

Gems at the J

This older adults hub at the Kaiserman JCC inspires older adults to live independently, actively and involved, through programs and activities that enhance wellbeing, promote engagement, and foster community.

Policies

Membership

No membership required to join our programs.

Virtual Option

Please contact us via email to learn more about Zoom options for those who are homebound.

Registration

Registration is required for all programs.

Please visit PhillyJCC.com to register via credit card.
Checks may be mailed to our office, if preferred.

Cancellation

When appropriate, Gems at the J will issue a credit, not a refund.

Programs are held at The Kaiserman JCC

45 Haverford Road, Wynnewood, PA 19096
Learn more at www.PhilllyJCC.com

**Program Sponsor: Weinberg Family Fund of the
Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia
The Ginsburg Family Charitable Fund**

For sponsorship opportunities email GEMS@PhillyJCC.com

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Gems Kaiserman JCC
Philly 

45 HAVERFORD ROAD, WYNNEWOOD, PA 19096

Gems At The

COMMUNITY, LEARNING & WELLBEING



Adele and Fred Astaire, circa 1921

Gems Kaiserman JCC
Philly 

FALL 2025 PROGRAM

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--------------------------|-------|
| Music | 3 |
| Judaism | 4-5-6 |
| Arts | 6 |
| History | 7 |
| Film | 8 |
| Trips | 9 |
| Hands on Art | 10 |
| Politics | 11 |
| Programs with JFCS | 11 |
| Wellness | 12-13 |
| Clubs | 14-15 |
| Fitness | 15 |

FALL 2025 Kickoff Events

OPEN HOUSE: BRUNCH AND COURSE REGISTRATION

Thursday, September 4th 10-11:30AM | FREE

Discover all the exciting programs and upcoming trips we have planned, meet our team, and connect with friends old and new. Enjoy a light brunch as you explore everything we have to offer.

RESOURCE EXPO & LINE DANCING HAPPY HOUR

Thursday, September 18 4-6PM | FREE

Join us for Let's Make A Plan! This engaging resource exhibition—designed for adults and older adults—brings together senior-focused community partners to help you explore valuable services and opportunities. Enjoy upbeat line dancing with Trina Lyons of Mastah Tee Fitness & Dance, savor a nacho bar with desserts and refreshing virgin margaritas, and enter to win exciting raffle prizes!

PICKLEPALOOZA

Sunday, September 28 3-4PM for 60+ | COST: \$25
4-5:30PM for all ages and levels | COST: \$30

Picklepalooza is our ultimate celebration of all things pickleball, whether you're a seasoned player or brand-new to the sport! Enjoy friendly competitions, skills challenges, open play, and plenty of fun on and off the court. Grab your paddle, bring your friends, and get ready for a day filled with laughter, energy, and pickleball pride! All proceeds support wellness programming at the JCC.

Music

KLEZMER JAM

Sunday, October 19; December 21

3:30-5:30PM | COST: \$10 per session

Led by Marvin Weinberger, Klezmer Afficionado

Join us for a lively Klezmer Jam, where musicians and music lovers come together to celebrate the joyful, soulful sounds of Eastern European Jewish tradition. Bring your instrument, your voice, or just your dancing feet!



SPECIAL KLEZMER JAM WITH NAT SEELLEN: From Bach to Bulgars - New Works for Solo Klezmer Clarinet

Sunday, November 16 3:30-5:30PM | COST: \$25

Join Nat Seelen, artistic director of the Boston Festival of New Jewish Music, for a concert of new works for solo klezmer clarinet. The program features Seelen's new "Suite I", a six-movement homage to the Bach Cello Suites filtered through the lens of klezmer music, "Sonata for Klezmer Clarinet," and an interactive composition experience where Seelen writes and performs a new piece with audience input to finish the concert.



BROADWAY DANCE NUMBERS & FAMOUS CHOREOGRAPHERS

4 Tuesdays, November 4-24

11:00AM-12:00PM | COST: \$48

**Instructor: Leila Joffe MFA American Conservatory
Theater, AFTRA, SAG, Actors Equity**

Discover the magic of Broadway's greatest dance numbers and the legendary choreographers and dancers who left their mark on musical theatre!



