

Each year our Mitzvah School has a theme for the entire school. Our curriculum is based on understanding how each of us plays a significant role in the world and how we each create for ourselves a meaningful life through doing mitzvot (sacred acts) and understanding the mitzvot.

Study Theme 2020-21/5781

Shemithah: Seventh Year of Reflection

Essential Questions

1. What is a mitzvah hero?
2. How can I be a mitzvah hero?
3. How does Judaism call upon us to act in the world?
4. Why does God want us to rest and reflect?
5. How do I act in the world in a way that demonstrates that I rest and reflect?

Enduring Understandings:

1. A mitzvah hero deliberately performs *Tikun HaOlam* (repairing the world) by using their gifts, talents, time, energy and resources.
2. I can become a mitzvah hero through pursuing answers to the questions asked by Danny Siegel: What are the other person's needs?; What am I good at; What do I like to do?; Whom do I know?; Why not help others? and then get up and do--*kum v'aseh*.
3. Judaism is a religion that is grounded in deed not creed in which social justice is key. Jews are commanded to act in this world to make it a better place.
4. In Judaism, resting and reflecting requires action. We demonstrate our resting and reflecting through our actions and in doing so fulfill the commandment to rest and reflect.
5. Acting in a way that demonstrates *shemithah* (rest and reflection, literally sabbatical) is complex. There are social, economic, cultural, racial, justice, autonomy, geographic, and political factors that make-up the complexities of demonstrating *shemithah*.
6. I can demonstrate *shemithah* as an individual mitzvah hero and also in the company of others in my local, national and international community. At times the challenges of demonstrating that I rest and reflect can feel overwhelming and when I feel overwhelmed by the challenges of repairing the world, I remember the Rabbis' teaching in Pirke Avot 2:16 "It is not your job to complete the task, neither are you free from doing the work."

Mitzvah Moments

During the year we will take field trips to the following to participate in Mitzvah Moments that tie into the learning done while in class and/or online.

Sukkah Building

The Ark

Nature Preserve

Solar-Illinois

Gidwitz Place
Horcher Farm
The Chicago Stress Relief Center
Body and Brain Yoga Tai Chi
Labyrinth Walk
Shabbat Challenge

The Hebrew curriculum is a prayer reading, chanting and comprehension curriculum. Students learn prayers at their own pace. Prayers may include:

Tallit Blessing
Barchu
Yotzer Or
Ma'ariv Aravim
Ahava Rabah
Ahavat Olam
Shema
V'ahavta
Mi Chamocha
Avot v'Imahot
Gevurot
Kedushah
Oseh Shalom
Ayn Kamocha
Ki Mitziyon
Torah Service Shema
Gadlu
L'cha Adonai
Torah Blessings
V'zot HaTorah
Haftarah Blessings
Aytz Chaim Hi
Aleynu
Mourner's Kaddish
Chatzi Kaddish
Holidays prayers and blessings