **Cantor Sidney Ezer** has served his home congregation of Beth Tzedec for over 11 years. Having an Ashkenazi as well as an Iraqi Jewish background, he strives to study and share the beauty of various Jewish musical traditions with others.

Justice, Justice Shall You Pursue: A Social Justice Roundtable

With Yacov Fruchter, Penny Parnes, Rabbi Shalom Schachter and more

Hybrid session

Representatives from various synagogues and organizations will share the work they do to bring more light and justice to our world. Come to this workshop with your passions and your questions.

Yacov Fruchter is a Spiritual Leader at Beth Tzedec, the largest synagogue in Canada and a registered psychotherapist. He is originally from Montreal, and married to a Winnipegger, Ryla Braemer, and has three awesome kids. **Penny Parnes** has been a clinician, an educator, a researcher, a policy advisor and an administrator. In 2004, Ms. Parnes was the founding executive director of the International Centre for Disability and Rehabilitation (ICDR) at the University of Toronto, a position she held until June 2012.

Rabbi Shalom Schachter is a social justice activist, educator, and labour lawyer. He is a founding Vice President of the Alliance of Rabbis and Cantors for Jewish Renewal and has served in his capacity as a rabbi around the world. In 1985, when the equality provision of Canada's Charter of Rights was implemented, he and his wife Marcia Gilbert successfully sued the Federal Government to win paid parenting leave on a non discriminatory basis for all parents.

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FAMILY TRACK: Family Chanukef

With Rabbi Eliza McCarroll and Lisa Isen Baumal

In person session. To attend the Family Chanukef, you must purchase a Family Track ticket.

An hour of family Chanukah fun after the communal Havdalah! Brush up on your Hanukkah trivia to compete in friendly family-style games and challenges. Each child will also leave with a painted dreidel ready for spinning and other crafts. Dinner will be included for families in this session.

Rabbi Eliza McCarroll is the assistant Rabbi at Holy Blossom Temple, and **Lisa Isen Baumal** is the Principal of Youth Education and Family Engagement at Holy Blossom Temple. They are excited to celebrate Chanukah with you.

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SNACK BREAK 7:45 PM - 8:30 PM

20s and 30s L'Chayim

In person

This is an informal opportunity for young adults (20s/30s) from across Jewish Toronto to join for a short but sweet L'chayim over the food break. It will be a great chance to relax and connect with others of a similar age and life stage, and to toast to the Chanukah festival together! Bring your food from the grab-and-go area; drinks and extra snacks provided.

Ignite! Art in Motion

In person

Join Daniel Abramson in the creation of a colourful silk canvas celebrating the joy and light of Chanukah. No experience or artistic talent is needed to participate. Daniel will guide you as you add your own

artistic flair to this hand-painted silk banner, which will be the inspiration for what we hope will be an annual festival of creativity and community each Chanukah.

Daniel Abramson is a multimedia artist and educator. He is passionate about helping learners of all ages explore ideas through creative and artistic practice. He has worked with students and teens at Jewish day schools, supplementary schools and at URJ Camp George. He is the Curriculum Development Director for the Tikkun Project at The Leo Baeck Day School.

SECOND SESSION CHOICES: 8:30 - 9:30 PM

Spread the Light, Spread the Warmth: A Blanket Tying Workshop With Alan Gotlib and Sybil Berk

In person session

In this hands-on workshop, we will create unique, hand-tied blankets with applique that will be given directly to those in need through our friends at Ve'ahavta. No sewing experience required! While working together, we will discuss the Jewish imperative to ensure that everyone in our community is cared for this winter. Let's bring warmth to the cold while igniting a light in our souls.

Alan Gotlib is a long-time member of the Danforth Jewish Circle. He is a retired elementary school teacher with a particular interest in the arts. He is very active in the DJC, a community which he loves! **Sybil Berk** went shul shopping during the pandemic, tuned into a virtual Danforth Jewish Circle service, and found the community she had always wanted. She is a retired speech-language pathologist who worked with children so she would never have to grow up. Her late father was a tailor and she will proudly be bringing his very vintage shears to the event.

