

Conversion Program Goals and Requirements

Goals:

1. Learn about Jewish way of life and thought (through class sessions, reading, meetings with Rabbis and others)
2. Learn Hebrew: how to recognize the letters, pronounce words, recite some basic prayers. (Hebrew class)
3. Work through personal responses to adopting Jewish people/lifestyle (meetings with Rabbis and others, spiritual/conversion journal)
4. Feel comfortable as member of Jewish community

Requirements:

1. **Attend Invitation to Judaism course**
2. Read materials from **required books**
3. Keep **conversion journal** (suggested topics for entries will be made in class from time to time –see below for first two topics) and complete **Terms List**
4. Take **Hebrew course** (next hour). It, too, has required text and tape
5. **Meetings from time to time with Rabbis**
6. **Attend Shabbat services regularly (Friday night:** Shabbat Yahad, Great Sanctuary, Chapel, Friday Night Alive! **Saturday morning:** Great Sanctuary, Museum Minyan, Chapel, (Junior Congregation) **Saturday afternoon:** Chapel
7. **Visit Holocaust Museum, JCC/Federation, Krogers** (kosher food tour), **Library tour, Passover Seder**
8. **Shabbat Dinners** – at Beth Yeshurun and Rabbi's home
9. **Participate in Holiday celebrations at Beth Yeshurun** (we will discuss the holidays in the class as they come up)
10. **Understand and accept Jewish way of life and thought:** commitment to Jewish practice of Shabbat (at home and in synagogue), kashrut, tzedakah, holidays, continued study, raising children as Jews (enrolling them in Jewish religious/day school), sharing in fate and faith of Jewish people, *must be choosing this path of your own free will, not coerced, and seen as lifetime commitment*. Because these requirements are particular to each person converting, no guarantees can be made about the time conversion ceremony will take place. Must be mutually agreed upon by Rabbi and candidate for conversion.
11. **Final Essay Questions**
12. **Ritual:** Bet Din (court) interview, *brit milah* or *hatafat dam* (men only), mikveh (ritual bath), stand before ark. (Note: Mikveh fee is \$180 at United Orthodox)
13. **Optional:** Book Fair lectures at JCC, Scholar in Residence lectures at Beth Yeshurun, Horvitz Scholar lectures at JCC, Jewish web sites (see list), Jewish movies (see list),

Journal: first two topics

- a. Why am I converting to Judaism? What do I think I will get out of this program? What do I think will be different when I am Jewish? What will I have to leave behind?
- b. Letter to God. What do you want to say to God/ask of God as you embark on this program?