

Gesher L'Mishpacha

גשר למשפחה

Welcomes your

family!

GESHER L'MISHPACHA
"BRIDGE TO THE FAMILY"
2022-2023/5782-5783



GESHER L'MISHAPCHA...BRIDGE TO THE FAMILY

Gesher L'Mishpacha is a family project that enhances Jewish identity while having a great deal of Jewish family fun!

During the Religious School year, Gesher families complete 18 ("chai") simple activities from the list of more than 50 items that are provided in this booklet. These activities are divided into three categories, **Torah (study)**, **Avodah (worship)**, and **G'milut Chasadim (acts of loving kindness)**. One credit point is awarded for each activity completed by your family. **Families must complete six activities from each of these categories to cross the Gesher "bridge" and graduate.**

Families who complete all 18 activities, six from each area, are honored at a special Gesher Graduation Recognition at the Family Shabbat Service in May. Gesher graduates' names are also engraved on a special plaque that hangs outside of the Julia M. and Samuel L. Flom Religious School Office.

Many of our families choose to participate every year. We welcome them back each year with open arms and extend our hand to all others who would like to participate in the Gesher project. It's an experience well worth your time!

In Hebrew numerology, the number 18 means "chai" or life. It is by enjoying being Jewish every day that our lives are enriched by our faith. Through living a Jewish life, Jewish bridges are built from one generation to the next.

Mazel Tov on entering the Gesher Program. Have fun with your family in study, worship, and acts of kindness!

Rabbi Joel Simon
Senior Rabbi
jsimon@zedek.org

Amanda Fleischbein
Religious School Director
afleischbein@zedek.org

Please check the items that you complete. **Return your forms to Amanda Fleischbein, Religious School Director, afleischbein@zedek.org or 3303 W. Swann Ave, Tampa, FL 33609.**

Web Page : <https://www.zedek.org/religiousschool/gesher-lmishpacha/>

Facebook Group: Schaarai Zedek Gesher L'Mishpacha
(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1095600204678501>)

GESHER L'MISPACHA FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Torah (Study)

1. Go to <https://www.youtube.com/bimbam> and watch a few videos as a family to discuss. (Can you find the video for the week's Torah portion?)
2. Add two Jewish books to your home library and read them together as a family. (Check out the Schmooze "Book of the Week" section for suggestions!)
3. Make an appointment with one of the rabbis or cantor for an "Ask the Clergy" session.
4. Earn a Cub, Brownie, Girl or Boy Scout religious badge.
5. Present information on Judaism or a Jewish holiday to your secular school class.
6. Visit a Jewish cemetery. (Contact the Religious School Office for detailed suggestions.)
7. On a family trip, visit a place of Jewish interest—a Jewish Museum, synagogue, etc.
8. Subscribe to a Jewish publication (Shofar, Jewish Press, Jerusalem Post) or podcast (CSZ has their own!) and discuss articles/episodes of interest as a family. This counts if it is a NEW subscription! *You can also fulfil this task by following an account like Modern_Ritual on Instagram.
9. Tape an oral history with a Jewish Senior Citizen about his or her life.
10. Create a family photo album of at least one Jewish Lifecycle event.
11. Find out about the person for whom you were named. If he/she were a biblical character, what traits would you want to "inherit"?
12. Investigate the basic rules of "kashrut" (keeping kosher) on a trip through the grocery store. Make a list of 5 items that are kosher and 5 items that are not kosher and tell why. (You may want to read <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/kosher-food/> for some basic background information.)
13. Learn about a famous Jewish person through a movie or book. Post what you learned about them in the Geshher Facebook group thread for this task!
14. Demonstrate "Ahavat Yisrael" (Love for Israel) by learning an Israeli song or dance or preparing an Israeli food.
15. Read a book of Bible stories. Draw pictures about the stories and put them together, creating a personal Torah.
16. Read three stories from Lessons from the Past (available in the Religious School Office) and answer the questions at the end of each story.
17. Attend Shabbat morning Torah Study or Bagel Minyan as a family.
18. Choose an alternate Torah activity. Have it approved by Rabbi Simon, Rabbi Weiss, or the Religious School Director. Briefly describe it.

Your suggestions for future Torah activities are welcome. Please discuss them with the Religious School Director.