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The Candle Making Workshop: Learning and Light With Daniel Abramson

In person session

Try your hand at an ancient art form -- candelmaking! Just in time for the first night of Chanukah, create a few candles to give as a gift or to illuminate your own Chanukiyah. Local artist and educator, Daniel Abramson and Rabbi Yael Splansky will co-teach about the significance of these thin candles that bring so much joy!

Daniel Abramson is a multi-media artist and educator. He is passionate about helping learners of all ages explore ideas through creative and artistic practice. He has worked with students and teens at Jewish day schools, supplementary schools and at URJ Camp George. He is the Curriculum Development Director for the Tikkun Project at The Leo Baeck Day School. **Yael Splansky** is the Senior Rabbi of Holy Blossom Temple and currently serves as the President of the Toronto Board of Rabbis.

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Chanukah Literary Salon With Ronna Bloom, Lorne Blumer, Jacquie Buncel, Maria Meindl, and Jaclyn Piudik

Hybrid session

Join Shir Libeynu writers and poets for an hour of literary enchantment that will light up any dark December night! Come share your own writing in our open mic time!

Ronna Bloom is the author of six books of poetry. Her poems have been recorded by the CNIB, and translated into Bangla, Chinese and Spanish. **Lorne Blumer** leads Hineinu, a community for Jewish contemplative practice, and writes a spiritual reportage blog called Lorne Meets World. **Jacquie Buncel**

is the author of *Turning the Corner at Dusk* (Wolsak and Wynn 2010) and she raises awareness about the Holocaust through her poetry. **Maria Meindl** is a writer, Feldenkrais practitioner, and life-long learner who recently received her doctorate from the University of Toronto. **Jaclyn Piudik** is the author of *To Suture What Frays* (Kelsay Books 2017) and three chapbooks. She recently won the Very Short Verse Prize from the League of Canadian Poets.

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Instant Choral Ensemble With Cantor David Rosen

In person session

If you love to sing, come and join Cantor David Rosen as we form an “instant choral ensemble.” In this fun and fast paced session, we will learn two Chanukah-themed pieces to be performed during the “Shamash” concert. (Basic music reading ability is recommended.)

Cantor David Rosen is the Senior Cantor and Music Director of Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto, Canada. Cantor Rosen was ordained at the Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music at Hebrew Union College Jewish Institute of Religion, where he has since served as adjunct faculty. He loves to build community through the power of music and in addition to humming a good tune, he is known to both cook and eat a good meal from time to time....

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Ask the Rabbi

With Rabbis Robyn Fryer Bodzin, Steven Wernick, Julia Appel, Samuel Kaye, and moderated by Aaron Rotenberg

Hybrid session

Chanukah questions? We have some answers. Join us for a fun hour where the story of Chanukah will be shared through the lens of four different Rabbis. And be sure not to miss the high-speed round. Part-study, part-game show. Who knows where it will go? Hosted by Beth Tzedec Congregation.

A Toronto native, **Rabbi Robyn Fryer Bodzin** is a member of the Spiritual Leadership Team at Beth Tzedec. Among her many diverse responsibilities, Rabbi Fryer Bodzin serves as the director of the Centre for Spiritual Wellbeing with the Beth Tzedec community and beyond. **Rabbi Steven Wernick** currently serves in leadership roles on many communal organizations, including as Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee and at Mercaz Olami as Vice-Chair of the Jewish Agency Aliyah Committee and a member of the Government Relations Committee. He has been named one of Newsweek’s 50 Most Influential Rabbis in America and was on the Forward’s List of Influential Jewish Leaders. **Rabbi Julia Appel** is the Senior Director of Innovation at Clal - The National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership, in which role she teaches about innovation, entrepreneurship, belonging, and communal change for professional and lay leaders of Jewish communities across North America. She serves on the Executive Committee of the Toronto Board of Rabbis and her writing has appeared in such publications as *The Forward*, *The Canadian Jewish News*, *e-Jewish Philanthropy*, *The Walrus*, and *The Wisdom Daily*. **Rabbi Samuel Kaye** is the Associate Rabbi of Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto. Rabbi Kaye is an accomplished educator and community organizer who firmly roots his justice work in the Jewish tradition. **Aaron Rotenberg**, among his many leadership endeavours, is the Spiritual Leader of Annex Shul, a rabbinical student at ALEPH, and Hesed Intern at Beth Tzedec Congregation.

