PARENT WELCOME AND CURRICULUM NIGHT

3rd - 7th Grade
YOUR CHILD’S JEWISH JOURNEY AT LCLJ

K-2: a taste of PBL

3rd & 4th Grade: PBL, Hebrew, T’filah

5th - 6th Grade: PBL, Hebrew, T’filah

7th - 12th: CenSyn Teens: Leadership, Confirmation, and Beyond
WHAT IS PBL AND WHY DO WE DO IT?

- Students gain knowledge and skills by investigating and responding to an authentic, engaging, and complex question.

PBL at LCLJ:

- Students explore 3 units each year.
- Classes run on a trimester schedule for 3rd-7th graders.
- Student-driven learning: students can decide what they want to explore within the unit
Project Based Learning
Judaic Units: 3rd Grade (K’tanim)

- Jewish Holidays
- Shabbat and Creation
- Genesis
Unit 1 (And Returned to Throughout the Year): Jewish Holidays

Main points we explore:

- The meaning and traditions of the Jewish holidays
- Marking time and the Jewish calendar
- How celebrating our holidays unite us as a Jewish people

How we explore this:

- Participating in holiday rituals as a class
- Looking at the lunar calendar (with the help of Oreos!)
- Comparing Jewish holiday traditions from around the world
Unit 2: Shabbat and Creation

Main points we explore:
- The story of Creation from the Torah
- The concepts of rest and holiness
- Shabbat rituals and prayers

How we explore this:
- Telling the Creation story in our own words
- Interviewing guest speakers about their Shabbat practices
- Comparing everyday moments to the holiness of Shabbat
- Plan and lead a Family Shabbat Service
Unit 3: Genesis

Main points we explore:
- Stories and characters in the Book of Genesis
- Jewish values and lessons found in Genesis
- Importance of retelling Torah stories each year

How we explore this:
- Creating interactive visuals that embody the values we learn
- Finding the connection between Jewish stories and our lives
- Creating a Genesis “newspaper” with articles written by our students
Project Based Learning
Judaic Units: 4th Grade (Nitzanim)

- Exodus
- Jewish Rituals
- Israel: Land, People, and Culture
Exodus

Main points we explore:
- The arc of the Exodus story; Characters and events
- Lessons and Jewish values that we can learn from our stories
- Modern-day heroes and activists who embody those Jewish values

How we explore this:
- Reading stories, watching videos, and acting out scenes to bring these stories to life
- Journaling—using pictures or words—to reflect on key points and values from each of the stories
- "Meeting" a variety of people who dedicate their lives to making positive change
Jewish Rituals

▶ Main points we explore:
  - Jewish rituals through the lens of the Passover Seder
  - How these rituals are portrayed in different contexts (i.e. Shabbat, Chanukah, High Holy Days)
  - What customs and texts make Jewish rituals meaningful

▶ How we explore this:
  - Defining "ritual" and connecting it to how we celebrate the Jewish holidays
  - Opportunities to participate in and perform Jewish rituals with Central clergy and staff
  - Creating our own 4th Grade Passover Haggadah and Seder experience
Israel: Land, People, and Culture

Main points we explore:
- Israel's popular sites and landmarks
- Israel’s diverse demographics and people
- Israel’s vibrant culture through song and food

How we explore this:
- Taking an interactive "tour" of Israel's various cities
- Experiencing a "day in the life" of Israelis of all different backgrounds
- Singing Israeli songs and getting a "taste" of Israeli cuisine
Project Based Learning
Judaic Units: 5th Grade (Bonim)

- Israel: Birth of the State
- Jewish Law
- Jewish Life Cycle Events
Israel: Birth of the State

Main points we explore:

- The historical, political, and social contexts in which Israel was established
- Key values that impacted the establishment of Israel (i.e. land, safety, innovation, Jewish pluralism, freedom)
- Influential leaders and their perspectives on the values above
Israel: Birth of the State

How we explore this:

- Chronological overview of Israel’s formation
- Games, comics, videos, and exploring important texts
- Kibbutz rotations, building evidence for a debate on the Dreyfus Affair
Jewish Law

Main points we explore:

- History and evolution of Jewish Law
- Interpreting how Jewish laws are applicable to our lives
- Principles of Reform Judaism
Jewish Law

How we explore this:

- Participating in a Torah scavenger hunt for different types of Jewish laws
- Interviewing Central clergy and staff about Reform Judaism
- Bringing Jewish text to life through a live action text-study

Public Product:

- Students will create their own “Talmud Page,” and participate in an interactive study and discussion with families
Jewish Life Cycle Events

Main points we explore:
- The significance of Jewish life cycle events
- The rituals associated with each event
- How to make life cycle events more inclusive
Jewish Life Cycle Events

How we explore this:

- A gallery walk of pictures from various lifecycle events
- Interviewing Central staff and family members about their experiences with baby namings, conversions, weddings, and death
Project Based Learning Judaic Units: 6th Grade (Chalutzim)

- Social Justice/Tikkun Olam
- The Holocaust
- God
Main points we explore:

