



# JEWISH IDEAS INTENSIVE

Rabbi Danielle Leshaw and Rabbi Danny Schiff

Inspired by Iyun, Powered by the Jewish Federation of Pittsburgh

## **Week One: How Big is Our Story?**

**April 18**

Welcome to the Jewish Ideas Initiative! In this first session, we'll share our personal histories and discuss how our lives are rooted in the past. We'll aim to answer a series of questions about the nature of leadership and our attempts to ensure a fruitful future for the Jewish people.

## **Week Two: God and Spirituality**

**April 25**

You can't discuss Jewish ideas without first considering God. What do we mean by God? Does prayer, or communicating with God still have a place in modern Jewish life? In this session, we will consider how we might relate to God in the twenty-first century.

## **Week Three: Revelation and Mitzvot**

**May 2**

According to Jewish tradition, we all stood at Sinai. We were all there for that original experience when God revealed the Torah and the commandments of Jewish life. It's a great image, but what does it mean for us today? In this session, we will discuss the place of revelation and commandments in our contemporary lives.

## **Week Four: Time. Sacred time. Holiness.**

**May 9**

Leadership is not just about joining a board, pursuing a profession, giving a gift, or having influence. Leadership is often best characterized by how we choose to allocate our time. In this session we will look at the question of devoting time to specific practices as a way to manifest leadership.

## **Week Five: Place. The Land. Israel.**

**May 16**

The very first instruction that God gave to Abraham was "go to the land that I will show you." What's the importance of having a land? In this session, we will consider Zionism and what it means to live in a time of renewed Jewish sovereignty.

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**Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh**

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## **Week Six: The People of the Disagreement**

**May 23**

Jews have texts. Lots of texts. Jewish leaders need to have some familiarity with the foundational texts of Jewish life. In this session, we will explore the structure of Jewish texts and explore how Jewish leaders have engaged in important conversations that have gone on for centuries, and how the textual tradition allowed for robust disagreements.

## **Week Seven: Conversations, Civil and Uncivil**

**June 6**

We've spent the last few weeks learning how to see our lives as part of the bigger Jewish narrative. We've discussed our responsibility to pass on our traditions. But what does continuity matter at times of national trauma? With great upheaval comes great unrest. In this session, we'll explore ancient Jewish viewpoints on civil discourse, and how those teachings of the past can impact us today.

## **Week 8: On Taking Responsibility**

**June 13**

Jews are mandated to care for one another. But what does that mean, exactly? In this session, we will explore our commitments to both the larger, worldwide Jewish community and the more local, Pittsburgh community.

## **Week 9: Siyyum: Conclusions and Steps for the Future**

**June 20**

We've learned and questioned and deepened our understanding of our sacred tradition and how that tradition informs our Jewish leadership. What questions have been activated for us as a result of this journey together? In this final session, we will express gratitude, ritualize our time together, and explore Jewish ideas of optimism and the Jewish future.

## **Need to miss class? Have something you'd like to discuss? Send us a quick email!**

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