

Shavuot
May 21



the
valley
temple

a refreshingly positive jewish experience



May 2026
Iyyar - Sivan 5786

MAY RELIGIOUS SERVICES

FRIDAY, MAY 1, 7:30 p.m.

Shabbat Service with Friday Night Live

SATURDAY, MAY 2

9:30 a.m. – Torah Study

9:45 a.m. – Tot Service

10:30 a.m. – Shabbat Service

Torah Portion – *Emor*, Leviticus 21:1-24:23

FRIDAY, MAY 8, 6:15 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE TIME CHANGE

Shabbat Service with

Hebrew Union College Pre-Ordination Service

Reception begins at 5:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, MAY 9, 9:00 a.m.

PLEASE NOTE LOCATION & TIME CHANGE

Hebrew Union College Ordination Service

Plum Street Temple | 720 Plum Street

FRIDAY, MAY 15, 7:30 p.m.

Shabbat Service with Graduation/Confirmation

Oneg Shabbat sponsored by the families

of the graduates/confirmands in honor of

their special occasion

SATURDAY, MAY 16

9:30 a.m. – Torah Study

10:30 a.m. – Shabbat Service

Torah Portion – *B'midbar*, Numbers 1:1-4:20

THURSDAY, MAY 21

7:00 p.m. – Shavuot Service

Dinner at 6:00 p.m. with reservations

Adult Education at 8:00 p.m.

FRIDAY, MAY 22

10:00 a.m. – Shavuot Service

with *Yizkor* (Memorial) Prayers

7:30 p.m. – Shabbat Service with Friday Night Live

SATURDAY, MAY 23

9:30 a.m. – Torah Study

10:30 a.m. – Shabbat Service

Torah Portion – *Naso I*, Numbers 4:21-5:31

FRIDAY, MAY 29

7:30 p.m. – Shabbat Service

SATURDAY, MAY 30

9:30 a.m. – Torah Study

10:30 a.m. – Shabbat Service

Torah Portion – *Naso II*, Numbers 6:1-7:89



REMINDER



The Valley Temple's Annual Meeting is

Friday, June 5th @ 7:00 p.m.



Your attendance is needed to ensure we have a quorum.
And you'll hear all about the great things happening at Valley!

Please note that Shabbat Services will start at 8:00 p.m. ★ ★ ★ ★



From the Rabbi Sandford R. Kopnick

This month marks the 50th anniversary of my becoming a *Bar Mitzvah*. Our congregation was in the city of Detroit—called Temple Israel. In fact, it is the same congregation that suffered that horrible terrorist attack in March.

Becoming *Bar Mitzvah* in 1976 was wonderful. It was 1976, so many of us had Bicentennial themes—lots of red, white, and blue! I remember the process of working with Mrs. Glasier (of blessed memory). One of the rabbis from my *Bar Mitzvah* is still serving that congregation—Rabbi Harold Loss. He and I check in from time to time—and he remains a gifted and inspirational rabbi.

What I most remember from that time includes sharing the morning with another *Bar Mitzvah* boy whom I met during tutoring. Our congregation had grown to be so large, that Friday Nights and Saturday Mornings frequently had two *B'nai Mitzvah* for each service. I read 6 lines of Torah, chanted ½ the blessings, and recited a pledge to continue my studies. I asked my tutor whether I could read the translation of the Torah portion during the service, and she said, “there is no translation for that week.” While I’m certain that is what she said, I think she meant that she had no way to find a translation and didn’t know who to ask.

Yet, it was a wonderful moment for me and my family. My grandmothers, my parents, and brothers—along with aunts, uncles, and cousins, gathered to celebrate another Jewish person in our family embracing Judaism. This was especially poignant since one of my parents had many relatives he had never met die at Auschwitz. That year was different for me than many kids today. I went to a public school with many Jewish kids. I attended 37 *b'nai mitzvah* over the course of the year—and competed with Lori Shapiro for our mutual friends’ participation in our services and parties. I even went to part of her party on the evening of my own *Bar Mitzvah* (we couldn’t afford an evening celebration).

I was one of the luckiest people in my grade—for I loved our Temple, I loved the heritage being passed to me by my parents and grandmothers, and I loved every minute of the process of becoming a *bar mitzvah*. Granted it was not too rigorous, but it allowed me to join my family as a maturing Jewish participant. And while becoming a rabbi was not yet on my radar (being a game-show host was!), I loved being able to share what I learned with my grandmother—and to see her pride in my love of our shared heritage.