SAVE THE DATES

Kommuna Lux Klezmer Concert - Sunday, September 21

Fall Festival - Sunday, October 12

Hanukkah Gems Party - Tuesday, December 16

Laughter and Lo Main - Wed., December 24

JEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD SERIES

COST: \$45 for the Full 4-Part Series.

PART 1: JEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD: *Italy*

Tuesday, September 9 11-12PM | COST: \$15

Instructor: Steve Pollack, *Opera Singer and Performer*



For more than 2,000 years, a distinct Jewish community has thrived in Italy, cultivating a culture unlike the Ashkenazi, Sephardic, or Mizrahi traditions that may be more familiar. The Italian Rite liturgy traces its origins back to the time of the Maccabees, and the community's cuisine is equally unique, rich with history and flavor. This program will explore their origins, journey through history, and the vibrant identity they maintain today.

PART 2: JEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD: *Curaçao*

Wednesday, October 29 12:30-1:30PM | COST: \$15

Instructor: Daniel van der Kwast, *MBA, PT, DPT, CLSSBB*



Jews arrived in Curaçao in the 17th century. This is one of the oldest communities of the New World, and it still exists today. Come hear how community member Dan Van der Kwast's family played a role in the history of the Diaspora of the Sephardic Jews to and from Curaçao.

PART 3: JEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD: *Yemen*

Thursday, November 13 11:30AM-12:30PM | COST: \$15

Instructor: Oreet JS



Discover the rich heritage of Yemenite Jews through their dance, food, and history. In this workshop, you'll explore their life in Yemen, the story of their immigration back to Israel, and traditional movements rooted in ancient ritual. Learn how their customs, shaped by generations of isolated life, have left a lasting mark on Israeli music, food, movement, and fashion. And yes...you'll even get to taste a bite of Yemen, too!

PART 4: JEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD: *Ukraine*

TBD

12:30-1:30PM | COST: \$15

Instructor: On Zoom from Ukraine



Discover the rich history and vibrant culture of the Jews of Ukraine, from their centuries-old communities and traditions to their resilience through times of upheaval. This class will explore stories, music, and heritage that continue to shape Jewish life today.

CHOLENT AND CONVERSATION

4 Fridays - Dates listed below

11:30-12:30PM | COST: \$36 series, \$12 per session



Each month, we'll welcome a different Rabbi or Jewish educator from our community to share their wisdom, exploring Jewish texts and the ways they inspire and impact our world today. A warm serving of kosher vegetarian cholent will be provided.

September 5: Rabbi David Levin, Board of Rabbis President

October 10: Cantor Jenn Boyle, Beth Chaim Reform Congregation

November 7: Rabbi Megan GoldMarche, Executive Dir. at Tribe 12

December 5: Rabbi Nathan Martin, Beth Israel of Media

BRUNCH AND LEARN - *Understanding and Challenging Antisemitism, Anti-Zionism and Anti-Israel Bias*

Monday, September 29

11:30AM-1:30PM | COST: \$18

Instructor: Randi Boyette, *ADL Senior Associate Regional Director*



This interactive presentation will examine the history of antisemitism, persistent antisemitic myths, tropes and stereotypes, and where we are today, in terms of both the current landscape and the impact of rising antisemitism, anti-Zionism and anti-Israel bias on Jewish people and the Jewish community in the United States. There will be opportunities to share experiences and concerns as well as to discuss strategies to challenge this "Oldest Hatred".

Judaism (continued)

OMG, CAN YOU BELIEVE?!

Wednesdays, Oct. 29-Dec. 10 (No class 11/26) 12-1:30PM | COST: \$179

Instructor: Rabbi Marsha Friedman, PhD

In this six-week Melton exploratory course, we'll dive into the BIG questions around God and God's relationship to Humankind. We'll examine the many different understandings of God, free will, and mitzvot expressed by Jewish philosophers, rabbis, leaders past and present - and you. We'll explore the divine, the prophetic, and even the supernatural, as we amplify and dissect your deepest God-questions. Just do not expect to leave with any final answers.