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SHAMASH CONCERT 9:45 - 10:45 PM

Hybrid concert

The centrepiece of the IGNITE! program will include a hybrid live/virtual variety concert curated by the Ashkenaz Festival, in which artists from around the corner and across the country (and beyond) will bring

us fresh musical performances inspired by the themes of the season. The program includes: Allan Merovitz, Aviva Chernick, The Barrel Boys, Finjan, Mostly Kosher, Socalled, The Rosenblatt Family (Jason, Rachel and Abby), and Toronto Klezmer Society. The concert will be broadcast live on [Holy Blossom's Livestream page](#) and on [Holy Blossom](#) or [Ashkenaz](#) on Facebook!

THIRD SESSION CHOICES: 11 PM - 12 AM

Judith: Our Unsung Hero

With Ella Gladstone Martin

Hybrid session

Matriarchs Ruth, Miriam, and Devorah all have iconic pieces of music written about them. But what about Judith? Discuss her story with City Shul's cantorial student Ella Gladstone Martin. Together you will write your own Chanukah song in honor of this courageous heroine.

Ella Gladstone Martin has a Master's in Sacred Music and is fulfilling her dream of becoming an ordained cantor at Hebrew Union College. Ella received her bachelor's in jazz voice from the University of Toronto. Ella is the proud recipient of several academic honors including the Women of Reform Judaism's Award in Torah Cantillation and the Isaac Mayer Wise Scholarship. Her passion is healing and uplifting communities of all ages through prayer. Ella is thrilled to serve as cantorial intern at Temple Shaaray Tefila on Manhattan's Upper East Side, and to co-lead monthly services with Rabbi Elyse Goldstein at Toronto's City Shul.

Table Drumming and Chanting

With Rabbi Aaron Levy

In person session

In this hands-on, musical-spiritual workshop jam, we'll learn wordless niggunim (chants) from different Jewish cultures and basic rhythms to play on tables to accompany them. No experience necessary for this meditative, musical exploration. All are welcome to drum and sing with us!

Rabbi Aaron Levy is a leader in the revival of downtown Jewish life in Toronto, where he is the founder and spiritual leader of Makom: Creative Downtown Judaism, a diverse and inclusive community fusing Jewish tradition and progressive values through spirituality, learning, and culture since 2009. Ordained in 2004 in the first graduating class of Yeshivat Chovevei Torah: The Open Orthodox Rabbinical School, he is also an avid drummer, cyclist, hiker, and vegan.

Tackling Talmud: My Chanukah, Your Chanukah, The Talmud's Chanukah

With Rabbi Jordan Shaner

Hybrid session

Together we will look at classic rabbinic texts from the Midrash and Talmud, and learn about what Chanukah was really all about for the rabbinic cultures that shaped those texts, while also discussing how to find renewed meaning in our own celebrations of the festival of lights.

Jordan Shaner is the associate rabbi of Temple Sinai Congregation of Toronto. He began his career in Toronto in 2019, shortly after receiving his rabbinic semicha from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York City. While studying to become a rabbi, Jordan also served as a synagogue cantor in New York. He lives with his wife, Kate, and son, Meir.

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Sacred Darkness

With Aaron Rotenberg

Hybrid session

In this night-time text-study class, we'll explore ways in which darkness is a holy and nurturing force in biblical, rabbinic and mystical texts. Sources will include texts about the earth itself, black ritual objects like tefillin and the black ink of the Torah scroll, mystical practices about the power of studying at night and the “arafel” – the thick darkness that contains the Divine presence.

Aaron Rotenberg, among his many leadership endeavours, is the Spiritual Leader of Annex Shul, a rabbinical student at ALEPH, and Hesed Intern at Beth Tzedec Congregation. He spends his summers as the Educational Manager of Heart to Heart, a society-building summer camp program for Jewish and Palestinian teens. He has an MFA in Film Production from York University and enjoys spending time developing film in the dark.