

Nusach HaTefillah: Mastering the Magnificent Modes of Ashkenazi Musicology

Behind the tunes that we hear during davening is a rich and complex musical system going back hundreds, and, possibly, thousands of years. These musical traditions have been studied and codified, developed and, in many cases, have started to disappear from the contemporary Modern Orthodox synagogue. In this series we will use the Friday Night Service as a starting point for understanding how Jewish liturgical music works. Whether you want to appreciate davening more deeply or improve your skills as a Ba'al Tefillah, this class will give you both depth and details that are sure to delight.

Syllabus for sessions 1-3:

Yedid Nefesh

- Nusach vs. Nusach
- Music in Tefillah—Three Categories

Lechu Neranena

- Introduction to the Ashkenazi Musical Modes
 - Adonai Malach
 - Ahavah Rabbah
 - Magen Avot

Arba'im Shanah

- The Carlebach Contribution

Havu L'Adonai

- Tunes and Modes
 - Sefaradi and Ashkenazi Melodies
- Mid-Davening Switches in Musical Modes and Tunes
 - Chol Morning Davening
 - Mid-Amidah Switches

Lecha Dodi

- The Germanic Musical Tradition
 - Seasonal Motifs
 - Shir Hama'alot
 - Shabbat Mevarechim
 - Hallel

Mizmor Shir L'yom HaShabbat

- The Enlightenment and the Reform Choral Tradition
 - Lewandowski and Sulzer

Adonai Malach

- Cantoral Composition
 - Eastern vs. Western Europe
- Historic Evolution of Nusach

Kaddish 1

- Halachic Obligation to Pray with a Tune

Ma'ariv

- Regional Nusach
 - Shabbat Pesukei D'zimrah
- Western Minor and Major Scales in Jewish Music
 - Torah and Trope
 - Sultzer Shema
 - Anticipation in Nusach (Part 1)

Umalchuto Beratzon

- Phraseology in Nusach and Melody

V'shameru

- Contrafactum
 - Carlebach and Major/Minor

Kaddish 2

- Anticipation in Nusach (Part 2)
- Eliyahu Hanavi and Migrating Melodies
- Seasonal Kaddish

Amidah

- Avot / Gevurot and the Kedusha Rule
- The Pentatonic Scale

Vayechulu/Magen Avot

- Sing an American Tune: The Goldfarb Brothers

Kaddish 3

- Kaddish Shalem
 - Basic Kaddish Modes
 - Special Kaddish Shalem

Kiddush

Aleinu

- MiSinai Melodies
- The Maharil and the Halachic Status of Nusach

Yigdal

- The Ascending Minor and Jewish Music

Adon Olam

- The State of Israel and its Impact on Nusach

Session 4: The Kaddish: Musical Marker of Nusach (with Cantor Gideon Zelermyer)

For the final session Rabbi Grossman will be joined by Cantor Gideon Zelermyer of the Shaar Hashomayim Congregation in Montreal for a musical exploration of the Kaddish and its significance in Nusach HaTefillah. We will look at the different modes and compositions for the Kaddish employed during the cycle of the Jewish liturgical calendar, as well as its life beyond the siddur in popular and high musical culture.

