



**PARK AVENUE SYNAGOGUE**  
Congregational School

**Vav – Grade 6**

Our overarching curricular goals for Hebrew are for a graduate of the Congregational School to be able to:

- Decode Hebrew texts with emphasis on *tefillot* (prayers), *brakhot* (blessings), and Torah texts
- Participate in Shabbat services, both singing and reading *tefillot*
- Feel connected to the larger Jewish community and Israel

### **Hebrew Curriculum**

The Hebrew curriculum for Grade 6 has three components:

1. **Semi-private Hebrew tutoring** leading up to Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutoring. Tutoring sessions focus on solidifying learners' Hebrew decoding skills. Depending on each child's Hebrew level, they will use a variety of Hebrew sources that are appropriate to further their reading abilities.
2. **Bnei mitzvah learning & trope**. See below for more details.
3. **Tefillah sessions** during the week, led by Principal Music Educator Josh Rosenberg. We also encourage Vav learners to attend congregational *tefillah* services on Shabbat.

### **Tefillah – Prayers, Skills, and Rituals**

- **Shabbat: from Kabbalat Shabbat to Havdalah – the Whole 25 Hours**

Vav/Gr 6 students will learn the services for *Kabbalat Shabbat* (welcoming Shabbat on Friday evening), *Shabbat Shaharit* (morning), and *Havdalah*. Adding to their knowledge of the *Sh'ma*, *Mi Khamokhah*, and the *Amidah*, learners will be introduced to the full Friday evening *kiddush*, *L'kha Dodi*, *Shiru L'Adonai*, *Kol Ha-n'shamah*, and to different forms of the kaddish.

- **Bnei Mitzvah Learning & Trope**

Vav learners will participate in a weekly session about topics related to becoming Bnei Mitzvah. Subjects include key ritual objects such as tallit and tefillin. In October and November, the class will learn the trope (cantillation) for chanting the Haftarah. In subsequent sessions, students will apply the trope to their own Haftarah portions. The students will also make a *yad* (Torah pointer) that they can use when they read from the Torah at their Bnei Mitzvah.

## Core Judaics

The fall semester focuses on *tikkun olam*/social action to help learners gain a sense of responsibility for their actions as they approach their Bnei Mitzvah ceremonies. Each session relates to a different aspect of social activism as seen through a Jewish lens. Learners will participate in a semester-long *tikkun olam* project in small groups, using the Kiva organization.

The spring semester focuses on Jewish identity and belonging. The syllabus is structured in concentric circles, from the individual to the family to the immediate Jewish community to the Jewish People to the world at large. Vav learners will examine their personal relationships within each of these circles and will explore what Judaism teaches us about each one of them.

Specific topics include *Nevi'im* (the Book of Prophets) as a context for the Haftarah reading; Jewish journeys – spiritual as well as literal immigration; Maimonides' Eight Levels of Tzedakah; acts of *Hesed* (kindness); Jewish roles in racial justice through historic and current lenses; and the mitzvah of *pidyon sh'vu'im* (rescuing captives).

## Milestone Moment

Together with their families, students will have an opportunity during their Milestone Moment to showcase what they have learned, examine a complete Torah scroll, and stand in front of their Bnei Mitzvah portion. Learners will also receive the *yad* (Torah pointer) that they created to use at their Bnei Mitzvah.

## Learning Objectives/Goals

### Vav Learners will . . .

- Gain a sense of Jewish identity in both global and historical contexts.
- Appreciate the social responsibility of individual Jews and of all Jews based on the principles laid out by the rabbinic sages and by contemporary Jewish thinkers and scholars.
- Recognize and articulate their personal role in the extensive tapestry of Jewish history.
- Articulate how their Jewish identity connects them to the work of social action.
- Be familiar with the full arc of Shabbat prayers, from sundown to sundown.
- Be comfortable with Torah and Haftarah trope.