Fifty years is a long time. At the 14th anniversary of becoming a *Bar Mitzvah*, I was ordained as a rabbi. It never occurred to me that my experience should be the same as my future students’ experiences of becoming *b'nai mtizvah*. On the contrary, I knew I was

unusually positive about the process. I knew that I wasn’t becoming an adult in anyone’s eyes—and that we needed to help students engage in Judaism with the honesty about what was really happening when we prepared a student for their *B-mitzvah*. I loved being in that massive Temple—but realized that the experience we can share in a smaller congregation can be more personal, deeper, and more tailored to our students’ needs and challenges.

The Torah portion from my *Bar Mitzvah* will be read while we celebrate the final Cincinnati Ordination of HUC-JIR at Plum Street Temple. I am looking forward to celebrating that momentous day of Ordination with those families as I reflect on that morning in the Palmer Park neighborhood of Detroit when my family gathered to link me to the chain of tradition that is our Judaism. I pray that you and your family may have similar Jewish memories that you can remember with the joy and pride that so fills me at this golden time.

Have a great month.

Sandford R. Kopnick, Rabbi

Please remember that Rabbi Kopnick will be at camp in early June and then away for most of the summer but can be reached via the Temple office. He will be back for a weekend in July and August prior to returning during the last week of August.
Rabbi Kopnick’s retirement begins July 2027.



Thanks to the Men’s Club for their recent Temple grounds work!



Rabbi/Educator's Message Austin Zoot

If you had asked me in my early days of Rabbinical School, I would have told you that being a Rabbi Educator was the last thing I wanted to do. I was far more interested in sermons and pastoral care than I was in lesson plans and assemblies. In truth, the only reason I agreed to become a Rabbi Educator was because I had fallen in love with the Valley Temple family, and I would have mopped the floors if it meant I could call this place home.

Over the past six years, I have come to see what a profound gift it was to be put in charge of this school. Of all of the aspects of our congregational program, religious education is perhaps the most profound. At the same time that Jews around the world are voicing their frustration with the ways that their upbringing left them dissatisfied with their understanding of our tradition, I got to see up-close and personal what it means to use education as a driver for identity formation. While most Jews in America dread Sunday mornings, our building is the epicenter of joy, creativity, and connection. To get to steward that experience has been an honor, and I am so grateful to be able to bring the things I have learned into the next phase of my leadership at Valley.

None of this is possible without the teachers who have devoted their time and enthusiasm to creating an environment where our students can feel nurtured and curious. Every single teacher has chosen to put their entire heart into making Judaism feel accessible and impactful, and I can't express what a treat it has been to partner along the way. Nancy, Bette Ann, Joanna, Josh, Hannah, Olivia, Lexi, Sophia, Sam, Megan, Ross, Kara, Elizabeth, Josiah, Rocki, Andrea, Ben, Sam, Brian, Brandon, Charlie, Cyle, Lily Plum, and Charlene: Thank you for being such spectacular partners in the work of crafting the Jewish identity of our children. The future is so much brighter because of you.

Most importantly, to the students who have come through our program over the past six years: you are my favorite part of our congregation. I love getting to greet you every week with fun nicknames you begrudgingly accept. I love listening to your questions and opinions, because that is the best way that I learn the beauty of what Judaism can be in real life. I love getting to see the spark in your eye when you participate in the rituals that my community taught me growing up, knowing that you might find as much meaning in our tradition as I do. Most of all, I have loved getting to know each and every one of you as the gift you are. No matter where in the world you go, you will always have a rabbi who cares about you and is ready to be supportive whenever you need.

This is an awful lot of naval gazing for someone who is moving his office a grand total of zero inches. Thank you for indulging me. Because really, isn't that what makes this congregation so special: our willingness to see one another for who we truly are and lift one another up to feel safe, loved, and empowered? I have certainly grown to be a better version of myself because of this program. And that is the greatest gift we can get.

Rabbi Austin Zoot
Rabbi/Educator



We are grateful to the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati's S.E.E.D. Program, The Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati and an anonymous donor for their support in funding this position.

EXCITING NEWS FROM THE OFFICE

Valley Temple is updating to a new database!

The official launch of **Easyshul** will happen on July 1, 2026, but we are working on the setup now. In fact, you may have received a Seder reminder email (or three) from "**noreply@easyshul.com**."

Please send an email to **kelli@valleytemple.com** if you've updated your email or any other information so we keep you informed!





THANK YOU TO OUR AMAZING SPONSORS!

