

## A Taste of Judaism & Jewish Literacy

### With Rabbi Mike Lotker

The three-part Taste of Judaism class, designed to introduce the main tenets of Judaism, will be followed by a 15-week Jewish Literacy class. These classes are ideal for Jews, for their spouses, for those who are exploring conversion, and those who simply wish to broaden their knowledge about the fundamentals of Judaism's extraordinary history, beliefs, and faith. The 15 sessions of Jewish Literacy touch on most of the areas of concern and interest to adults who wish to explore the holidays, sacred literature, history, spirituality, mysticism, and living a full Jewish life. This class is required for conversion candidates.

**New for this year:** Each week we will have a Thursday evening small session for those who are not Jewish and especially those interested in Conversion to Judaism.

**Tuition:** Thanks to the support of the Jewish Federation of Ventura County, here is no cost for A Taste of Judaism for anyone or for Jewish Literacy. If you would like to donate to the Jewish Federation to support its valuable work, click here.

<https://www.jewishventuracounty.org/ways-to-give>

**Wednesdays (& Thursdays, 7-8:30 p.m., 9/29/21 – 2/10/22)**

**Texts:** No texts required for the 1<sup>st</sup> Three "Tastes" sessions  
For the Jewish Literacy sessions, the following texts will be used

- Lotker, *A Christian's Guide to Judaism*, Paulist Press 2004 (available from Rabbi Lotker or online)
- Olitzky & Isaacs, *The Complete How To Handbook for Jewish Living* (3 Volumes in 1), KTAV, 1993 (available on line)

### Introductory Sessions (3 session overview)

9/29 A Taste of Judaism—God (Jewish views of God, spirituality etc.)

10/6 A Taste of Judaism—Torah (Jewish sacred texts, Jewish way of life)

10/13 A Taste of Judaism—Israel (the land, people, and modern state)

### Sacred Time

10/20 The Hebrew Calendar, cycle of holidays and Shabbat

10/27 The High Holy Days

11/3 Chanukah, Purim, Pesach, Shavuot, and Sukkot

### Sacred Literature

11/10 Bible

11/17 The Mishna & Talmud

12/1 Midrash, Halacha, Jewish legal codes and issues

12/8 Jewish mysticism: Kabbalah & Zohar

12/15 The Prayer book

### Jewish History

12/22 All of Jewish history in 90 minutes

1/5/22 Judaism and Christianity—the parting of the ways

1/12 The 20<sup>th</sup> century (Zionism, antisemitism and the Holocaust)

## **Living a Jewish Life**

1/19 Temple and Synagogue: Home and kashrut

1/26 Life Cycle: Brit Milah, B'nai Mitzvah, marriage (and inter-marriage), divorce, funerals

2/2 Jewish community: Conversion, movements, synagogue life, etc.

2/9 What does Judaism say about sexuality and ??? (students select topics)

(as of 9-3-21)