- Using Jewish values as a tool to repair the world
- How to be advocates for issues we care about
- The importance and foundations of volunteerism
Social Justice / Tikkun Olam

- How we explore this:
  - Participating in a Family Day of Service
  - Brainstorm upstream vs. downstream solutions to issues we care about
  - Learning from our Clergy and teens how we can make a difference in our community
The Holocaust

Main points we explore:

- The historical and societal context of the Holocaust
- The importance of remembering the Holocaust
- Themes of resistance, righteousness, and legacy
The Holocaust

- How we explore this:
  - Listening to survivors tell their stories
  - Analyzing pictures, documentaries, and memorials
  - Helping to plan Central’s Yom HaShoah service
God

Main points we explore:

- Where do people find or feel God?
- What is God’s role in the Torah?
- How do our students, as 6th graders, relate to God?
- What does God mean to each of us?
God

How we explore this:

- Interviewing members of Central Synagogue’s clergy and staff
- Studying representations of God in Judaism through primary source texts, commentaries, art and more
- Creating personal statements about God
Seminars
7th Grade (Tzofim)

- Jewish Ethics
- PG-13 Torah
- Book of Why
Jewish Ethics

Main points we explore:

- Identify Jewish values within contemporary scenarios
- Apply said values to situations that arise in their own lives
- How to respectfully disagree with and debate our peers on issues important to us
Jewish Ethics

How we explore this:

- Practice respectful debating through imagined ethical scenarios
- Text studies to ground us in the proof texts from which many ethical scenarios arise
- Barometer exercises to visualize where we stand on various topics
PG-13 Torah

Main points we explore:

- Torah stories not previously taught in younger grades
- Characters whose stories have been hidden or not fully understood
- How we can learn from these stories and characters, even when they are challenging or confusing
PG-13 Torah

How we explore this:

- Text studies
- Group and class-wide discussions
- Comparisons between the stories they were told in younger grades vs. the stories in their original context
Book of Why

Main points we explore:

- Jewish values: Hachnasat Orchim, Shalom Bayit and more
- Leadership in Judaism, Biblical and contemporary, with an emphasis on female leadership
- What choices do we have to make as Jewish adults?
Book of Why

How we explore this:

- Generate questions about Jewish tradition and culture
- Utilize online resources and Central staff and clergy to help answer our questions
- Compile questions and research into the Tzofim Book of Why, to be distributed to the entire 7th grade
Hebrew Curriculum

- Hebrew Instruction:
  - 30 minutes each week
  - PBL classes are divided into smaller Hebrew groups, with Hebrew specialists pushing in to co-teach or teach their own group

- Goals:
  - For students learning the Alef-Bet:
    - Recognize each Hebrew letter by name and sound, and each vowel by sound
    - Decode Hebrew letter/vowel pairs and words
  - For post-Alef-Bet learning:
    - Learn modern Hebrew vocabulary and basic grammar structures
    - Read conversational Hebrew and practice phrases with their peers
T’filah / Prayer Curriculum

- T’filah at LCLJ:
  - 30 minutes per week
  - Led by Jeremy Sipe, Shirel Richman, and Tkiyah with visits from Central clergy during the year
  - Class-wide sessions (Grade-wide on Zoom)

- Core Prayers, Kabbalat Shabbat, Shacharit Shabbat
T’filah / Prayer Goals

Students will:

- Acquire the ritual and liturgical skills to become active participants in t’filah
- Be able to navigate the siddur and enunciate and chant the t’filot accurately and fluently.
- Learn the prayers in the siddur as a text, learning the meaning and content of individual prayers.
- Acquire skills for participation such as responding appropriately to prayers recited responsively, practicing when to sit, stand, and bow.
- Become leaders of their LCLJ prayer community with opportunities to lead their classmates in prayer.
- Experience t’filah as a vehicle for connecting to and cultivating a personal relationship with God, as well as a way to connect to the Jewish community.
- Be exposed to a range of positive t’filah experiences and options, including Central’s Kabbalat Shabbat service, music, storytelling, yoga, movement, meditation, niggunim, praying outdoors, or creative writing.
T’filah / Prayer Curriculum

- **3rd Grade:** Familiarizing with: Hinei Mah Tov, Barchu, Shema/Hear O Israel, Mi Chamocha, Silent Prayer, Oseh Shalom, Shehecheyanu, V’Ahavta Hashkiveinu, Adonai S’fatai

- **4th Grade:** Honing in on core prayers above, adding in: L’cha Dodi, Shiru L’Adonai, V’Shamru, Mi Shebeirach, Avot V’imahot
In 5th and 6th Grade, students begin to learn Central’s Shacharit Shabbat service: learning the prayers, focusing on the order of service, and exploring the meaning of prayers:

- Kedusha, Aleinu, Mourner’s Kaddish, YotzeirOr, Shema V’Ahavta
PROGRAMMING

- Shabbat Yeladim
- YFE Programming (Holidays, etc.)
- Outside Programming
  - By grade (Pre-K-2; 3-4; 5-6)
  - Outdoors at Central
  - Hopefully soon at other locations!
B'nei Mitzvah Programs