



February 2025 Sh'vat - Adar 5785

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1

9:30 a.m. – Torah Study 10:30 a.m. – Shabbat Service Torah Portion – *Bo*, Exodus 10:1-13:16

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 7:30 P.M.

Shabbat Service Friday Night Live

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8

9:30 a.m. - Torah Study 10:30 a.m. - Shabbat Service Torah Portion – B'shalach, Exodus 13:17-17:16

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 7:30 P.M.

Family Shabbat Service

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15

9:30 a.m. – Torah Study 10:30 a.m. – Shabbat Service Torah Portion – *Yitro*, Exodus 18:1-20:23

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 7:30 P.M.

Shabbat Service

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22

9:30 a.m. – Torah Study 10:30 a.m. – Shabbat Service Torah Portion – *Mishpatim*, Exodus 21:1-24:18

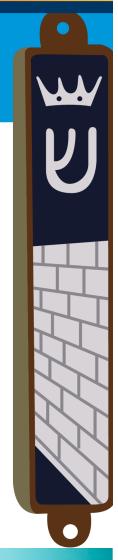
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 7:30 P.M.

Shabbat Service

INTRO TO JUDAISM STARTS ON FEBRUARY 2

Want a refresher about Judaism? Want to learn about Judaism because you're newer to our faith? Want to interact with people of all ages at a fun and interesting seminar about basic Judaism? Well wait no more. Our Introduction to Judaism class will begin on Sunday, February 2, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. in Rabbi Kopnick's study and will run through the first Sunday in May. Know you'll have to miss a few? No biggie—so you'll miss a few.

The price is right—at \$0 for Temple members. It is also \$0 for people in the process of becoming a Jew by Choice. The price for non-members is being nagged about joining the Valley Temple. So join us—bring a friend and don't worry, no previous knowledge is expected or required. It's time.



AN OPEN DISCUSSION ABOUT ISRAEL

Join us on **Tuesday**, **February 11 at 7:30** in the Board Room for an open discussion about what is going on in Israel. We will have an update from a few folks who have recently been in Israel, along with an open discussion on the toll the Israeli wars are taking on our connections to our homeland. It's been a tough 17 months – and it's time we talk. Bring an open mind, any RELIABLE articles you have read, and a commitment to frank, friendly, and respectful conversation. Good people can disagree. Good people can also be kind when they do – so let's give it a try.





We Jews do stuff. It is great to believe, but actions always are more important than words. One of my favorite Jewish sayings comes from Pirkei Avot when it says,

אָם אֵין אֲנִי לִי, מִי לִי וּכִשֵּאַנִי לְעַצִמִי, מָה אַנִי וְאָם לֹא עָכִשִּׁיוּ, אֵימָתְי

"If I am not for myself, who will be for me? If I am for myself alone, what am I? And if not now, when?" (Pirkei Avot 1:14).

I love this idea that we should be both protecting ourselves, but not to the exclusion of others. And I also love the urgency that comes at the end—if not now, when?

Jewish values have us value the other. Jewish values also have us value ourselves. And sometimes, when we are valuing others—(like remembering we were strangers in the land of Egypt, thereby remembering not to treat "strangers" poorly), we are actually helping ourselves to not be treated poorly again.

I fear that the internet, and our obsessions with our phones, computers, and tablets lead us into rabbit holes of isolation and, in some cases, despair. More and more research suggests that this is happening with younger folks, but likely it happens to some of us, too.

Finding ways to be involved with others is an important opportunity to value both ourselves and our neighbors. Zoom is convenient, but doesn't replace interactions that can allow for a good hug, or better perceptions that come with non-verbal cues.

One of the best parts of Jewish communal prayer is not really the prayer—it's the community. Sure, some need to be home because of their health, but many choose to stay away because they're unmotivated by the weather or the need to "get dressed" before going out. Yet, most of the time—showing up is the hardest part—but being there—that's almost always worth it.

When we collect for the big blue bin in the lobby, make the trip to deliver the stuff. When you know a dear one is commemorating a yahrtzeit or is going to services to pray the misheberach—join them—support them—and be for them—just as you choose to be for yourself.

Go to lunch with a friend. Serve lunch at a soup kitchen. Make and deliver lunch to someone you know who is home-bound. Come to our fundraiser in March—not just

From the Rabbi Sandford R. Kopnick

to help the cause, but to be with each other. Do what it takes to invest in yourself by limiting isolation. Do what it takes to be for others by creating opportunities to be together. And for God's sake, do it now!