This program in collaboration with The Florence Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning. Registration is through the Melton website.



MODERN HEBREW 101

3 Fridays, Sept. 12-26 11:30AM-12:30PM | COST: \$45

Instructor: Tal Shachar, Hebrew Specialist

On the schedule by special request! Learn *Ivrit* (Hebrew) in a fun, welcoming class for adult learners. Build vocabulary, master everyday expressions, and explore Israeli culture through interactive activities. Whether for travel, family, or personal connection, come *aleph*-bet on yourself and watch your Hebrew grow!



Arts

PICTURING PEOPLE: *Jewish Expressionism*

4 Wednesdays, Oct. 22-Nov. 12 2-3:15PM | COST: \$48

Instructor: Lynn Berkowitz, MFA, BFA

From early cultural eras to avant-garde modern times, many artists of Jewish descent have depicted the human figure with sympathy and compassion. Whether sharing familial stories, highlighting social justice concerns, or communicating humanistic values, Jewish artists have used the art styles of their time to give expression to the human face and form. Our conversation includes historic to modern images, a diversity of artists ranging from Pissarro, Ben Shahn to Stettheimer-and many more- while short videos enrich the artful conversation.



History

"WE'RE BIGGER THAN U.S. STEEL:" *The Jewish Mafia of the Early 20th Century*

2 Mondays, September 29 & October 6 10-11AM | COST: \$25

Instructor: Herb Kaufman, Adjunct Professor, Manor College, Editorial Staff, The Civil War News

During Prohibition through World War II, Jewish mobsters played a major role in America's underworld, especially in New York. Large bootlegging operations, run alongside Irish and Italian gangs, brought in hundreds of millions of dollars, and many figures became infamous for their exploits. Colorful characters like Lepke, Pittsburgh Phil, Dopey Benny, Kid Twist, Longy, Ice Pick Willie, Gurrah Jake, Bugsy, and Dutch Schultz dominated headlines, with Arnold Rothstein controlling the nation's largest gambling operation and Louis "Lepke" Buchalter leading Murder Inc. This program explores the myths, stories, and events surrounding these controversial figures in Jewish American history.



EINSTEIN AND OPPENHEIMER: *The True History of the Creation of the Atomic Bomb*

Monday October 20 & Thursday, October 23

10-11AM | COST: \$25

Instructor: Herb Kaufman, Adjunct Professor, Manor College, Editorial Staff, The Civil War News

The atomic age began when scientist Leo Szilard wrote, and Albert Einstein signed a famous letter to President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1939. On July 16, 1945 the United States Army, at what is now the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico, tested "The Gadget." Lead scientist, Robert Oppenheimer named this site, "Trinity," and this first explosion equal to 22 kilotons of TNT, created the "radiance of a thousand suns," and brought the world into the age of nuclear war. This is the incredible story of the history and development of the atomic theory, the creation of the Manhattan Project, the intrigue behind the plans to drop the first atomic bombs, and the industrial and scientific efforts that brought the world into the atomic age.

Film

SUSPENSE AND THRILLS - The World of Alfred Hitchcock

4 Tuesdays, October 21-November 11

1-3:30PM | COST: \$48

**Instructor: Irv Slifkin, Film and Communications
Instructor, Temple University**



Good eev-e-ning. What made the films of Alfred Hitchcock's so special and what made the great filmmaker tick? In this engaging series, Temple professor Irv Slifkin will present four of Alfred Hitchcock's uniquely different films, guiding lively discussions on their artistry, enduring appeal, and the reasons they continue to captivate audiences decade after decade.

