

# Baltimore Jewish Cultural Chavurah

## About Cultural Judaism

Cultural Judaism, also known as Secular Humanistic Judaism, is a non-religious Jewish movement that declares that Judaism is the creation of the Jewish people, rather than a set of rules and beliefs. Historically, cultural Judaism grew out of Eastern European Yiddish culture, free thought, and progressive social values, enriched by Western European enlightenment philosophy.

Baltimore Jewish Cultural Chavurah is an affiliate of the Society for Humanistic Judaism and a member of the Baltimore Coalition of Reason. Other cultural Jews are affiliated with the Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations or the Workmen's Circle. There are Secular Humanistic Jewish groups in North and South America, Israel, Europe, and Australia.

## What do we do?

We usually meet twice a month, on a Sunday morning and a Friday evening, where we share a secular observance of our Jewish traditions, offer educational programs, and socialize over dessert or brunch. Our gatherings usually take place in the homes of various members.

On Friday evenings we light candles, share challah and wine, and sing. We enjoy dessert—and sometimes a potluck dinner—carrying out our motto: “First we eat, then we talk.” A guest speaker generally follows the observance and we engage in a spirited discussion. Our Sunday

morning gatherings feature potluck brunch, followed by another Jewish cultural program, with an occasional field trip to a movie, museum or play.

**EDUCATION:** We offer stimulating, thought-provoking, and informative adult programming from a Jewish perspective. Our speakers share their expertise and guide a lively discussion on topics ranging from Jewish history, culture and identity, to social justice movements, art, and science. For young families, we also provide guidance and mentoring for secular Bar and Bat Mitzvahs.

**HOLIDAYS:** We observe High Holidays, hold a Chanukah latke party, raise a sukkah, and host an alternative Passover Seder. Adults and children are welcome at our celebrations, which feature music, readings, and community participation.

**TZEDAKAH:** At every meeting, we collect contributions for a cause that aligns with our values. On a rotating basis, we select a local, national, or international organization to which we donate the funds we collect at our meetings.



## About BJCC

Baltimore Jewish Cultural Chavurah provides a welcoming and enriching Jewish environment for those who identify as Jews primarily through culture, history, and family.

Secular Humanistic Jewish observances include music, readings, and discussion, rather than prayer. We concentrate on the ethical and historical messages which unite and uplift us as human beings and as Jews, with no demand for religious belief. We offer programs geared to adults and we welcome children at our holiday celebrations.

If you're interested in learning more about BJCC or about Secular Humanistic Judaism, please visit our website: [baltimoresecularjews.org](http://baltimoresecularjews.org)

You can contact us at:  
[baltimoresecularjews@gmail.com](mailto:baltimoresecularjews@gmail.com)  
Or call us at: 410-493-2473



## Is this for you?

Baltimore Jewish Cultural Chavurah welcomes people of all ages and backgrounds, including single people, one-parent families, inter-married couples, and those of any gender orientation or identity.

As Secular Humanistic Jews, we believe that only natural forces and human beings are responsible for what happens in the world.

We believe that people have the ability and the responsibility to solve human problems through striving for equality, social justice, and peace. We believe in the equality and dignity of every human being and in the power of community.

We value the diversity of Jewish life.



## The Society for Humanistic Judaism

The Society for Humanistic Judaism was organized in 1969. The Society's mission is to mobilize people to celebrate Jewish identity and culture consistent with a humanistic philosophy of life, independent of supernatural authority.

As the central body for the Humanistic Jewish Movement in North America, the Society assists in organizing and supporting its communities, and in providing a voice for Humanistic Jews.

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## A Secular Humanistic Jewish Alternative

[baltimoresecularjews.org](http://baltimoresecularjews.org)  
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