



Welcome to Stephen Wise Free Synagogue!

We are so thrilled that you are going to be joining our community and we cannot wait to get to know your whole family. Our synagogue is an incredibly warm and dynamic place, and I believe that you will find our Religious School to be another shining example of that!

Our Religious School is ready to welcome your child for the 2022-2023 school year. Below is some helpful information that we encourage you to read through carefully before filling out the registration form:

- In order to enroll in our Religious School, you must be a member. Please make sure you have started the process of becoming a member and have the membership application. We will not be able to fully process your child's Religious School registration form until your membership in our synagogue is confirmed. To learn more about our membership process, dues, and forms, you can reach out to our director of membership engagement, Isaiah Benedek (x223).
 - If you haven't attended one of our information sessions, you can register [HERE!](#)
- Judaica classes will take place in person ONLY next year! During their Judaica programming day, each cohort will have an additional community learning component (*tarboot* for grades K–2, *tefilah* for grades 3–5, *nosh & drash* for grades 6–7) as part of their Judaica time. Students will attend Judaica once per week at one of the following times listed below:
 - Grades K–2
 - Sundays @ 9–11 a.m. OR Mondays @ 4–6 p.m.
 - Grades 3–5
 - Sundays @ 9–11 a.m. OR Mondays @ 4–6 p.m.
 - Grades 6–7 (*Note: This will be taught by our clergy again!*)
 - Sundays @ 11:30 a.m.–1 p.m, OR Wednesdays @ 4–5:30 p.m.

Please do your best to select the one that works best for your child. If you need to switch at any time before the year starts, you will need to speak with Alexander (religiousschool@swfs.org).

At this time, we are committed to keeping our COVID-19 vaccine requirement for all who are eligible. You will be asked to submit proof of vaccination during the registration process so that we do not have to ask students for it each week. If your child is not yet vaccinated, please be sure to submit the vaccine card before the first week of classes in September.

- This year, we will be offering an alternative to the full religious school program for students in pre-K, kindergarten and 1st grade. Our new Club Aleph Bet will take place on Tuesday afternoons for one hour (4–5 p.m.) from November through the beginning of April. This taste of religious school will include music, dance, holiday celebrations, Torah stories and more. You will be able to sign up by semester or for the entire year. More information on and registration for this will be available in June!
- Hebrew lessons for grades 3–7 will remain virtual and in small groups (up to five students) or *chavruta* (two students). We saw tremendous growth for all our students in Hebrew during the pandemic and believe that our online Hebrew program continues to be the best way to ensure maximal learning for our students. We are also excited by some new elements we will be

bringing to our Hebrew program in the fall. **In August, we will send out a form to select times that will work for your child's virtual Hebrew lessons.** Hebrew lessons will take place on Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays next year.

Please keep in mind that any student in Grades 4-7 who did NOT attend our Religious School or Portals program during the 2021-2022 school year, will be assessed on their Hebrew skills over the summer. They may also be given some additional Hebrew lessons or placed in a significantly smaller group in order to get them to an appropriate skill level as quickly as possible. There will be an additional charge of \$750 added to your RS tuition for all of these services.

- In order to ensure our in person classes are safe and with appropriate physical distancing, and that our virtual classes are as conducive for learning, we will be capping our class sizes (both in person and virtual). We will monitor registration and open wait lists for classes. If you register for something that is at capacity, you will be notified that you are waitlisted for that day/time. Classes will be filled based on a FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED basis.

Please also keep in mind that exact class sizes per classroom is something that we will continue to work on throughout the summer as CDC recommendations and guidelines will likely keep changing.

- Our registration form is ONLINE. Please fill this out carefully and let us know if you have any issues with the form. To finalize your registration, you will need to send in a check with your deposit of \$250 per student. (We cannot take credit card payments for Religious School tuition.)
- We will continue to offer our Portals program (one-on-one) for 3rd–7th graders. Please note that you will need to choose the separate PORTALS form to register for that program and you will only be able to register one child per form submission. Portals sessions can be virtual or in person depending upon scheduling, family preference and teacher preference.
- Filling out the registration form and sending in your deposit before July 1 means paying a lower tuition rate! **All registration fees will go up by \$75 after July 1.** We strongly encourage you to enroll as early as possible. Enrolling earlier helps us to hire (and re-hire) our teachers sooner, order supplies in advance and even create classroom set ups. If you plan to join us in 2022-2023, please register as soon as possible so we can be ready to welcome your child.

We cannot wait to get to know your entire family and having you be a part of our synagogue community.

If you have questions or concerns, you can reach out to me at any time.

[Register for Religious School Here](#)

[Register for Portals Here](#)

See you for the start of Religious School the week of September 11!

Sincerely,

Rabbi Rena Rifkin

Director of Youth Education