October 21: Notorious (1946) with Cary Grant, Ingrid Bergman, Claude Rains

October 28: Strangers on a Train (1951) with Robert Walker, Farley Granger, Ruth Roman

November 4: Rear Window (1954) with James Stewart, Grace Kelly, Thelma Ritter

November 11: The Birds (1963) with Tippi Hedren, Rod Taylor, Suzanne Pleshette

JEWISH HOLIDAYS IN FILMS

4 Mondays, November 17-December 8

1-3:30PM | COST: \$48

Instructor: Ruth Anolik, Villanova U. Professor



Now that the Jewish High Holidays are behind us, let's take a filmic journey through some of the holidays we celebrate throughout the year: Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Purim, Pesach. Each of the movies is unique and riveting. All will lend themselves to provocative and engaging discussion. Join us for this enjoyable review of the Jewish year!

November 17: Yom Kippur: The Jazz Singer, 1927

November 24: Sukkot: Ushpizin, 2004

December 1: Purim: For your Consideration, 2006

December 8: Passover: When Do We Eat, 2005

Trips

TRIP TO THE NEMOURS ESTATE

Friday, September 26 9AM - 2:45PM | COST: \$80



Come explore the Nemours Estate with us! On our way back we will stop for lunch at Harvest Seasonal Grill. Transportation to and from the JCC, plus lunch and admission, is included. Please note: There will be a lot of walking for this trip.

TRIP TO ACT 2 - Stephen King's Misery & Lunch

Thursday, October 23 11:30AM-5PM | COST: \$80



When celebrated novelist Paul Sheldon is rescued from a car accident by his "number one fan," Annie Wilkes, he believes he's been saved—until he discovers her true intentions. This tense thriller, adapted from Stephen King's classic, will keep you on the edge of your seat! Join us for a trip to ACT 2, followed by an included lunch at Planchette Bistro & Creperie. Registration closes October 10.

TRIP TO AMERICAN HELICOPTER MUSEUM & EDUCATION CENTER WITH LUNCH



Thursday, November 6 9AM-3PM | COST: \$60

Up, Up, and Away! Join us for an exciting trip to the American Helicopter Museum & Education Center in West Chester, PA. We'll enjoy the Vertical Flight: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow presentation, followed by a docent-led tour through the museum's fascinating gallery. Afterward, we'll head out for a delicious lunch (included with your ticket), with transportation provided.

TRIP TO EASTERN STATE PENITENTIARY & BRUNCH

Thursday, November 20 9:15AM-2:30PM | COST: \$60



Join us for a delicious brunch, then step back in time with a guided tour of the historic Eastern State Penitentiary. Discover fascinating stories of the prison's past and explore its iconic architecture. Brunch and round-trip transportation are included.

TRIP TO THE BRANDYWINE MUSEUM WITH LUNCH

Thursday, December 11 9AM-2:30PM | COST: \$60



Join us for a delightful day exploring art and community at the Brandywine Museum. Enjoy a guided tour highlighting the museum's unique collections and exhibitions, followed by a delicious lunch together.

Hands on Arts

ART WORKSHOP WITH GAVI KESTENBAUM, *Art Instructor*

Friday, Sept. 12 10:30AM-12PM | Pay As You Wish

Come explore the world of paper cutting! No experience needed. All materials provided.



ZENTANGLE® SERIES WITH MINDY SHAPIRO, *Zentangle Instructor*

4 MONTH SERIES \$45

◆ WORD FOR THE NEW YEAR

Tuesday, Sept. 16 10:30AM-12PM | COST: \$15

Set your intentions for the New Year by creating a custom piece of art. Choose a meaningful word that captures a personal quality you hope to embrace in the coming Jewish year—use our inspiration list or find your own. No experience necessary; just bring your creativity!



◆ COASTERS

Thursday, October 16 11:15AM-12:45PM | COST: \$15

Create one or two coasters which will be laminated for your use.

◆ FRAGMENTS

Tuesday, November 18 1:30-3PM | COST: \$15

If you look and count closely, you will see that the same pattern is repeated five times which then creates a meta pattern. In this class we will explore the world of Zentangle® fragments and create a beautiful repetitive design.

◆ CREATING A TANGLED BOX

Tuesday, December 9 11AM-12:30PM | COST: \$15

In this class, we'll create beautiful tangles on a decorative box—perfect for holding a small gift or keeping as a special treasure for yourself.