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Louis & Jude Beck
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Emmeram & Shelly Morning
Philip & Allison Schneider
Beth Schwartz & Gene Smiley

BETTY CROCKER

Carol & Les Appel
Neil Berman & Susan Marmo
Dolph & Nancy Berman
The Broh Family
Kent & Jody Finley
Craig Hoffheimer
Sue & Mike Mantel
Mark & Jan Rosenbaum Sass
John & Greer Schneider
Valley Temple Men's Club

FANNIE FARMER

Rabbi Sandford & Dr. Nancy Kopnick
Laura & Sam Lobar
Amy Paul & Jerry Newfarmer
Dan & Dedra Perlmutter
Sue Price and Family
Amanda Stein & Tom Enneking
Scott Steinberg
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valley temple
SISTERHOOD

UPCOMING MEETINGS & PROGRAMS

We hope you can join us in person (we typically have food), but if you cannot all meetings are streamed live at bit.ly/GeneralMeetingsVTS

MONTH	MEETING DATE
May	May 3th (Religious School Picnic)

Some exciting things to look forward to:

- Rummage Sale June 14. Look in the Bulletin for Drop off dates beginning June 1st.
- Last days to order flowers from Flower Power: <http://vtsisterhood.fpfundraising.com/>

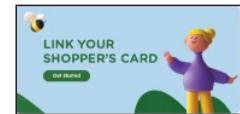


High Holiday Honey Jars

Our annual Honey Jar Program for the holidays is coming soon!
• Sales will begin in June, with all orders due by August 2.

**More details will be shared
in early June—stay tuned!**

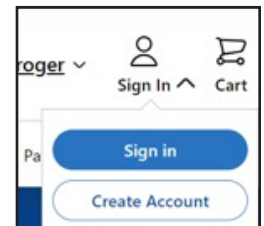
KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS POINTS



PLEASE ALLOCATE your Kroger community rewards to Valley Temple Sisterhood (you still get all of your same personal rewards – they just allocate a donation to us based on your spending).

How do you do that?
Simply follow this link
<https://www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards>

If you have an account – sign in;
if not, create an account



MISHEIBERACH

We pray for healing for:
Bernice Blatt
Dr. Michael Gelfand
Pam Levinson
Robert Pollack
Sharlene Stempler
Lizzie Spicehandler



He [Rabbi Tarfon] used to say: It is not your responsibility to finish the work, but neither are you free to desist from it. Pirkei Avot, 2:16

APRIL

OUR MAY BLUE BIN PARTNER IS PROJECT CONNECT BRING DONATIONS TO THE BLUE BIN IN THE TEMPLE LOBBY



We are continuing our year-long focus on Project Connect, which provides advocacy, educational services and lifestyle enrichment opportunities for children in Cincinnati Public Schools who are experiencing homelessness. Because these needs extend beyond the school year, PC provides a summer camp for 80-100 children, ages 5-14, from June 8 - July 16. Children are in a classroom setting with a CPS teacher and paraprofessional, as well as volunteers from UC and XU. In addition to academic enrichment and reading support they get to enjoy all the typical camp experiences, including daily swimming/ swim lessons.

For the months of April and May, we will be collecting Beach Towels and Swim Goggles with the goal of collecting 100 of each!!! If unable to shop for these, you can contribute money to the Valley Temple Social Action Fund. We will be sending updates on how we're progressing toward reaching these goals.



Another huge part of our Social Action work is providing lunch four times a year, approximately 40-50 meals, to individuals and families at Queen City Kitchen in Walnut Hills. Food is provided by temple

members and money from our social action fund, and volunteers serve the meals. Upcoming dates are:

- May 3**
- June 28**
- August 23**

For information about any and all Tikkun Olam projects, please call or email:

Linda Lazar
lazarjl1@fuse.net
(513) 260-1026

Helen Waits
bindywaits@gmail.com
(513) 310-7633

SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVITIES

During Passover, we are reminded that we were slaves in Egypt, and therefore:

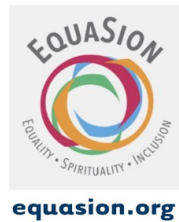
“You shall not wrong nor oppress the stranger, for you were strangers in the Land of Egypt” (Exodus 22:20).

“The strangers who reside with you shall be to you as your citizens ... for you were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Leviticus 19:34).

The commandment to care for the stranger is mentioned more times than any other commandment in the Torah — more even than the command to love God. Depending on which source in the Talmud, it is commanded 36 or 46 times.

