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## NEWS & VIEWS

April 4, 2019 | 28 Adar II 5779



### Celebrating Cantor Dr. Brian Mayer and the New Scholarship in His Name

Please join us at Hebrew College on Monday, May 6, 2019 at 1:30 p.m. as we celebrate Cantor Dr. Brian Mayer, Dean of [Hebrew College's School of Jewish Music](#) & Associate Professor of Jewish Music for his 10 years of dedicated leadership. Cantor Mayer is a teacher, mentor, and creator of the Cantorial Ordination for Spiritual and Educational Leadership Program, and, in collaboration with the Rabbinical School, the Rav-Hazzan Program and Ani Kinor: Prayer Leader Summer Institute.

Upon Cantor Mayer's departure, we will also be celebrating the establishment of the Cantor Dr. Brian Mayer Scholarship, to be awarded to an outstanding Hebrew College cantorial student who embodies the values of pluralism, academic and musical excellence, and Jewish leadership central to Cantor Mayer's legacy. Please consider [making a gift](#) in Cantor Mayer's honor.

The event will also feature a performance by Kol Arev, Hebrew College's resident choir, envisioned by Cantor Mayer. Reception following. Dietary laws observed. Questions? Please contact [sjm@hebrewcollege.edu](mailto:sjm@hebrewcollege.edu).

RSVP | [Make a Gift](#)



## Ani Kinor: Prayer Leader Summer Institute Kicks Off with New 2-Day Intensive: "Visions of Prayer Leadership"

Each summer, the School of Jewish Music offers eight weeks of pluralistic programming in leading services and teaching music. Ani Kinor, which runs from June 3 through July 26, is open to clergy, students, lay leaders, teachers, and musicians who are interested in Jewish liturgical music and enhancing their musical skills.

This year, Ani Kinor kicks off with a special 2-day intensive, "[Visions of Prayer Leadership](#)," Monday and Tuesday, June 3 and 4, 8 am-5 pm. Over the course of two days, study the philosophy and practice of "shlichut," prayer leading, with Hebrew College faculty and students from the cantorial and the rabbinical schools. Presentations and Beit Midrash style text study will give an overview, and workshops will explore the theme of "Listening to Text and Context," including both physical and intellectual approaches to becoming an effective prayer leader. Instructors include Rabbinical School Rector Rabbi Arthur Green, School of Jewish Music Dean Cantor Dr. Brian Mayer, Rabbinical School faculty member Rabbi Ebn Leader, School of Jewish Music Head of Vocal Arts Cantor Lynn Torgove, and others.

The day will include communal morning and afternoon prayer; breakfast and lunch are included, and Monday evening will feature a joyful concert with special guest, Rabbi Jessica Kate Meyer '14, accompanied by acclaimed musicians Dr. Hankus Netsky and Cantor Becky Khitrik '14.

Following the 2-day intensive, classes in June and July will include Nusach & Liturgy for the Three Festivals, Cantillation for Haftarah & High Holidays, Liturgical Hebrew, and Teaching Tefillah.

Join us this summer and register for the 2-day intensive and/or summer classes.

[Learn More](#)

[Register](#)



## Create Your Own Jewish Parenting Class

[Parenting Through a Jewish Lens](#), a Hebrew College Adult Learning program supported by CJP, invites you to create your own parenting group in your living room. Themes include: Pregnancy through a Jewish Lens, Parenting Young Children through a Jewish Lens (ages newborn - 9), Parenting Tweens through a Jewish Lens (ages 9-13), Parenting Teens through a Jewish Lens (ages 13-19), and Grandparenting through a Jewish Lens. Classes can be geared towards specific family experiences, including interfaith, single parents, adoptive parents, parents of children with special needs, etc. Each class must have at least 8 parents.

Please let us know if you're unable to host but are interested in a living-room class. For more information, please email [Ahava Rosenthal](#), Director of Parenting Through a Jewish Lens at Hebrew

College, or call her at 617-559-8734.

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## SIGHTS & SOUNDS



Rabbi Or Rose, Director of Hebrew College's [Miller Center for Interreligious Learning & Leadership at Hebrew College](#) moderates a multi-religious panel at the Dying Well Conference held at Hebrew College on April 2. The conference, organized by the Boston Theological Interreligious Consortium (including the Adult Learning department of Hebrew College), drew 150 participants across professions and faith backgrounds, who discussed end-of-life conversation tools for dying well.

(Pictured l-r) Rabbi Or Rose, Professor Chris Berlin, Chaplain Aida Mansoor, Dr. M. Sara Rosenthal, and Dr. Phillip Mamalakis. (Not pictured) Rabbi Joel Baron, Rab` 14.

# IN THE NEWS

Hebrew College's [Miller Center for Interreligious Learning & Leadership](#) was featured in an April 3 [The Boston Globe article](#) entitled, "Hebrew College receives \$250,000 grant for interfaith fellowship."

The article "[How to Rebalance the Jewish Ecosystem](#)" by Director of the [Early Childhood Institute](#) Rachel Raz appeared in the March 28 issue of eJewish Philanthropy.

# EVENTS



Honor Your Teachers with a Celebratory Gift

At this year's spring community event, [Hebrew College Live! Stories in Honor of Our Teachers](#), we will celebrate a group of honorees: your teachers. Your teachers are Hebrew College faculty and instructors in our degree and community learning programs; our alumni across the globe; and our students teaching in communities across the country.

