



THE CITY CONGREGATION for HUMANISTIC JUDAISM

Adult Education

JUDAISM 101: WHILE STANDING ON ONE FOOT What Does Secular Humanistic Judaism Teach About Our History and Heritage?

Hillel and Shammai were famous rabbis who lived in the first century. Hillel was known for his leniency. Shammai was known for being strict. One day a non-Jew approached Shammai and said, "I want to convert to Judaism. But keep it simple. Teach me the whole of Torah while standing on one foot." To Shammai this was a ridiculous request and he responded with anger by hitting the man. When the man then went to Hillel he accepted him. Rather than reject the man's request, he answered him on his terms with a simple statement. "Do not do to your neighbor that which is hateful to you. All the rest is commentary. Go and study it."

**An on-going series of classes presented by Rabbi Peter Schweitzer
Wednesday evenings, 7:00-8:30pm, 15 West 86th Street**

**Free to members, but donations will be appreciated.
\$10 to non-members. Visitors are welcome.**

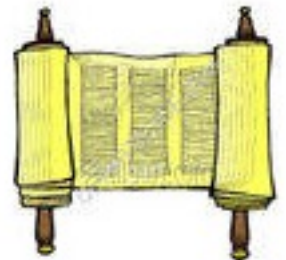
Registration required to 212-213-1002 or info@citycongregation.org.

November 2

Philosophy 101 / BASIC BELIEFS AND PRINCIPLES OF JUDAISM: Are these our beliefs too?

What are the basic beliefs and principles of Judaism that have been espoused over the millenia? Do these core ideas still hold true for contemporary secular and cultural Jews? If not, what Jewish concepts are meaningful to us?

How do we interpret the trajectory of Jewish history? How do we explain bad things happening to good people? What is the traditional view on God-Torah-Israel? Where does knowledge and truth come from? What are the traditional Jewish positions on when life begins, when life ends, heroic measures and afterlife? What are our views on these and other matters?



December 7

Culture 101 / ANCIENT TALES AND LEGENDS: The Biblical version of history and the origins of the Hebrew people

How do secular Jews read our ancient literature? Discover the truths and real history of the Bible. Find out how this "sacred" text is a disguise for a political tractate that supports the priesthood and the Davidic Dynasty. Learn how to analyze ancient tales as works of literature with a rich cast of characters...including God.



Who wrote the Bible and why? Did you know there were two Creation stories? Why did God bring the Great Flood and later destroy Sodom and Gomorrah? Why did Abraham protest but Noah didn't? Did the Exodus occur, and if not, what's the point?

January 11

Culture 102 / HILLEL ON THE ROOF: A sampling of our classic folklore

Why is the moon smaller than the sun? Why did Abraham smash his father's idols? What was Hillel doing on the roof and where did the Rebbe of Nemirov disappear? What are the classic rabbinic tales from our folklore? Do we agree with the lessons they try to teach? Are these stories still noteworthy for secular Jews?



How did Abraham discover God when he was only a child? What did the bee say to Solomon? Why did the cow refuse to budge? How did Beruria face the death of her two sons? How did the people of Chelm capture the moon? What are the stories you missed in Sunday School?

February 1

Philosophy 102 / THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN SECULAR JUDAISM: From the early Hellenists to modern Humanistic Judaism

How did secular Judaism develop? Is it a new phenomenon or can its roots be traced back to Hellenism? How did it emerge in the 18th century and how has it continued to take form over the last two centuries? Where does Humanistic Judaism fit into this history?



What did the original coffeehouse have to do with the development of secular Judaism? How much was "bottom up" versus "top down"? What was the reaction from traditional Jews? How has secular Judaism continued to take shape in the last two centuries? What are the basic tenets?

March 6 (Note: This is a TUESDAY)

History 101 / THE AMERICAN JEWISH EXPERIENCE: Tracing the waves of immigration from 1654 to the present

Who were the first Jews who came to America? How were they received? How did the American Jewish population grow and expand? What does it mean to be identified as a secular and cultural Jew in the United States today?



Where is the oldest Jewish cemetery? How did the Jewish population grow and expand? How were the early Jews received? When did Jews get the right to vote? Who was Asser Levy and why was he such an important Jewish New Yorker?

Memberships and tuition fees do not fully cover the congregation's expenses. Please consider making a tax-deductible contribution to support our many programs and our growing community.

The City Congregation for Humanistic Judaism
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