



Adath Emanu-El Religious School  
21st Century Judaism for 21st  
Century Families

# Religious School Handbook

## 5785 (2024-2025)

**RABBI AMY MEMIS-FOLER**

[rabbi@adathemanuel.com](mailto:rabbi@adathemanuel.com)

**ABBY WOLF—Religious School Director**

[awolf@adathemanuel.com](mailto:awolf@adathemanuel.com)

**RACHEL MAINWARING—Religious School Committee Chair**

[rachelbbm@gmail.com](mailto:rachelbbm@gmail.com)

**HEIDI KRAMER—Religious School Assistant**

[hkramer@adathemanuel.com](mailto:hkramer@adathemanuel.com)

SYNAGOGUE OFFICE 856-608-1200

Welcome to another great year at Adath Emanu-El Religious School.

We are excited to learn with you and your family throughout the year.

Thank you for taking the time to read this important handbook. Please use this booklet as a guide to our school, events, policies, and procedures. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Abby Wolf or this year's Religious School Committee chair, Sarah Bachner.

### **Mission & Vision Statements**

#### Mission Statement:

Adath Emanu-El's Religious School aims to provide students and families with positive Jewish experiences and the tools needed to live a life engaged with Jewish ritual, Jewish identity, and Jewish culture.

#### Vision statement:

Adath Emanu-El's Religious School seeks to foster Jewish experiences, stimulate family learning, and enable an appreciation of Judaism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



*B'ruchim Ha'baim—Welcome!*

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# ***Brit (covenant) for Students, Families, and Our School***

## **Adath Emanu-El Religious School**

**5785**

Effective synagogues do not simply engage with students; they form families. This is even more true for religious education: parents, siblings, and other family members are all a part of the learning team. The Religious School can teach *about* Judaism. However, it cannot make people Jewish; only a supportive and nurturing environment can do that. This covenant reflects those principles.

### **FAMILIES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:**

- sending their child(ren) to school regularly and on time.
- showing an interest in what their child(ren) is/are learning.
- making Religious School a family priority.
- attending Shabbat services periodically with their child(ren).
- attending school family events.
- communicating with teacher(s) and/or Abby Wolf should problems arise.

### **STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:**

*a serious approach to learning which includes:*

- coming prepared to work.
- participating in activities, discussions and projects with enthusiasm.
- completing assignments.

*appropriate behavior in school which includes:*

- respect for the dignity of teachers and students alike.
- respect for your property, the synagogue, and the property of others.
- working to ensure that the Religious School environment is a safe one for yourself and others.
- periodic attendance at Shabbat services with your family.

### **THE SCHOOL IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:**

- providing teachers and staff committed to excellent instruction.
- providing support materials necessary for learning.
- creating a safe and nurturing environment conducive to learning and to the development of self esteem and positive Jewish identities.
- respecting and providing for the needs of individual students.
- maintaining on-going communication with families and students.

To signify your understanding of this sacred trust, please sign below and retain it for your reference.

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Family Member's Signature

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Student's Signature

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Adath Emanu-El Representative

## Shabbat with Friends



Join your Religious School friends for a pre-shabbat oneg and activity at 6:45 pm, followed by family services at 7:30 pm.

### Mark Your Calendar!

**December 2, 2022**....5th/6th Grade Shabbat with Friends

**February 3, 2023**....3rd/4th Grade Shabbat with Friends

**March 3, 2023**....K-2nd Grade Shabbat with Friends

**6:45 pm**

## **Class Times and Scheduling**

### **K-6th Grade**

Kindergarten through 6th grade classes meet Sunday mornings.

Kindergarten, 1st & 2nd Grade: 9:00 am-10:50 am.

(Optional Babysitting available from 10:50 am - 12:30 pm)

3rd-6th Grade: 9:00 am-12:30 pm with a supervised 15 minute break & snack.

### **Teen Night**

7th-10th grades meet Wednesday evenings and includes dinner

7th Grade: 5:30-8:00 pm

8th-10th Grade: 6:30-8:00 pm

11th-12th Grade: Dinner with the Rabbi (4-5 times during the year).

