



## **ELECTIVES - HAVA NASHIRA 2024**

### **Elective Sessions #1**

#### **Improvisation in Prayer: Presence and Practice**

*Facilitated by Elana Arian*

Being fully present as a worship leader means cultivating an openness to possibility. Whether responding to a given moment in song, speaking extemporaneously, or finding organic ways to integrate the contemporary with the traditional, the most effective and meaningful worship requires an orientation towards improvisation. In this elective, we will explore some basic techniques of improvisation - both practicing them musically and thinking more broadly about the opportunities for improvisatory awareness in crafting worship.

#### **L'chadeysh: Refreshing Familiar Repertoire**

*Facilitated by Jacob Spike Kraus*

We always want to introduce the hottest new melodies and brand new pieces we fall in love with to our communities. But many of us lead congregations that are “passionately committed” to certain melodies that we feel obligated to include week after week. In this elective, we’ll explore artistic and performance-based choices you can make that enliven and transform classic repertoire across a spectrum from “subtle” to “what just happened”. We’ll cover topics like tempo and time signatures, chord choices and reharmonization, instrumentation, transpositions, “mashups”, and more. Playing the same melodies week after week for our congregations shouldn’t feel like playing the same melodies week after week, for us or our congregations.

#### **Unpacking my guitar style: tips and tricks from 60 years of strumming**

*Facilitated by Cantor Jeff Klepper*

I’m hardly a “great” guitarist, but over the years, after teaching at different levels from beginner to advanced, I’ve been able to isolate a number of techniques that define my own style. As I demonstrate, you can emulate, following the great advice of Robbie Robertson, “Take what you need and leave the rest.” The aim is not for you to play like me, the aim is for you to create your own style that enables you to play whatever you want as effortlessly and joyously as possible!

Here are some of the things we will cover:

- Maximizing rhythmic potential
- Using fresh chord shapes
- Leaning on suspensions
- Shortcuts for tricky chords
- Playing for quiet moments
- Combining picking & strumming
- Grabbing the melody under your fingers
- Using a flat pick, thumb pick, and bare hands
- Why knowing a little music theory is really helpful
- (BTW, no lead guitar, no special capos, no fancy finger picking!)

### **Singing as A Spiritual Practice: Inviting Others into Song**

*Facilitated by Eliana Light*

What can the voice itself teach us about prayer? How can we encourage folks to raise their voices in both prayer and song? Together, using only a few melodies, we'll experience a model that weaves discussion, mindful awareness, and gentle noticing to create a safe space for singing. Then, we'll unpack, exploring how to bring these elements into our singing and prayer spaces, elevating them for everyone.

### **Using Guitar To Create A Holy Space**

*Facilitated by Chava Mirel*

The guitar is such an important support tool for prayer and music leadership in the Jewish community, with limitless potential for enhancing spiritual experiences - and Jewish songleading requires different approaches to the guitar than ones often taught by traditional guitar teachers. In this class, we will approach guitar playing through the lens of facilitating holy gatherings, with curiosity and sensitivity to the wide variety of needs that could be present in any community. Building on a basic knowledge base of simple chords and strumming patterns, we will explore rhythm, dynamics, and harmony variations that can create a more complex and nuanced sound. We will also learn 2-finger chords and 1-chord arrangements, partial capo tricks, strumming and picking patterns, and other techniques that support heartfelt group singing and prayer.

## **Circle Singing**

*Facilitated by Mayta Cohen*

Welcome to Circle Singing; a game that looks completely different depending on who shows up to play. If you want to experiment with vocal harmony, practice leading in moments where you may feel unsure, or listen and support others in doing this work, this elective is the place for you. Deeply rooted in Bobby McFerrin's world of vocal improvisation, we will explore how this vulnerable experience can be a valuable guide in our Jewish musical leadership. We'll talk about skills we can build by playing and ways we can bring the magic of Circle Singing back home with us. How do you play? You'll have to join us to find out...

## **MasterClass on the Worship "Teach"**

*Facilitated by Cantor Rosalie Will*

Experiment with graceful and effective ways to introduce new repertoire during worship. We will invite a select number of participants to try some tools and techniques to introduce something "new" to a community with integrity. Open to those who want to get some feedback on their "teach" as well as those who may not want to demonstrate themselves but can learn a tremendous amount observing others in the process while in a safe, nurturing, supportive environment!

## **Electives Sessions #2 (Participant Led)**

### **Behold Behar! – Jewish Poetry Writing Workshop**

*Facilitated by Rick Lupert*

Let's rewrite the Torah together! We'll try to collectively write a haiku for every parsha as well as take a deeper look at this week's *parsha*, Behar (it's all about taking a rest!) through guided writing prompts to write some longer pieces that we will share with each other. (and maybe take over one of the open mics reading them!)

### **Lean on Me: The Choir as an Ally for Congregational Singing**

*Facilitated by Cantor Zoe Jacobs*

Discover the transformative potential of your choir in enriching congregational singing experiences! Whether you're blessed with a dedicated group of vocalists or are nurturing a budding choir, this session explores how to maximize its impact in your worship services. Delve into strategies for creating meaningful listening experiences and encouraging active participation within your congregation. Together, we'll explore diverse approaches to enriching our services with harmony, creating collective moments of celebration through song.

