

Chabad of Potomac



Women's Circle

EMPOWERING JEWISH WOMEN
THROUGH TORAH STUDY



Program Guide

2017-2018 with Expanded Learning Opportunities!

A FORUM FOR THE CONTEMPORARY
JEWISH WOMAN TO EXPLORE,
DISCOVER AND CONNECT.

www.womenscircle.me

Dear Friend,

As we enter our 16th year of the Jewish Women's Circle, I invite you to join a forum where Jewish women of all ages and backgrounds come together to learn, to explore and to be empowered through the life giving waters of the Torah, thus rejuvenating mind, body and soul.

The Rebbe, whose vision is the inspiration behind the Jewish Women's Circle, would often stress the powerful potential of the Jewish Woman. Women, the Rebbe would say, are the foundation of the home and the entire world. Only when the foundation is strong, can the entire edifice endure.

The goal of the Women's Circle is to empower each of us Jewish women through Torah study, inspiring us to use the unique tools we were given to build our families, our homes and our communities upon the strong and everlasting foundation of Judaism.

I invite you to come and see for yourself what hundreds of community women have come to treasure.

I would like to thank our special and generous sponsors for enabling us to offer the JWC:

Beatriz Yanovich in honor of Debra Berman, a fantastic mother in law and grandmother.

Lissa Shorr in honor of a new year of Torah study

Dafna Berman in honor of her parents Dr. & Mrs. Saul and Beatriz Yanovich

Sincerely,

Sara Bluming



Women's Torah & Tea

AN ISLAND OF SERENITY, A LIGHTHOUSE IN TIME!

An intriguing and personal weekly Torah discussion of the practical and the mystical and its contemporary relevance.
Hot Coffee and freshly baked goodies always served!

**Weekly on Tuesdays-10:00am-11:00am
and Wednesdays-1:00pm-2:00pm.**

Beginning Tuesday October 17 and Wednesday, October 18.

Fee: \$75 for the year

Babysitting available, please inquire.

The Rosh Chodesh Society is a global initiative that aims to transform the lives of Jewish women, their families, and their greater communities through the bonds of shared Jewish experience and cutting-edge adult education. Our ultimate vision is to empower, inform, and inspire women to spark a worldwide spiritual revolution that will ensure a brighter future for the Jewish people.



A NEW MONTHLY COURSE FOR WOMEN
BY THE ROSH CHODESH SOCIETY



pause & AFFECT *A Shabbat Outlook*

Monthly, choice of Sunday or Tuesday evenings, 7:30pm-9:00pm

"The Sabbath is to the week what the line break is to poetic language. It is the silence that forces you to return to what came before to find its meaning."

—JUDITH
SHULEVITZ

Shabbat, says the Talmud, is G-d's gift to the Jewish people—and what a gift it is! It offers respite from labor and a break from the intrusion of our ubiquitous technologies. It allows family and community the time to connect and reflect without distraction. The warm smell of *challah*, the glowing candles, and the comfort of ritual all leave their imprint, shaping forever the meaning of family, peoplehood, and one's place in the universe.

Yet to many, Shabbat is archaic, restrictive, and daunting, and it is therefore altogether ignored. The objective of this course is to remove the barriers that keep people from enjoying what Shabbat has to offer. We invite women of every level of observance to experience the mystery of this most precious of Jewish treasures on their own level. This mitzvah is not an all-or-nothing proposition, and so this course provides multiple entry points so that students at every level of affiliation can explore meaningful ways to enrich their lives with the lessons of Shabbat.



LESSON 1 November 12 or November 14

Gift of Rest

It is difficult to imagine today a society functioning without a weekend, but this institution was unheard of in the ancient world. Societies customarily celebrated seasonal holidays, but the notion of a universal weekend—where an entire society would take a day off each week—was nonexistent. In fact, Greek and Roman writers habitually mocked the Jews for their Shabbat. Yet, these mockeries were ignored by contemporary Jews because of the profound meaning they found in Shabbat.

This lesson explores the deep riches that Jews have found in the past—and continue to find today—in Shabbat observance. We learn that some of the restrictions of Shabbat allow us to experience its power: increased productivity, enhanced physical and emotional health, a more robust sense of liberty, a better fostering of relationships, and amplified feelings of happiness. We then climb to the next rung to discover the vast spiritual treasures embedded into this day—how Shabbat is a different day, a loftier day, a more spiritual time, rendering it a conducive period for us to ponder and explore our relationship with G-d and our overall life's mission.