7th Grade begins in the classroom at 5:30 pm followed by dinner at 6:30 pm

8th -10 Grades begin in the Social Hall with dinner at 6:30 pm

## **Special Family Ed Programs and Activities**

### **2nd Grade**

Second graders and their families come together to learn about Hanukkah in an interactive program created and facilitated by Morah Shira. This year the program will be on Sunday,

**December 11.** Please mark your calendar!

### 3rd Grade

Third graders and families will set aside sacred time and learn about Shabbat. **November 20**, is devoted to creating personalized challah covers that can adorn their Shabbat table for many years to come.

### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

Passover is in the air all year long in 4<sup>th</sup> grade! Students and their families come together to explore different facets of one of our most memorable holidays. This year the program will be held on **March 26**. More information will be sent home as the holiday approaches.

### 5th Grade

Animals will be the topic of discussion as 5th graders and families join us on **October 23**.

### 6th Grade

6th graders will participate in an interactive and delicious Tu B'Shevat Seder led by Morah Abby on February 5, during class time.

### Teachers & Classroom Assignments

Kindergarten: **Morah Sophia** [Classroom 5] [sophiarosenberg@adathemanuel.org](mailto:sophiarosenberg@adathemanuel.org)

First Grade: **Morah Renae** (Classroom 6) [rgodfrey@adasthemanuel.org](mailto:rgodfrey@adasthemanuel.org)

Second Grade: **Morah Shira Keet** [Classroom 10] [skeet@adathemanuel.org](mailto:skeet@adathemanuel.org)

Third Grade Judaic: **Morah Cindy Rosenberg** [Classroom 8] [crosenberg@adathemanuel.org](mailto:crosenberg@adathemanuel.org)

Third Grade Hebrew: **Rabbi Renae Toben** [Classroom 3] [rtoben@adathemanuel.org](mailto:rtoben@adathemanuel.org)

Fourth Grade Judaic: **Moreh Michael Wemer** (Classroom 9) [mwemer@adathemanuel.org](mailto:mwemer@adathemanuel.org)

Fourth Grade Hebrew: **Moreh Michael Wemer** [Classroom 9] [mwemer@adathemanuel.org](mailto:mwemer@adathemanuel.org)

Fifth Grade Judaic: **Morah Orly Buday** [Room 7] [obuday@adathemanuel.org](mailto:obuday@adathemanuel.org)

Fifth Grade Hebrew: **Morah Dana Fine** [Classroom 2] [dfine@adathemanuel.org](mailto:dfine@adathemanuel.org)

Sixth Grade Judaic: **Morah Cindy Rosenberg** [Multi-Purpose] [rforth@adathemanuel.org](mailto:rforth@adathemanuel.org)

Sixth Grade Hebrew: **Morah Shira Keet** [Classroom 10] [skeet@adathemanuel.org](mailto:skeet@adathemanuel.org)

## Teen Night

Morah Karen Federman-Ellner

Morah Dana Fine

Morah Rachel Forth

Morah Shira Keet

Morah Cindy Rosenberg

Morah Jamie Schoopachevich

## Pick Up/Drop Off Procedures

Drop Off: The traffic cones in our parking lot provide a safe space for all of our students to enter the building. Please be respectful of the entrance to the Religious School wing. Follow the traffic pattern to drop off your student(s) between 8:45-8:55 am on Sundays.

Pick Up: Please follow the same procedure as Drop-Off.  
Students will be escorted out to the pick-up line.

## Lateness and Early Dismissal

Please make every effort to be on time for class. Students who arrive late must sign in with the Temple Office before going to class.

If a student needs to leave early, a parent or guardian must come into the Temple office. Students will not be released without a parent or guardian present in the building.

The parent or guardian must sign the student out in the designated binder, and a staff member or *madrich/a* will bring your child to the office. Please **inform the office in advance** if your child will be departing before class time ends. This ensures we know where every student is at all times.

## In the Classroom

### **Cell Phone Policy-Updated for 2023-2024**

**Please do not expect your child(ren) to answer his/her cell phone or respond to text messages during school hours.**

If you need to be in contact with your child, please call the Temple Office. Cell phones will not be allowed for personal use during Religious School, but students in grades 6-12 may use them during class as a learning tool and for recreation during break.