Have a great month!

Sandford R. Kopnick, Rabbi

DO YOU PLAY A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT?



If you would like to be in our Purim Band this year and you play a real musical instrument (and have been told by someone who knows better that you're good at it), then please consider being in our Purim Band. We accept all who wish to try--as long as they are in high school or older. It will be essential that you be able to read music. If you're interested, please send an email to Rabbi Kopnick at rabbikopnick@valleytemple.org. You'll be glad you did. (That might not be true).

OUR SYMPATHY

Bette Sherman on the death of her sister, Rona Simon

The family of Laurel Fischbaum

Nancy Kopnick and Rick Magnus and John Frank on the death of their mother and sister, Carol Magnus

Amy Levy and Jim Levy on the death of their mother, Davine

Bob Denham on the death of his father, Marion Denham

The family of Peggy Barrett



There is No Getting an A in B'nei Mitzvah Tutoring

"I'm bad at this one."

The Bar Mitzvah student in front of me flips to a fresh page in his prayerbook, one he has been practicing for less time than the others. This is a smart kid, a highachiever, who isn't used to being bad at, well, anything. But as is so often the case, Hebrew tutoring pushes students out of their comfort zone. In many cases, this might be the first time a child is expected to hit benchmarks in a foreign language that feels deeply uncomfortable, which often makes a young person feel inadequate. Because in most school settings, they have been taught that anything less than perfection doesn't warrant an A. and an A is how we quantify value in academia.

This gives us yet another chance to be a powerful counterbalance in a child's development. While education can so often get in the way of a person's learning, we have the unique opportunity to allow students to feel uncomfortable in a safe and supported environment. How can we expect a kid to be able to do a great job reading a prayer they might have never seen before? How is it fair to expect perfection from a kid who is practicing in order to get better? How do any of us ever become good at something without struggling first and receiving the help we need to improve?

To make matters both better and harder, we're talking about prayer. Prayer, by its very nature, is something that requires practice, and comes with an undercurrent of expected perfection. Yet, there is a strange conundrum to be found here: there is no such thing as a perfect prayer. And yet all worship that is heartfelt and dedicated is perfect when it comes to crafting a relationship with the Divine. To that end, I always try to encourage students to remember that we are "graded" on our commitment, rather than our execution. If we are putting in the practice we should and we are working with an open heart and a strong will, then whatever we offer will be received with love and compassion. It is only when we cut corners, don't do the work, and ignore the profound meaning of what lies in front of us that we leave ourselves open to be criticized or judged.

I have heard a defense mechanism many times in preparation for a Bar or Bat Mitzvah: "it isn't like anyone else will understand what you're saying in Hebrew anyway." While I understand the inclination to protect ourselves from the embarrassment of making a mistake in front of others, this idea thoroughly undermines the point of practicing prayer and ritual in the first place. Because the community listening might not understand, but the student knows when something isn't right. The partner in learning (in our case, the rabbis) know. And God knows. And that is a compelling enough reason to put our energy

Rabbi/Educator's Message **Austin Zoot**

into doing the best we can with a full heart, even while having compassion for ourselves when perfection isn't an attainable goal.

I do not expect our students to be perfect. I expect our students to care. Because when they invest their care in the process, they make it all the more meaningful for everyone involved. And learning to put in the effort required to succeed also helps the people who are invested in the student be even more effective at providing the unique love and support that this kid requires.

It isn't possible to be "bad" at prayer. But we can be bad at caring. Luckily, the solution is fairly easy: start. Any time. Anywhere. And we will be there to support you along the way.

> 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 thisposition.



Join sisterhood today at https://valleytemple.com/sisterhood/

MEETINGS & PROGRAMS

Don't miss our Monthly Sunday morning meetings and look for fun activities each month as well! This year, we'll hold our activities/monthly catch up at 10:00 and our business meeting at 11:00. We're trying something new!

MONTH **MEETING DATE** February February 9th March 9th March

May May 4th (Religious School Picnic)

April 6th

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

Co-Presidents:

April

Robyn McCarrick (mccarrick626@yahoo.com) and Elizabeth Woosley (efwooz@gmail.com)



President's Message Neil Berman

In the last week, Cincinnati received more than a foot of snow – the most the city has seen since 1977. For me, the fresh snowfall brings a sense of calm. The familiar landscape of my yard looks different and unexpected. The fence is piled high with white powder, pine tree branches are heavy with the weight of the snow, and the ground is glistening white. Everything is both ordinary yet also transformed. The winter scene reminds me how the practices and traditions of Judaism bring peace and meaning to my everyday life.