LESSON 2 December 10 or December 12

Glow of Peace

The prototypical Shabbat scene, as depicted in art and literature, is of a family gathered around the elegantly set Friday night table, with the Shabbat candles burning. These images portray a sense of peace, love, and serenity. But it was not only in the best of circumstances that Jews dedicated themselves to kindling the Shabbat flames. In the Kovno Ghetto during the Holocaust, Jewish women asked a local rabbi whether they could use electric lights to fulfill this mitzvah because they could not obtain candles or oil. Analyzing this question and the rabbi's answer allows us to explore the contours, function, and meaning of this powerful mitzvah. We will learn the practical laws and customs as well as the rich symbolism and meaning that is present in this ritual act that ushers in the Shabbat.





LESSON 3 January 14 or January 16 *Shabbat Matron*

"Come, O bride, come O bride, come, O bride, O Shabbat queen." Why is Shabbat compared to the bride and not the groom? Why is Shabbat compared to the queen and not the king? The liturgy of Shabbat is replete with female references, and Jewish mysticism teaches that Shabbat is truly feminine in multiple respects. By exploring the mystique of Shabbat's femininity, we will gain a deeper insight into the nuances of Shabbat, a greater appreciation of ourselves as women, and a newfound understanding of how the two interrelate and feed off of each other in unique ways.



LESSON 4 February 25 or February 27 *Divine Delights*

Much of what is written about Shabbat leads us to characterize it as a day of transcendence, a day whose holiness naturally affords much spiritual pleasure. Yet, when Jewish law formulates how to observe Shabbat, it instructs one to take pleasure by not just one but three sumptuous meals that are to be graced with lavish foods. If Shabbat is characterized as a day of transcendence, why is so much emphasis placed on eating and physical pleasures? Shouldn't the primary pleasure come from the sublime and ethereal? This lesson will explore two Jewish answers to this question, which will reveal two distinct philosophies concerning the concept of Shabbat, and more broadly, two perspectives on the overall function of Judaism and our purpose in life.



LESSON 5 March 18 or March 20 *Sacred Symbolisms*

There are certain laws and customs with regard to the Shabbat meals, and this lesson provides the opportunity to discuss their history and significance. Why is *Kiddush* recited on wine? What is the significance of two covered loaves? Why is it so important to consume fish and meat on Shabbat? Why do Ashkenazi Jews eat gefilte fish, and why do Jews eat *cholent* (or some variation thereof) on Shabbat? This lesson explores the origins and rationales for each of these customs, rendering what was heretofore a random food assortment that was merely good for the palate into a unified and holistic journey that is also good for the soul.



LESSON 6 April 15 or April 17

Order from Chaos

For many, what Jewish law permits and proscribes on Shabbat appears random and whimsical, and the dos and don'ts often seem dry, almost mundane. This lesson looks back at how Jews historically tried to demonstrate a logical structure that underlies the laws of Shabbat observance, and how Jews attempted to infuse this subject with soul and spirituality. We will explore some of the interesting theories that were postulated by rabbis in nineteenth-century Germany and in the Chasidic courts of Eastern Europe. A common refrain was that the laws and minutiae of Shabbat are consistent with its deeper theme—to become more mindful of how G-d is the anchor of our successes and accomplishments.



LESSON 7 May 20 or May 22

The Farewell

“Do not be afraid, Jacob My servant.” These words are customarily sung by some Jews after the Shabbat queen has departed. The need to “not be afraid” also appears in the text of the *Havdalah*, which we recite at the conclusion of Shabbat. The person is about to shift into a second gear, and this triggers spiritual qualms and uncertainties; but in the end, she is assured that there is nothing to fear. By examining the *Havdalah* ritual, we will acquire a deeper grasp for how Shabbat and the weekday are two important modes of our spiritual service, and how they both ought to interact with and enhance each other.