Please join us on **Thursday evening, May 30 at 6:30 p.m.** at Temple Beth Elohim in Wellesley, MA for shmoozing, plentiful hors d'oeuvres, wine, dessert, and storytelling by five inspiring Hebrew College teachers who will share memorable stories of their Jewish journeys and their own teachers. Our storytellers, who teach in Hebrew College graduate degree and community learning programs, Hillels, and congregations are: Rabbi Tiferet Berenbaum, Rab`13, MJEd`13; Rabbi Jordan Braunig, Rab`14, MAJS`14; Rabbi Dan Judson, Rabbinical School Dean and Storyteller-in-Residence for Hanukkah at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston; Rabbi Margot Meitner, Rab`14, MAJS`14; and Rabbi Jordan Schuster, Rab`18, MAJS`18 (pictured above); with music by Cantor Ken Richmond and family.

Please [consider a celebratory gift to Hebrew College in honor of one of your special teachers](#) and help Hebrew College continue to impact Jewish learning and leadership around the world.

Questions? Please contact Sharon Katz at [advancement@hebrewcollege.edu](mailto:advancement@hebrewcollege.edu) or 617.559.8764.

Purchase Tickets | Make a Gift in Honor of a Teacher

**From Passover to Yom Ha'Atzmaut:  
A Season of Celebration and Commemoration  
Workshop for educators**  
April 10 | 5:30-7:30pm  
Hebrew College  
RSVP [rraz@hebrewcollege.edu](mailto:rraz@hebrewcollege.edu)

**Huzzah! la'Hazzan**  
Celebrating Cantor Dr. Brian Mayer and the  
Establishment of the Scholarship in his name  
May 6 | 1:30 pm  
Hebrew College  
[RSVP](#) | [Make a Gift in Cantor Mayer's Honor](#)

**Nava Tehila Ensemble Concert**  
Co-sponsored by Hebrew College  
May 12 | 7-9 pm  
Temple Beth Zion, Brookline, MA  
\$20 General Admission | \$15 Students & Seniors  
[Purchase Tickets](#)

**A Mini-Symposium: Ethnic Identity and Choral  
Singing**  
Sponsored by Zamir Chorale of Boston Alumni  
Association and the School of Jewish Music at  
Hebrew College  
May 15 | 7:30-9:30 pm  
Hebrew College  
[Learn More](#) | Free Admission

**Commencement**  
June 2 | 10 am  
Hebrew College  
[Information](#)

**Cantorial Ordination**  
June 2 | 1:30 pm  
Temple Reyim, Newton MA  
[Information](#)

**Rabbinical Ordination**  
June 2 | 3 pm  
Temple Reyim, Newton MA  
[Information](#)

**Ani Kinor: Prayer Leader Summer Institute  
Two-Day Intensive**  
June 3-4  
Hebrew College  
[Learn more](#) | [Register](#)

**A Joyful Concert for Body & Soul**  
with Rabbi Jessica Kate Meyer `14, Dr. Hankus  
Netsky & Cantor Becky Khitrik `14  
June 2 | 7-9 pm  
Hebrew College  
\$10 General Admission  
[Learn More](#) | [Purchase Tickets](#)

**Torah Godly Play**  
 May 19-20  
 8 am-3 pm  
 Hebrew College  
[Learn more](#) | [Register](#)

# 70 FACES OF TORAH

Posts from this [Hebrew College-hosted blog](#) are published weekly in [Patheos](#).

## Reverance for the Wondrous Life Force

Parashat Tazria (Leviticus 12:1- 13:59)

By Rabbi Brian Besser, Rab` 10  
 Congregation Beth Shalom in Bloomington, Indiana



The Levitical laws of purity strike the modern ear as arcane at best, and repugnant at worst. What are we to make of the apparently misogynistic passage at the beginning this week's Torah portion Tazria, declaring "impure" the childbearing mother, or next week's portion declaring "impure" the menstruating woman for that matter? It would be a singularly sadistic God who fashioned the human being with naturally occurring functions such as parturition and ovulation and then punished her for them.

Even according to the text's plain meaning, it becomes clear that we are not dealing with defilement in the conventional sense when we realize that many of the human activities that the Torah labels *tamei*, "impure" or "unclean," are unavoidable. For example, in an agrarian society such as ancient Israel, handling the carcasses of farm animals would be commonplace. As for touching a human corpse, elsewhere the Torah enjoins care for the dead as a *mitzvah*.

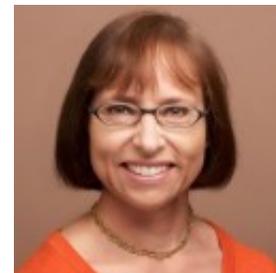
[Read more](#)

# STATE OF FORMATION

The State of Formation blog is a joint venture of the [Miller Center of Interreligious Learning & Leadership](#) and [Boston University's School of Theology](#).

## Finding a New Religious Home

By Meli Solomon, MJLS `18  
Former State of Formation Fellow



*This post is part of my ongoing project 'Talking with God', focused on the religious practices and beliefs of Jews, Christians and Muslims.*

Of the nearly fifty participants of my "Talking with God" project, about half of them have converted or changed denominations, a figure similar to the Pew Forum's 2007 research survey. The emergence of this subgroup is intriguing to me. What was the impetus for conversion, and what was the result? In particular, how did it alter their relationships with the Divine?

The impetus for converting varies widely, as does the process. Most of the converts sought a deeper spiritual or intellectual connection, a place they could call home. A few wanted to leave hypocrisy or conflict. I feel an affinity with these desires. Having grown up without affiliation to either my mother's Protestantism or my father's Judaism, I have chosen the latter. I know the pull to a meaningful identity and community. That said, each story is unique, and some particularities are worth noting.

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