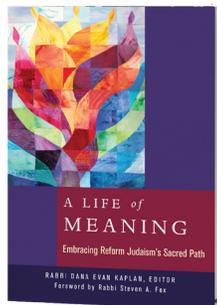


INTRODUCTION



to the New Reform Adult Education Curriculum

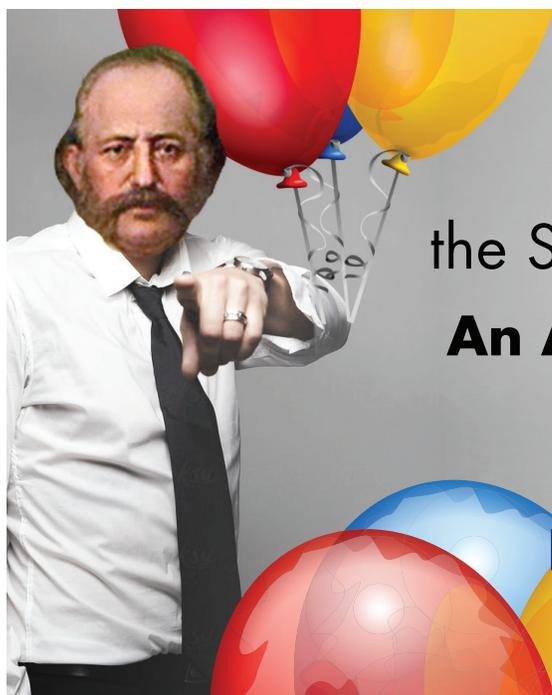


***A Life of Meaning: Embracing Reform Judaism's Sacred Path*, edited by Rabbi Dana Evan Kaplan, PhD, was published in 2018 by the CCAR Press. The book contains a broad look at Reform Judaism: our history, our theology, the development of our prayer, and our mission in this world.**

This book tells our story.

In April 2019, the CCAR Convention will take place in the city of Cincinnati, celebrating its 130th birthday. This city was the home of Isaac Mayer Wise, the founder of the American Reform Movement, whose 200th birthday we will celebrate this year, on March 29. This occasion is an apt moment in time to return to our roots, re-assess our history, and reconnect to our core values.

The new curriculum was compiled to give our clergy members, educators, and congregants the opportunity to dedicate the years of 2019 and 2020 to the study of our roots. It includes five sessions about the history, theology, and core values of Reform Judaism. Each of the sessions stands by itself; they are also each in dialogue with each other. This curriculum familiarizes students with the core ideas of our Movement, and invites a variety of different texts and voices into the conversation.



**A Life of Meaning:
An Introduction to
the Sacred Path of Reform Judaism
An Adult Education Curriculum
PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE**

**Reform.ccarpress.org
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SESSION 1: HISTORY

This first session provides an introduction to the history of our Movement in North America. When early Jewish immigrants arrived to North America, they struggled to become American while still maintaining their Jewish identity. We will explore how the European question of whether or not we were a “nation” or “a religious community” has shaped our self-understanding of Reform Judaism as a religion, and the impact of our self-understanding on our national and religious loyalties.

[Watch video 1 with Rabbi Dr. Gary Zola on Reform.ccarpress.org]

SESSION 2: MITZVOT AND ETHICS

In the second session, we will study the evolution of mitzvot and of Jewish practice, and how this evolution is reflected in the CCAR platforms. We will explore the meaning of mitzvot and ritual practice in Reform Judaism today, the ethics they these mitzvot convey, and discuss three mitzvot that became central to Reform Jewish American life.

[Watch video 3 with Rabbi Dr. Carole Balin on Reform.ccarpress.org]

SESSION 3: JUSTICE

This session is dedicated to one mitzvah that has shaped the Reform Movement more than any other mitzvah: the mitzvah to establish justice in our world. The session explores the historical reasons for the centrality of the Movement’s ethical calling in this world; and examines how Reform Jews who engage in this effort have grown both spiritually and morally during their struggle to live up to the highest moral standards.

[Watch video 2 with Rabbi Dr. Gary Zola on Reform.ccarpress.org]

SESSION 4: SPIRITUALITY

The fourth session focuses on a map of Reform Jewish spirituality. In what ways do Reform Jews “feel” their religion? This session explores three Jewish ways to grow spiritually as a Reform Jew: through engaging in text study; through establishing sacred relationships; and by internalizing the ways the words, melodies, and gestures of our prayers

[Watch video 4 with Rabbi Dr. Carole Balin and video 6 with Rabbi Dr. Lance J. Sussman on Reform.ccarpress.org]

SESSION 5: ON-GOING REVELATION

As Reform Jews, we know that the messages of the Torah have to be rediscovered in every generation anew, and for every person anew. The fifth session, then, is dedicated to the theme of on-going revelation. Where are we heading to? What are today’s most important lessons for the future of Reform Judaism and Reform Jews in North America?

[Watch video 4 with Rabbi Dr. Carole Balin and video 5 with Rabbi Dr. Lance J. Sussman on Reform.ccarpress.org]