Politics

POLITICAL AFFAIRS WITH BILL ROSENBERG

4 Thursdays, October 9-30 11:15-12:15PM | COST \$48

Instructor: Dr. Bill Rosenberg, *Political Science, Drexel U.*

This season we will discuss the following topics:

- The History and Impact of Filibusters in the US Senate: US Senate Appointments and Legislation.
- The difference between Hard Power and Soft Power in terms of US foreign policy, in light of the demolition of USAID, and Teddy Roosevelt's Gun Boat diplomacy.
- The MAGA Movement Explained. The Future of the MAGA as well as its history.
- The effect of staggered elections and their Impact on the Political Process.



ANALYZING THE MID-TERM ELECTIONS

Thursday, November 13 10-11AM | COST: \$12

Instructor: Dr. Matt Kerbel, *Professor Emeritus, Villanova U.*

Elections in odd-numbered years are usually low profile affairs, but they can offer some clues about the state of our politics. We will read a few tea leaves from this month's results to assess where things stand as the midterm election season moves into full swing.



Programs with JFCS

LIFE TRANSITIONS PAINTING CLASS AT JFCS

3 Tuesdays, October 28 – November 11 1-2:30PM | FREE

Instructor: JFCS

Seasons of Change is a warm, creative space for older adults to explore life's transitions. A collaboration between JFCS and the GEMS Program, this group uses guided art-making to reflect on the paths we've walked, navigate the uncertainties of change, and imagine the possibilities ahead. No art experience is needed—just a willingness to share, create, and connect with others who understand the beauty and challenges of life's shifting seasons.

LOCATION: JFCS

COOKING CLASS WITH JFCS

Wednesday, October 22 11AM-12:30PM | FREE

GEMS and JFCS will partner for a hands-on Healthy Culinary Class to explore the flavors of Autumn's bounty. **LOCATION: JFCS**

Wellness

LEARN & LIGHT BITES SERIES WITH MAINLINE HEALTH

12-1:15PM | FREE; Lunch is cosponsored by Tikvah AJMI



Tuesday, September 16: Fall Prevention & Exercise,
Speaker: Kara Chivalette, Wellness Education Specialist

Tuesday, October 21: Take Charge of Your Care –
Communicating Effectively with Your Doctor,
Speaker: Maureen Krouse, MPH, MCHES



Tuesday, November 18: Cooking with Fresh Flavors,
Speakers: MLH Farmers & Maureen Krouse, MPH, MCHES

Tuesday, December 16: Osteoporosis and Aging,
Speaker: Dan van der Kwast, MBA, PT, DPT

EAT WELL, BE WELL SERIES, SPONSORED BY IBX

Monthly on Wednesdays 1-1:45PM | COST: \$5

Instructor: Rachel Sakofs, RD

Each month, join Rachel Sakofs—our very own
Gems manager and a registered dietitian—for fresh
insights on food, eating, and overall health.



Sept 17: Learning about MyPlate

Oct 29: Understanding the Nutrition Fact Label

Nov 19: Finding Fiber Everyday

Dec 3: Healthy Holidays!

MIND YOUR NATURE

3 Fridays, September 12-26

10-11AM | COST:\$40

**Alyson Harris, Certified Mindfulness Meditation teacher &
Na'ama Yarden, Certified Happiness Studies Academy**

Discover how nature, mindfulness, and the science of
happiness can enrich your life. Pause, connect, and experience
a sense of “wholebeing” as you soak in the beauty around
you. Join Na'ama and Alyson for uplifting conversations and
purposeful walks.



SAY YES - Unlocking the Power of A Personal Mantra!

Café for Care Partners

Tuesday, October 21 10-11:30AM | FREE

Instructor: ARTZ Philadelphia



Your mantra serves as a foundation for shifting your
focus from negativity to positivity, bolstering your resilience in the
face of challenges. Mantras are made up of unique words or phrases
that align with your personal aspirations. Developing a personal
mantra can be both enjoyable and a creative endeavor. Join us to
uncover the transformative power of a personal mantra! This Café
will be facilitated by Carin Brastow, from The Residence at Bala
Cynwyd, a longtime creator of connections through the arts.

