

TORAH360!

Engaging Teens One Mitzvah at a Time



Student & Family Handbook





Dear Parents,

How do we get teens involved in a way that meets their interests? We ask them to help chart the course of their Jewish involvement and education. Today's teens have the ability to customize so many aspects of their lives from school, to extra-curricular activities, to social networking. Why should their Jewish education be any different?

TORAH360! gives our teens the opportunity to do just that! By offering a wide variety of activities in which our teens can choose to engage, **TORAH 360!** offers a structure that is flexible and fluid so that all students can participate and create their own timeline and level of engagement. Students will have the opportunity to complete two circles of mitzvah points. The completion of the first circle (i.e., 360 mitzvah points) leads to Confirmation. Completion of a second circle of 360 points leads to graduation and an additional capstone trip. Details follow regarding classes, social action, field trips and worship participation opportunities that will be offered, but we encourage students to suggest ideas as well.

We are excited about your child's involvement in **TORAH 360!** Please don't hesitate to be in touch with any questions.

Shalom,

Dr./Cantor Rhoda Harrison
Director of Congregational Learning & Programming

Rabbi Linda Joseph
Senior Rabbi

על שלשה דברים העולם עומד

על התורה, על העבודה, ועל גמילות חסדים

Our world stands upon three things:
Torah, Worship & Acts of Lovingkindness

(Pirke Avot 1:2)

Our Rabbinic sages taught that our world stands on three things: *Torah* (education), *Avodah* (worship) and *Gemilut Chasadim* (service to others). So, too, Har Sinai's **TORAH360!** stands on these primary pillars of Jewish life. Our students are faced with a barrage of different choices as they grow. Providing our students opportunities to engage in these primary Jewish tasks within the context of their Jewish community has the power to give them insight, not only into their developing Jewish identities, but also into how they fit into the broader world beyond themselves.

Torah

Our Congregational Statement of Purpose says, "We are a center of study and engagement...We inspire growth and leadership." One of our goals is to educate our youth and provide them with a rich educational foundation that will lead them to grow into knowledgeable, active, lifelong learning Jewish adults.

Worship

A minyan, a quorum of ten, is required for Jewish worship because Judaism recognizes that we are not just individuals, but, rather, that each of us is part of a larger community. We pray within the embrace of community to remind us of our ties to the generations that came before us and to each other. Praying together also reminds us of our responsibility to each other and to our synagogue community.

Service to Others

The value of *Tikkun Olam*, the repair of the world, and the pursuit of social justice are paramount to Reform Judaism. *Pirke Avot* (2:21) reminds us that though we are not obligated to complete the task, we are not free to neglect it. Our students may already be engaged in *tikkun olam* through their school service requirements or other extra-curricular activities, but it is important for them to understand that working to make the world a better place is a core Jewish value.

TORAH360! To Do List

❖ Register

Registration forms are available on our website: www.harsinai-md.org, by contacting the temple office: 410-654-9393 or by emailing our Administrative Assistant, Rebecca Diamond: rdiamond@harsinai-md.org.

❖ Attend information meeting

There will be a family information meeting held at the start of the school year to review the program and answer questions.

❖ Sign up for activities

Review the list of options in each category. A preliminary list is included with this Handbook and will be emailed to each student as they register, and there will be opportunities for students to propose their own activities. Return sign-up forms to Dr./Cantor Harrison. They can be mailed in or emailed: rharrison@harsinai-md.org - Har Sinai Congregation, 2905 Walnut Avenue, Owings Mills, MD 21117.

❖ Complete activity

Submit any required documentation to Dr./Cantor Harrison for receipt of Mitzvah points.

Confirmation & The Gems of JEM Society

Students must earn at least 324 of their circle of Mitzvah points in order to be eligible for the Confirmation NYC trip and two weekend Confirmation preparation retreats. The final preparations and rehearsals for the Confirmation service will give the students their final 36 Mitzvah points to complete their circle.

After Confirmation, point values for activities double, and students are invited to begin work on a second circle of Mitzvah points. Completion of a second circle earns them membership into **The Gems of JEM Society**. Students must

have earned at least 324 points towards their second circle of Mitzvah points in order to be involved in the decision making and planning for the **Gems of JEM** trip and celebration. The final 36 points of their circle will be earned on the trip.

TORAH360! Sample Offerings

- Attend Shabbat Torah Study four times during school year (40 Points)
- Under the guidance of Rabbi Joseph, study a Torah portion and prepare a *D'var Torah* to deliver during Shabbat worship (40 points)
- Under the guidance of Cantor Gerber or Dr./Cantor Harrison, study trope and prepare a Torah portion to chant during worship services (40 points)
- Work with the clergy, participate in worship services as service reader (20 points)
- Work with the clergy, learn music and participate as a worship participant and/or songleader four times during the school year (40 points)
- Under the guidance of Cantor Gerber, learn how to use the sound system and work the system for 3 events (30 points)
- Under the guidance of Cantor Gerber, learn how to record, create and edit sound recordings of worship and/or sermons for placement on Har Sinai's website (40)
- Attend one of the elective 6-week class offerings for high school students to be held on Sundays after JEM (60 points)
- Organize and/or participate in a book club discussion on a Jewish themed book (selection to be approved by Rabbi Joseph or Dr./Cantor Harrison) (40 points)
- Organize and/or participate in movie viewing and discussion on a Jewish themed movie (selection to be approved by Rabbi Joseph or Dr./Cantor Harrison) (25 points)
- Attend a Jewish museum (e.g., Jewish Museum of MD, Holocaust Museum) and write a reflection to share with the community during worship services (25 points)
- Participate in a Har Sinai organized field trip for teens (depends on nature of trip)
- In coordination with Rabbi Joseph or Dr./Cantor Harrison, organize an off-site field trip for teens (depends on nature of trip))
- Work as a *Madrich/Madricha* in our JEM program under the supervision of Dr./Cantor Harrison (50)
- Work in the Har Sinai office under the supervision of Monica Blum (depends on tasks and frequency)
- Attend a Quad-Reform Temple teen event (25 points)
- Attend a NFTY-MAR or National NFTY event (75 points)
- Serve as a HaSTY Board member (50 points)

- Participate in any of Har Sinai's Social ACTION Committee events (points depend on project)
- Participate in one of The Associated's teen engagement programs (see www.4FrontBaltimore.org), examples include: STAC, DILLER, Social Innovation Fellowship, HaZamir (points depend on program)
- Work with Dr./Cantor Harrison and/or Har Sinai's Youth Coordinator, staff a Chaverim, Club Rishon or Kol Tov event (25points)
- Attend or staff a Jewish summer camp (75 points/week)
- Finishing the JEM year post-Bar or Bat Mitzvah (25 points)
- Independent Study project to be approved by Rabbi Joseph or Dr./Cantor Harrison (points depend on nature of project)

We also look forward to students proposing their own suggestions for projects and learning opportunities!