Avodah (Worship)

1. Listen to music by Dan Nichols, Jacob Spike Kraus, Debbie Friedman, Nefesh Mountain, and/or Elana Arian on Spotify, Amazon Music, or wherever you stream music. Talk as a family about how incorporating more Jewish music into your music time could enhance your Jewish life. (And if you don't like these, ask the cantor or rabbis for other suggestions!)
2. Attend a Friday night service in person and another streaming from home. Discuss the difference as a family. (We'd love to hear about your experience, too!)
3. Create a family prayer to include in your Shabbat observance. You can even illustrate it and put it up somewhere in your home!
4. For one month, enjoy Friday evening as a family by celebrating Shabbat. Light candles, say kiddush and motzi and eat a meal together.
<https://www.reformjudaism.org/jewish-holidays/shabbat/shabbat-blessings>
5. Recite the motzi at home before all family meals for at least one month. Discuss as a family if you think that makes the food taste better!
6. Have a family Havdalah Service to end each Shabbat for one month.
7. Participate in your grade's Student-Led Family Shabbat Service.
8. Attend a special Schaarai Zedek Service (i.e., band service, Scholar-in-Residence, High Holy Day service).
9. Attend a service in a temple or synagogue other than Schaarai Zedek. Compare the service to a Schaarai Zedek service.
10. Attend a life cycle event as a family—Brit Milah or baby naming, B'nei Mitzvah, wedding, funeral, etc.
11. Make a Jewish ritual object and use it as a family (challah cover, matzah cover, etc.).
12. Say the Shema as part of your nighttime prayers.
13. Purchase a mezuzah as a family and have a ceremony for affixing the mezuzah. (CSZ Sisterhood gift shop has some beautiful ones! You can also make your own at home!)
14. Experience Chanukah by lighting candles at home and/or attending the Schaarai Zedek Family Chanukah Service.
15. Have a Passover Seder at your home, attend one at someone else's home, and/or attend a Schaarai Zedek Passover Seder.
16. Attend a community-wide holiday celebration/observance (Yom ha-Shoah [Holocaust Remembrance Day]/Yom HaAtzmaut [Israel Independence Day]) celebration.
17. Attend or host a Havdalah Potluck Dinner.
18. Choose an alternate Avodah activity. Have it approved by Rabbi Simon, Rabbi Weiss, or the Religious School Director.

Your suggestions for future Avodah activities are welcome. Please discuss them with the Religious School Director.

G'Milut Chasadim (Acts of Loving Kindness)

1. Fulfill a hospitality mitzvah by inviting a new temple member into your home for a meal or dessert.
2. Invite a Schaarai Zedek family from your neighborhood to join your family in a Shabbat or holiday celebration.
3. Share a Jewish celebration (Shabbat, Pesach) with a non-Jewish family or friend. See if you can answer some of their questions!
4. Deliver a Shalach Manot basket of hamentaschen to a friend or neighbor.
5. Make a pot of matzo ball soup for a friend or neighbor that isn't feeling well.
6. Bring canned goods for a food drive.
7. Purchase a tree from the Jewish National Fund for Tu B'Shevat. As a family, decide who or what you are going to honor with the tree.
8. Make a Mazon (International Jewish effort to feed the hungry) donation.
9. Visit an elderly person at a nursing home or an assisted living facility. Take a challah, hamentaschen or another traditional treat with you.
10. Be a pen pal with a senior in our community or any Jewish person in another country.
11. Have a family bake sale or garage sale to raise money for a Jewish charity.
12. Create your own family Tzedakah box and fill it each Shabbat with coins. Donate these funds to the family's favorite tzedakah.
13. Contribute food supplies to the Food Bank weekly for one month. Donation can be dropped off at Schaarai Zedek.
14. Do a mitzvah by taking needed supplies to the Humane Society (old blankets, newspapers, or animal toys).
15. Make a family commitment to save our environment. Make a list of ways your family will help (use only biodegradable products, use recycled paper, do not use aerosol propellant products, etc.) and commit to one change as a family for the year.
16. Participate in Schaarai Zedek Mitzvah Day.
17. Pay a shivah call to someone in mourning.
18. Choose an alternate G'milut Chasadim activity. Have it approved by Rabbi Simon, Rabbi Weiss, or the Religious School Director. Briefly describe it.

Your suggestions for future G'milut Chasadim activities are welcome. Please discuss them with the Religious School Director.