

Foundation Course Program Overview

Thursdays April 9 - August 27, 2026, 7-9pm, held at Shtiebel

Core Learning Topics

- **Torah: Our People's Story** **April 9**
 This is an introduction to the Torah's key narratives, personalities, and themes, with a focus on brit (covenant) as a foundational concept in Jewish identity.
- **Ancient Israel: Kings, Priests, Prophets** **April 16**
 Exploration of the Tanakh's tripartite structure, historical development, and the role of biblical texts in Jewish liturgical life.
- **Two Jews, Three Opinions** **April 23**
 A study of Jewish diversity across geography, culture, and religious practice, including an introduction to contemporary Jewish denominations.
- Israel Shabbat** **5.30-8pm** **Friday 24 April**
 Commemorating Yom HaZikaron and Celebrating Yom Ha'Atzma'ut
- Shabbat Shacharit Service** **10.30am-12.30pm** **Saturday 25 April**
 Commemoration of ANZAC Day
- **Sacred Days: The Festivals of the Year** **April 30**
 Overview of major Jewish holidays, emphasising the Jewish calendar as a framework for Jewish values and beliefs.
- **Shabbat: A Cathedral in Time** **May 7**
 Understanding the meaning, structure, and observance of Shabbat, including its rituals and contemporary applications.
- **God Wrestling** **May 14**
 A discussion of Jewish theology, diverse conceptions of God, and personal spiritual reflection
- Erev Shavuot** **5-7pm** **Thursday 21 May**
 Community Intergenerational Program and Evening Service.
- Shavuot Shiur, Shir & Shnack** **10.30am-12.30pm** **Friday 22 May**
 Includes the recitation of the 10 Commandments.
- **Passover: Exodus and Us** **May 28**
 Exploring the Passover narrative, the Seder, and dietary laws associated with this foundational Jewish festival.

- **The Rabbinic Revolution** **June 4**
A historical survey of Rabbinic Judaism, including the evolution of Jewish law and key rabbinic texts.
 - **Prayer: Keva and Kavanna** **June 11**
A deep dive into Jewish prayer, its structure, key blessings, and personal spiritual engagement.
 - **Jews & Food** **June 18**
An introduction to kashrut (Jewish dietary laws) and the role of food in Jewish tradition, including blessings and ethical considerations.
 - **Under Crescent and Cross** **June 25**
A historical overview of Jewish life under Christian and Muslim rule, including significant figures like Rashi and Maimonides.
- Mid Program Break*
- **The Greatest Blessing** **July 16**
Jewish perspectives on relationships, marriage, and mikvah, with discussions on inclusion and contemporary Jewish ethics.
 - **From Generation to Generation** **July 23**
Exploring Jewish lifecycle events such as Brit Milah, Simchat Bat, and B'nei Mitzvah and Jewish approaches to education and naming.
 - **Life's Hard Times** **July 30**
A look at Jewish responses to illness, mourning practices, and ethical issues surrounding end-of-life decisions.
 - **Hatred and Heroism** **August 6**
A study of anti-Semitism throughout history, culminating in Holocaust survivor testimony and Jewish responses to trauma and resilience.
 - **Days of Awe** **August 13**
Examining the themes and observances of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, with a focus on the practice of teshuvah (repentance).
 - **Israel: A Great Dream** **August 20**
An exploration of the significance of Israel in Jewish thought, the history of Zionism, and the connection between Diaspora Jews and the State of Israel.
 - **The Jewish Mission to Heal the World** **August 27**
A closing session on Tikkun Olam (repairing the world), Tzedakah (charity), and Tzelem Elohim (human dignity) as foundational Jewish values.