ARTZ Philadelphia launched a decade ago, especially for the care
partners of people living with dementia (usually family members
but sometimes close friends playing the same role) to provide
engaging, stimulating experiences and relief from the daily grind.

TAI CHI

5 Wednesdays, October 22-November 19 11-12PM

COST: \$60 for non-unlimited class pass holders,
\$40 for unlimited class pass holders

Instructor: Allyn Miner, A Student of Master Jingshan Tang



In this five-week series, you'll learn the easy, flowing set of
moves called the Eight Form Yang Style Tai Chi, a graceful
sequence of arm and body movements coordinated with
breathing, often considered the gateway to all tai chi
techniques and benefits. Each class includes a warmup, guided
breathing, and two new movements, building to the complete
routine by week five. Practicing briefly at home between
classes will enhance your results.

ISRAELI DANCING

Wednesdays, October 22-December 17

11:30AM-12:30PM | COST: \$15,
\$250 full year series, unlimited class pass holders,
contact Rachel for a discount code

Instructor: Don Schlinger, from RAKDAN Entertainment

You asked, and we listened!! Join RakDan in a weekly Israeli
Dance Class!



Clubs



WEEKLY OPEN PLAY CANASTA

Mondays 12:30-2:30PM (not on holidays), FREE

CANASTA LUNCH

Monday, September 15 12-12:30PM | COST: \$36

Join us for lunch and help us keep Open Play Canasta free for everyone, while raising funds for new supplies!

CANASTA GUIDED PLAY WORKSHOP

Monday, September 15 12:15-2PM | COST: \$10

Instructor: Alice Dubin & Gladys Mandel

Have you recently learned to play Canasta and want a little guidance while you play? This is your chance to build confidence, refine your strategies, and receive extra support from facilitators Alice and Gladys. Please note: basic knowledge of Canasta is required to join.

CANASTA LESSONS

4 Monday, October 27-November 17 12:15-1:45PM | COST: \$60

Instructor: Alice Dubin & Gladys Mandel

Canasta is a fun, fast-paced card game of strategy and teamwork. This class is for beginners, who have never played before. Come challenge your mind to a new card game, in a small group setting.

WEEKLY OPEN PLAY MAHJONG

Thursdays 1-3PM (not on holidays) FREE

MAHJONG CLASSES

4 Thursdays, October 9-30 1-2:30PM | COST: \$80

Instructor: Helene Rosenfeldt & Sharon Dunoff

Join our lively classes to explore the rules, strategies, and social enjoyment of this classic tile game. Whether you're a beginner or looking to sharpen your skills, these welcoming sessions are a fun way to challenge your mind, connect with others, and enjoy the camaraderie of fellow players.

MAHJONG LUNCH

Thursday, September 11 12:15-1PM | COST: \$36

Join us for lunch and help us keep Open Play MahJong free for everyone, while raising funds for new supplies!



BOOK CLUB PARTY

Wednesday, September 3 2:30-3:45PM | FREE

Bring books to donate to a local charity and join us for a fun and inspiring afternoon! Enjoy light refreshments while we vote on books for 2025-2026.

We'll also welcome a guest from the Free Library of Philadelphia to share information about the valuable resources they offer—and more! This event is open to all, and we hope you'll join us.



MONTHLY BOOK CLUB

8 Wednesdays, Oct. 30-Aug. 27 Last Wednesday of the month

Book Selections to be released after the Book Party on September 3rd. 3-4PM | COST: \$36

Fitness

MOVE INTO AUTUMN - Our New Schedule Arrives September 1st!

This September, we're excited to launch our **new Fitness schedule!** Along with our incredible lineup of classes, we're welcoming **new instructors, fresh classes, and surprise pop-up events**—stay tuned!

With a wide variety of classes offered daily, there's something for everyone. For class descriptions, pricing details, and information on our new specialty classes, please visit www.phillyjcc.com/fitness. Our website is updated frequently!

Have questions? **Email** Jamie at jfeinstein@phillyjcc.com
We're happy to help!