So how do we observe this commandment? Immigrants throughout the country are experiencing fear, family separation, and threats of deportation. This is affecting our own neighbors in Cincinnati and Springfield, Ohio.

To provide support, you can contact one of these great agencies working in our area or in Springfield:



Springfield G92



tinyurl.com/3v2tzn45
(choose "Haitian Support Fund" from the menu)

St. Vincent dePaul

Haitian Support Center



wesharegiving.org
(choose "Immigration services" from the menu)



tinyurl.com/23pshhrx



Sustaining the Generations

We gratefully acknowledge the following contributions:

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In memory of Pauline Kallek; *from Lynn & Neil Kravitz*

ALLEN & SELMA WIENER BERKMAN

SOCIAL ACTION FUND

In memory of Jack & Rebecca Solgan;
from Linda & Jeff Lazar

L'CHAYIM CONGREGATIONAL CARE FUND

In memory of Jay Price; *from Izar & Stacey Spivak*

SASS FAMILY MUSIC FUND

In memory of Eric Waits; *from Ernie & Helen Waits*

ESTELLE WIGSER FLOWER FUND

In honor of Alan Lazarus's birthday;
from Rabbi Sol & Sue Greenberg

CAMP SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In memory of Dorothy Hodesh; *from Stuart & Ricki Hodesh*

In memory of Ilene Hodesh; *from Stuart & Ricki Hodesh*

In memory of Jay Price; *from Sue Price & Family*

ROBERT & CHARLOTTE LANZIT

ADULT EDUCATION FUND

In memory of Toby Ruben; *from Sharon Kollasch*

BRYNA SCHWARTZ MEMORIAL

ONEG & HOSPITALITY FUND

In memory of Edward Mulloy;

from Kathleen & Ivan Tamarkin

In memory of Leona & Armand Kahn;

from Sally & Ernie Waxman

In memory of Albert DuCovna; *from Herb DuCovna*

In memory of Clara Hochstein; *from Cheryl & Steve Hecht*

FRANCIE BROWN MEMORIAL OFFICE FUND

In memory of Blanche Stewart;

from Robert & Barbara Stewart

VIDEO STREAMING FUND

In memory of Marney Wasserman;

from Diane & Ken Mitman

THANK YOU TO:

*Marcia and Mark Chetwood,
Michael and Jessica Deitsch & Family,
and Marc and Kimmy Deitsch & Family
for sponsoring a recent Oneg Shabbat
in memory of her mother, their grandmother
and their great grandmother, Sarah Weiss.*

*Men's Club for sponsoring a recent
Oneg Shabbat in honor of Men's Club Shabbat*

*Sisterhood for sponsoring a recent
Oneg Shabbat in honor of Sisterhood Shabbat*

THANK YOU FOR HELP WITH THE CONGREGATIONAL SEDER!

Sandy Hatfield
Diane Mitman
Linda Lazar
Jeff & Linda Lazar
Bindy Waits



valley temple

SISTERHOOD

RUMMAGE SALE



DROP OFF DATES

MONDAY, JUNE 1ST	10 AM - NOON
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3RD	5 - 7 PM
FRIDAY, JUNE 5TH	10 AM - NOON
SUNDAY, JUNE 7TH	10 AM - 2 PM
TUESDAY, JUNE 9TH	10 AM - NOON
THURSDAY, JUNE 11TH	5 PM - 7 PM
FRIDAY, JUNE 12TH	10AM - 1 PM

RUMMAGE SALE DATE

SUNDAY, JUNE 14TH 9 AM - 2 PM



Congratulations to our seniors participating in
our upcoming Graduation/Confirmation Service!



Elana Berman



Asher Buchwald



Andrew Enneking



Lily Plum Gartenlaub



Jenna Geller



Sarah Moeller



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Kelli Gleiner, Administrator
Neil Berman, President
Linda Lazar & Elizabeth Woosley,
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Steve Deutsch & Scott Steinberg,
Co-Presidents, Men's Club
Wendy Walsh, 1950 - 2025

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WEBSITE: www.valleytemple.com
E-MAIL: kelli@valleytemple.com

And You Shall Teach It to Your Children: a Shavuot Study of Jewish Identity in Higher Education

Thursday, May 21st

**Dinner at 6, Services at 7, Study Session at 8
RSVP today! Cost is \$18 for dinner**

AMY HERSCH

Director of Engagement
American University Hillel



RABBI AUSTIN ZOOT

Rabbi Educator
Valley Temple



RABBI HANNAH LYBIK

Rabbinic Admissions Recruiter
Hebrew Union College