The snow covers the ground and creates a quiet, peaceful space. In the same way, going to Torah study and attending services helps bring meaning to my busy week. For you, Judaism may be the good deeds you do, the prayers you say, or the time spent together in community. Like the snowfall, these moments help us pause and appreciate the beauty around us and in our hearts.

As we enjoy this winter season, let's remember how our traditions and practices make us feel calm and renewed. Just as the snow changes the look of our world, our Jewish faith helps us see life with hope and gratitude. Together, let's celebrate the warmth of our community and continue to find joy and meaning in each day!

Best,

Neil Berman President



Candlepin Bowling

February 2

10am to Noon at the Wyoming Civic Center 1 Worthington Ave.

RSVPs are appreciated but not required.
Email or phone:
Scottydoc6@zoomtown.com or 513-324-4487



MARCH 1 is The Valley Temple's major annual fundraiser and we look forward to you supporting this event and helping to ensure that essential programs within the Temple can be maintained. We also feel that it is important to have a positive impact on the broader community, so we are donating a portion of the proceeds to benefit Visionaries and Voices, an inclusive arts organization serving adults with disabilities.

There are several things that you can do to help make our fundraiser a success!

DONATE AN ITEM TO THE SILENT AUCTION:

Our congregants have many talents and a donation to the silent auction would be greatly appreciated. This can be something that you make, a gift card, or something else that you think our guests would like to purchase. Donations in the past have included river boat cruises, tickets to sports events, gift certificates to restaurants, our Wendy's famous carrot cake and more. Your creativity adds greatly to our success. Please email your donation to Neil at nmb341@gmail. com or wendy@valleytemple.com. Contact us with any questions!

• BE AN EVENT SPONSOR:

Please be an event sponsor for our Night of Art. Event sponsors will be recognized in the Night of Art program booklet. There are several levels of sponsorship including:

MARC CHAGALL - \$1000 ____ GEORGIA O'KEEFE - \$500 ___ LEONARD DA VINCI - \$250 ___ VINCENT VAN GOGH - \$100

Please indicate how you would like your name or business to appear in our sponsorship listing:

• COME TO THE EVENT! (SEE THE BACK PAGE)

Thank you for your support of our fundraiser!



FEBRUARY

The Tikkun Olam Committee organizes a variety of Social Action and Social Justice projects throughout the year. There are opportunities for volunteers of all ages and areas of interest to engage in "repairing the world".

BLUE BIN DONATIONS

Our Tikkun Olam collection in the month of February will benefit one out of two mothers with infants in the Greater Cincinnati area. You read that right: 50% of families with babies cannot afford to keep those sweet cheeks clean and dry.

Sweet Cheeks Diaper Bank collects, repackages, and distributes diapers to over 16,000 families in need, partnering with 46 agencies to ensure that all who lack this hygiene essential are served.

Help us keep the next generation dry, clean, and healthy by donating diapers and wipes to our Blue Bin!

Also welcome are incontinence products for men and women, and period products. Sweet Cheeks is part of COVERD, which runs the programs FLY AND DRY and TIDAL BABE, which address these needs in our population.

Our Tikkun Olam committee has ideas for the other months of the year, including climate change actions, but we'd love to have more people join us, and bring your ideas and passions!

SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVITIES

Our Torah tells us: "You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Ex.22:20)

Because of this obligation, we have remained in contact with the Haitian community in Springfield, Ohio, and will continue to accept donations of Kroger's Meijer's and gasoline gift cards.

Please check out the websites of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism or the Union for Reform Judaism for more information on these campaigns.