Fee: \$99 for the course
(includes text book) or \$18 per class

Location: Chabad of Potomac

For more info visit www.myrcsociety.com

16TH ANNUAL

Spa for the Soul

*A Day of Relaxation, Depth, Beauty
and Spirituality for the Jewish Woman.*

Indulge your inner self and satisfy your soul at Spa for the Soul, a unique program dedicated to celebrating our femininity, and exploring the many facets of what it means to be a Jewish Woman today.

Sunday, January 7, 2018

10am – 2:00pm



Keynote Speaker:

Laurie Lans

As a Lieutenant Commander in the United States Navy Reserve, Mrs. Laurie Lans served on active duty in the Middle East supporting Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom. She was activated once again to full time service and joined the ground forces in Iraq. She served in Afghanistan and then she and her husband, an Active Duty Chaplain – were stationed in South Korea.

Laurie's powerful message is one of Jewish pride and commitment to upholding Jewish observance despite all odds, be it on the battlefield or on the battle field of daily life in our society today. Her incredible experiences from lighting the menorah in Saddam Hussein's palace to listening to the megillah on the hills of the Afghanistan battlefield, exemplify the power of one Jewish woman.

Laurie's captivating story is full of humor, inspiration and amazing Divine protection and providence.

Fee: \$60 in advance



Women's **NEW YORK** Trip

Sunday, April 29

Experience the trip of a lifetime! Join us for this inspiring, fun filled and educational trip as we visit the Rebbe's Ohel, tour Crown Heights, (Chabad Lubavitch Headquarters), and shop & eat NY style!

Fee: TBD based on number of participants

SPECIAL EVENTS



Waters of Eden: Mikvah

Tap into the spiritual source of the masculine and feminine and discover Judaism's remarkable and powerful tools for enhancing married life.

With guest speaker **Chana Weisberg**



Chana Weisberg is the editor of Thejewishwoman.org, the most popular Jewish educational site on the web for women. She is the author of five popular books and is a highly sought after inspirational speaker. She descends from a long line of distinguished Rabbis, is the mother of six children (and four grandchildren) and currently makes her home together with her husband in New Jersey.

For Men & Women | Delicious Soup & Salad Bar

Sunday, October 29th
@ Chabad of Potomac

7:00pm - Mikvah Tour of
beautifully renovated
Chabad Mikvah

7:30pm - Talk

Free of Charge

Sponsored by Mikvah USA





Women's Challah Chavurah

CHALLAH: NOURISHING, SUSTAINING. CHALLAH IS ONE OF THE THREE UNIQUE AND SPECIAL MITZVOT OF THE JEWISH WOMAN.

Join Rebbetzin Sara in her home on **Thursday evenings** and learn how to make and bake delicious homemade Challah that will nourish your family both physically and spiritually!

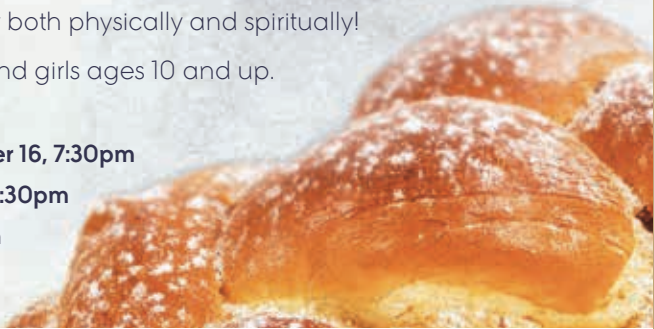
Open to women and girls ages 10 and up.

Two opportunities:

Thursday, November 16, 7:30pm

Thursday, May 10, 7:30pm

Fee: \$10 per person



Farbrengens

A Farbrengen is an informal, inspirational chassidic gathering whose purpose is to encourage us to grow spiritually and to empower us to tap into ourselves and realize our tremendous latent potential. Join us for an uplifting Farbrengen on these dates:

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7:
Celebrating the Chassidic holiday of
Yud Tes Kislev

SUNDAY, MARCH 18:
Special Women's Gathering

SHABBAT JUNE 16:
Commemorating the Yahrzeit of the
Lubavitcher Rebbe, OBM





www.WomensCircle.me

Become a WC Member! Join all courses offered an entire year by the Women's Circle for only \$199! Includes free attendance to all Women's Circle classes and events (includes the RCS course, excludes NY trip).



For more info or to RSVP go to womenscircle.me