## **Songs, Stories, & Props: Tools for Engaging Families with Young Children**

*Facilitated by Carla Friend*

Let's explore some tools that will make your experiences for young children and their families more engaging, welcoming, and inspiring. You'll leave with ideas you can implement in your tefillah and/or music classes right away including tricks for keeping everyone in the room engaged, from the tiniest babies to the chattiest adults. Come ready to play with scarves, puppets, parachute, bubbles, and more! This session is geared towards anyone who works with toddlers, preschoolers, families, Tot Shabbat, and early elementary groups.

## **Chords are for Lovers and Leaders**

*Facilitated by Zach Singer*

Join me in the shallow and deep waters of all the chords you'll ever need to play Jewish music. With 7th chords, sus-chords, walk-downs, power chords and polychords, we can get through anything. This is a more intermediate/advanced class where you may already want to be pretty comfortable playing F and Bm. Feel free to bring songs or progressions with mysterious chords you'd like to brainstorm. These methods usually involve a guitar strap with a button where the neck meets the body. If you don't have one, it's not a bad idea to have one installed.

## **Warehouse Shabbat: Playing with Prayer for Adults**

*Facilitated by Cantor Rollin Simmons and Rabbi Josh Fixler*

Play: It's not just for kids. Psychologists have found that a playful mindset can open us up to creativity, possibility, and hope. Cantor Rollin Simmons and Rabbi Josh Fixler have used the science of "play theory" to create Warehouse Shabbat - an out-of-the-box, young adult-focused worship experience. Come and learn how this unique clergy partnership has led to exuberant, innovative, and transformative services, which leave people saying "I didn't know prayer could feel like that!"

## **Weaving The Disparate Parts: Bringing Our Full Selves To Prayer**

*Facilitated by Rachel Chang*

How do we bring our full selves to prayer, to music, to ritual, to community? What parts of ourselves feel seen and nourished in prayer spaces? What parts of ourselves are still yearning to be seen and heard? Building off of learnings and practices from Jews of Color communities and other non-centered Jewish voices, this workshop will invite us to call in ancestors, to access our complex stories, to weave the disparate parts of ourselves that are aching for integration. This space is open to all who are looking for internal healing – and it will likely feel most impactful for those whose stories feel untold in some way.

## **Jewish Drum Circle**

*Facilitated by Mitch Gordon*

Join Sacred Drummer and worship leader Mitch Gordon in a Jewish Drum Circle with drum, chant, and meditation pieces that connect us to each other and the pulse of the earth and the universe. Bring an open heart and drop into a place of reflection as we explore some basic drumming skills, breathing, and mindfulness, and try on some original chants and kirtan, as well as those created by others like Rabbi Shefa Gold, Taya Ma, Yofiyah, and others. Limit 15 - no drumming or chanting experience necessary - all levels welcome.

## **Electives Sessions #3**

### **Singing Circle Repertoire and Practices**

*Facilitated by Chava Mirel*

We're blessed to be living in an absolute renaissance of Jewish spiritual music right now! We are experiencing an unprecedented bridging across denominations and geographical locations and finding potent new ways of understanding traditional ancient practices through the lens of our modern understanding of how group singing can meet the spiritual needs of community and individuals. In this elective, we will learn repertoire from a variety of different singing communities, and practices that help deepen connection and prayer. We will also explore ideas and techniques for incorporating new music seamlessly into our *t'fillot*, programs, and other gatherings.

### **Sounds Like Teen Spirit**

*Facilitated by Eric Hunker*

I've been lucky enough to build a songleading career almost *exclusively* working with communities of teens in youth groups, congregations, day schools, and college settings. The teenage years can be some of the most formative of our lives. Over the years, many have shared their apprehensions and struggles working with this age group with me. In our time together, I hope to share some hard-earned learnings and actionable techniques for songleading with teens in all settings. Our time together will be punctuated by moments of song, movement, laughter, and conversation. No experience necessary!

### **High Holiday Family T'fillah**

*Facilitated by Eliana Light*

Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur offer beautiful opportunities for families to share sacred time together. Through repertoire, techniques, and asking the big "why," we'll explore how to craft services for all ages of children and their grown-ups that look backward, forward, and inwards.

## **Lai Lai Lai or Nai Nai Nai?**

*Facilitate by Noah Aronson*

This elective will feature a handful of wordless melodies for stirring the spirit. *Niggunim* are a uniquely Jewish spiritual technology that allows us to bypass the mind and let the spirit sing. Come, let us sing!

## **Full Body SongLeading**

*Facilitated by Shira Kline*

Ever find yourself, just kind of, standing there when you songlead? Lots going on in your mind and your heart, but your body is not exactly telling the same story? Discover how to conduct music with your full body. From directing the scales with your fingertips to catching “the shoulder note,” learn to draw energy with the “angel stance” and to dance the song you sing. No experience necessary.

## **20 Barre Dash**

*Facilitated by Zach Singer*

Do you get anxious when you see an F chord on a chart? Is Eb like a left turn you avoid at all costs? Have you been playing barre chords for years but think there should be an easier way to achieve the sound you want with maybe a little less pain? Join me and look at your posture, find useful hacks, and rock the songs you always knew you could. This is available to all levels but may be useful if you can read a chord diagram. These methods usually involve a guitar strap with a button where the neck meets the body. If you don't have one, it's not a bad idea to have one installed.

## **Masterclass on Songwriting: A Safe Place for Feedback**

*Facilitated by Elana Arian*

As a follow-up to Elana's songwriting intensive, this elective is only open to folks who were in the intensive and are looking for more directed feedback/reflection on specific pieces they are working on. While the intensive will have a broader focus on writing techniques, inspiration, and big-picture musical creativity, this elective will give participants an opportunity to get real-time feedback from Elana and the class on a work in progress.