Students using their technology inappropriately will have the item confiscated and a family member must retrieve it from the Temple Office. Each classroom teacher reserves the right to make his/her own policy in addition to this one. In the interest of our youngest students developing friendships, we ask that students in grades K-5 do not bring any technological devices to school. During break, games and activities that foster interpersonal relationships will be provided. Students are also welcome to bring/share their favorite non-technological game/activities from home.

### **Dress Policy**

Our Religious School expects respectfulness in all areas, including manner of dress. Casual attire is welcome in the school environment as long as the appropriate guidelines below are observed. Please keep in mind that we have young students who will be looking up to the older students as role models in our school and synagogue.

- No clothing with slogans or images that could be seen as offensive.
- Clothing should cover well, not exposing large or inappropriate areas of skin or undergarments and clothing should fully cover the undergarments beneath them.
- With the exception of religious head coverings, hats or caps should not be worn in the classroom.
- Due to safety issues, we strongly discourage wearing flip-flops.

### **Food and Snacks in the Classroom**

On Sundays, third graders through sixth graders and anyone in babysitting, who stay from 9am to 12:30 pm will have a fifteen minute break during which a pre-packaged light snack or soft pretzel is served. This is to sustain our students' energy, to provide an opportunity for the class to join together in the appropriate blessings, and give the students a chance to socialize and establish friendships. We ask that families do not send snacks with their children so that we can be respectful of those with allergies. But, we do ask that your child brings a water bottle. If you have questions about the food items served or need to make special arrangement please contact the Temple Office.

### **Learning Support**

We pride ourselves on opening our souls, our building, and our programs to all individuals. We will work with students and their families to accommodate any and all needs. If your child has special needs of any kind, please contact Abby Wolf so that an appropriate individual educational plan can be developed to ensure that your child has a meaningful and rewarding educational and social experience. If you have an individual educational plan from your child's school, we strongly encourage you to share it with us so we can create a positive learning environment for each of our students.

## **Room Parents**

Each classroom has a room parent who helps coordinate room parties, special events, and facilitates communication between parents and the instructor. Be on the lookout for a welcome email from your room parent(s)!

## **Texts and Supplies**

Textbooks will be provided for each student at the beginning of the year and are included in your Religious School tuition. Teachers may send home an additional list of items for your child to bring to class. Please make sure that your child brings his or her materials to class each week and back home afterwards in order to complete assigned homework.

## **Tzedakah Collection**

*Tzedakah* is collected at the start of every Sunday. Of course, contributions are voluntary and the amount each student contributes is left to the discretion of the family. Each class will collect *tzedakah* throughout the year. At the end of the school year, the class or teacher will decide where they would like to donate the accumulated funds. We have also donated thousands of pounds of food to the South Jersey food bank and JFCS food pantry over the course of the year! These are concrete ways our school helps the community around us.

## **Life Cycle Events at Adath**

### **Consecration**

To mark the beginning of our students' formal Jewish education, they are invited to the Bimah on Erev Sukkot to celebrate with the community. This is a lovely and meaningful ceremony for children and families alike. Our teens create a "bridge" for our young students to run through and receive recognition for this milestone. The service is followed by a celebration in the Sukkah provided by the Youth Group.

**[This year's Consecration Service is scheduled for Sunday, October 9, 6:00 pm.](#)**

## **Bar/Bat Mitzvah**

Bar/Bat Mitzvah marks an important step in your child's spiritual growth and maturity. This is conveyed in the very words Bar/Bat Mitzvah (son or daughter of the Commandment). It suggests that the B'nai Mitzvah (sons and daughters...) are developing more mature understanding of Judaism as they begin assuming the responsibilities of adult Jewish life. It is Adath Emanu-El's policy that candidates for Bar/Bat Mitzvah be enrolled in Religious School during the year of their Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Those celebrating their Bar/Bat Mitzvah during the summer must be enrolled for the upcoming school year. Please see our Bar/Bat Mitzvah handbook (available in the Temple office) for more details about preparation for your child's big event.

## **Confirmation**

Reform Judaism, recognizing the need for a ceremony that would mark the free acceptance of Judaism by both sons and daughters at a more mature age than the thirteenth year, introduced the Confirmation ceremony. Each year a new class of students, in the tenth grade year of Religious School training, participates in the Confirmation ceremony held in the synagogue on Shavuot (late May or early June).

**This year's Shavuot Service will be held on  
Monday June 2, 2025 at 10:00 am**

## **Informal Learning at Adath**

Adath-Emanu-El's unique youth programming reaches from our youngest students to our high school seniors with AEFTY, AEFTY Junior (grades 7-8), AEFTY 5-6, AEFTY 3-4, and AEFTY 1-2. Few other Reform Congregations in the country provide such programming for their learners. AEFTY is part of NFTY-PAR, the Reform Movement's youth group for the Pennsylvania and South Jersey region.

For more information:

Karen Federman, AEFTY Advisor, at [youth@adathemanuel.com](mailto:youth@adathemanuel.com)

Rachel Griffin Youth Activities Chair at [adathyac@gmail.com](mailto:adathyac@gmail.com)

## Policies & Procedures

### **Absence Policy**

If your child is ill on a Sunday or Wednesday, please call the Temple Office or email Abby Wolf prior to the start of class. The school appreciates advance notice of any planned absences and will work with families to make up any missed work.

### **Administration of Medication**

Adath Emanu-El Religious School has established the following policies and procedures regarding the administration of emergency medications during Religious School hours. Medications shall include all over-the-counter (non-prescription) medications as well as medications available only by prescription. All medications will be kept in the Temple Office. No medications are to be kept or administered by classroom teachers or students. If medication is kept in a child's backpack or possession during school hours, it will be treated as a violation of the Religious School Behavior Policy.

Each medication to be administered by authorized Religious School personnel shall be provided to the Religious School according to the following:

- Each medication must be properly labeled. Pharmacy labels are required for all prescriptions. Over-the-counter medication must be sent in the original container with the student's name written on it.
- Medications are to be turned in to the Religious School office together with the Authorization for Emergency Administration of Medication form. That form must be completed and must include signatures by both the parent/guardian and a physician, as well as a physician's stamp.
- Medications will not be accepted or administered without compliance with these requirements.

The following procedures will be followed with respect to allergic reactions:

- The Religious School will designate personnel trained to administer antihistamines and epinephrine in case of allergic reactions and who will administer medications consistent with this policy.
- Medications are to be administered following the protocol set forth by a student's physician on the Authorization for Emergency Administration of Medication form.

- If epinephrine is administered, the Religious School will call 911 and the student's parents immediately. If any other medication is administered under this policy, the Religious School will call the student's parents immediately.

## **Illness Policy**

We must rely on parental judgment and discretion in deciding when children are ill and unable to attend school. A child who is ill is not likely to be an effective student. In addition, schools can be breeding grounds for contagious infections unless parents exercise reasonable caution in monitoring the health of their own children. If you are in doubt about whether your child is healthy enough for school, consult your physician. If a child arrives at school and, in the judgment of the school staff is too ill to remain in school, we will contact a parent or emergency contact and ask that the child be taken home.

Your child will not be allowed to attend class if he or she displays the following symptoms:

- Temperature of more than 100.5 degrees
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Outbreak of a contagious disease (e.g., chicken pox, impetigo, conjunctivitis, scabies, lice, or ringworm)
- Unidentified rash
- Yellow or greenish nasal discharge or sputum (from coughing)

In order to return to class after an illness, your child must meet the following conditions:

- Fever-free for 24 hours without fever reducing medicines
- Symptom-free of vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours
- 24 hours after the first administration of prescribed medications and that the child is no longer contagious
- In cases of conjunctivitis, the child's eye must be free of discharge before he or she attends class for a minimal timeframe of 24 hours
- Child is able to participate in the routine and curriculum of the class

Parents of children with chronic medical problems (asthma, severe allergies, diabetes, etc.) should discuss these conditions with Abby Wolf prior to the start of the school year so that we can take appropriate actions should a problem arise.

A treatment plan must be provided by the child's physician.

## **Promotion Policy**

All students in Kindergarten, First, and Second grade will automatically be promoted to the next grade.

### *Hebrew (3rd - 6th grades)*

1. All students must attend a minimum of 75% of scheduled classes.
2. Students must perform satisfactorily in the classroom. Satisfactory performance is up to the discretion of the teacher.
3. If a student does not meet the minimum requirements for promotion, he/she would be expected to do remedial work over the summer to be prepared for the next grade. Parents may opt to hire a private tutor to help achieve these goals.
4. Parents will be notified if a student is likely to need additional summer work by evaluations, interim reports, and contact from Abby Wolf.
5. It is expected that the school and the family will work closely together to ensure success!

### *Judaic (3rd - 6th grades)*

1. All students must attend a minimum of 75% scheduled classes.
2. Students must perform satisfactorily in the classroom.
3. If a student does not meet the requirements for promotion, he/she may do remedial work over the summer. The remedial work will be a meaningful project jointly agreed upon by the teacher, parent, and school administration. The project will be completed prior to the student being assigned to the next grade.
4. Parents will be notified if a student is likely to need to complete a summer project, as well as a letter from Abby Wolf.

*Confirmation: Students* will be admitted to Confirmation class after successfully completing grades 7th, 8th and 9th in Religious School

If you have questions or concerns about the promotion policy, please contact Abby Wolf.

## **Snow Day Procedure**

New Jersey weather is notorious. Inevitably, there will be days where, because of inclement weather, school will be canceled. If we choose to cancel school, we follow a set of procedures in order to inform everyone who is enrolled.

We will also post an announcement on the Religious School page of the Adath Website.

You will also receive an email from the school.



## **Student Evaluation**

Once per year, parents will receive a report detailing their child's progress in class. These will be distributed in conjunction with parent-teacher conferences. Please read these reports carefully and address any questions or concerns to Abby Wolf.

## Beyond the Classroom

### **Service Attendance for Bar/Bat Mitzvah**

In order to be a candidate for Bar/Bat Mitzvah, our students must have a solid grounding in Adath's Shabbat *minhag* (customs). To ensure your child meets these criteria, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders are required to attend nine services each year at Adath. They may be any combination of Friday night, Saturday Morning, Saturday afternoon, or holiday services. In order to receive credit, students must submit a service slip. The slips are located in the foyer outside of the sanctuary on the long wooden table near the entrance. After filling out, place the slip in the wooden box on the same table.

This requirement is designed to help your child prepare over time and not feel rushed or overwhelmed as they approach Bar/Bat Mitzvah. If your child does not attend *t'filah* regularly, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation process will be more difficult. **Please be aware that should your child need extra tutoring before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony (beyond the standard that we provide in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee) you will be responsible for compensating the tutor for his/her time.**

### **Worship Opportunities**

Attendance at Shabbat and holiday services is an indispensable part of your child's religious education, as well as a meaningful family experience. Family attendance at services strengthens and reinforces the family education component of our curriculum and, of course, fulfills a significant component of Jewish practice. Judaism has always promoted communal prayer, much more so than individual, because of the importance it places on community. We support each other on the road to greater understanding of our purpose and potential in life.

For our younger students and their even younger siblings, **Tot Shabbat** is a fun and interactive service for those who aren't yet readers. Please see the Temple calendar for the next scheduled service.

**Family Services** offer a shorter, congregational family worship experience and often feature the voices of our Youth Choir. Religious School classes have the opportunity to experience leading the congregation in worship. Family services are the first Friday night of each month beginning at 7:30 PM. Each month we will have a different class join us for dinner beforehand and participate on the bima.

Everyone is invited to **Saturday morning services** at 10:00 AM – whether we are honoring a young adult as Bar or Bat Mitzvah or simply worshipping together as a community. We encourage families to attend this service in order to become familiar with the customs of our congregation and prepare for their own Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

### **Sunday Morning T'filah**

We will be continuing with our brief prayer service at the beginning of each Sunday session (9:00-9:25 AM.) These mini-services will be led by Rabbi Memis-Foler, Cantor Sandi or lay leaders and will help the youngest students gain familiarity with worship at Adath Emanu-El.

The clergy, teaching staff and administrative staff are so excited to share another year of fun, learning and friendship with students and families.