RAC | Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism https://rac.org

Union for Reform Judaism: URJ https://urj.org

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

BLUE BIN FOR FEBRUARY: SWEET CHEEKS DIAPER BANKS



we are selling flowers online to help with your spring planting! There is a huge selection that includes flowers, herbs, fruits, vegetables, gardening tools and more. They all come with a 100% replacement guarantee if they don't grow. You can order anytime from now until **May 15th** and everything will be shipped directly to you. Orders start shipping April 1st. If you have any questions please reach out to **valleytemplesisterhood@gmail.com**



ORDER AT VTSISTERHOOD.FPFUNDRAISING.COM



RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In honor of the Bar Mitzvah of Ethan Pinsky; from Beverly Saeks & Family
In honor of Bernice Pollack's new home;

from Beverly Saeks & Family

In memory of Robert L. Dunie; from Richard Dunie In appreciation of The Valley Temple; from Bernice Pollack In memory of Carol Magnus; from Mark & Rose Apseloff

In memory of Louis Kallek; from Lynn & Neil Kravitz

In memory of Davine Levy; from Jenny Broh

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Kathie & Ivan Tamarkin

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Jeff & Linda Lazar

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Ellen & Stewart Dunsker

In memory of Harold Wright; from Susan & Jon Hoffheimer

In memory of Christine Wright;

from Susan & Jon Hoffheimer

In memory of Janice Wright;

from Susan & John Hoffheimer

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Steve & Cheryl Hecht

In appreciation of Rabbi Kopnick;

from Dedra & Dan Perlmutter

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Helen & Ernie Waits In memory of Ida Tamarkin: from Ivan & Kathie Tamarkin

In memory of Donald Miller; from Mark & Robin Miller

RABBI / EDUCATOR DISCRETIONARY FUND

In memory of Stan Perlmutter; from Dan & Dedra Perlmutter

ALLEN & SELMA WIENER BERKMAN SOCIAL ACTION FUND

In honor of Saul Weinstein; from Pete Mauro

In memory of Stacy McAnulty;

from Mark Sass & Jan Rosenbaum Sass

In honor of Valley's High Holy Day Food Drive;

from Charlene & Jeff Gubitz

In memory of Eugene Lazar; from Linda & Jeff Lazar

In memory of Richard Solgan; from Linda & Jeff Lazar

In memory of Sam Darnell; from Helen & Elliot Spieler

In memory of Robert F. Stewart; from Buz & Barb Stewart

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Helen & John Habbert

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Gail Lewin

In memory of Laurel Fischbaum; from Gail Lewin

In memory of Anne Michelle Lovell;

from Jeff and Linda Lazar

SASS FAMILY MUSIC FUND

From Oriana Aragon

In memory of Laurel Fischbaum; from Jenny Broh

In memory of Laurel Fischbaum; from Sam & Laura Lobar

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Beth Selke

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Bette & Thomas Sherman In memory of Laurel Fischbaum; from Helen & Ernie Waits

In memory of Carol Magnus;

from Dave & Jean Simmons and Family

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Sam & Laura Lobar

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Peggy Barrett

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Louise Werbelow

In memory of Carol Magnus;

from Denny & Marcia Reynolds

In memory of Carol Magnus;

from The Cincinnati Sound Chorus In memory of Carol Magnus; from Jean Zerges

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Carol & Randy Crow

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Brenda Tewel

In memory of Sidney Berkowitz;

from Buz and Barb Stewart

In memory of Miriam Berkowitz; from Buz and Barb Stewart

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Millard & Helene Mack

In memory of John Siegel; from Mark & Ellen Kovacic

In memory of Carol Magnus; from John Rosenberg

L'CHAYIM CONGREGATIONAL CARE FUND

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Laura Fram In memory of Carol Magnus; from Donna Goodman

In honor of Linda & Bobby Denham's anniversary;

from Mark Sass & Jan Rosenbaum Sass

ROBERT & CHARLOTTE LANZIT ADULT EDUCATION FUND

In appreciation of The Valley Temple; from Tom Steger In memory of David Hochstein; from Cheryl & Steve Hecht In appreciation of The Valley Temple; from Tom Steger

LOUISE MARKS RELIGIOUS SCHOOL FUND

In honor of Olivia Spivak's Consecration;

from Dan & Dedra Perlmutter

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Talia Schwartz

IRVIN AND JANET MAKRAUER MEMORIAL RITUAL FUND

From Luca Hrafnasvinr

ESTELLE WIGSER FLOWER FUND

In memory of Davine Levy; from Sam & Laura Lobar

CAMP SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In honor of the marriage of David Tamarkin & Brian Ulicky;

from Marsha & Barry Pinsky

In memory of Annabel R. Levy; from Barb Katz

In memory of Leslie Levy; from Barb Katz

In memory of Laurel Fischbaum;

from Stuart & Rica Hodesh

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Melissa & Brad Singer

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Rica & Stuart Hodesh

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Sue Price

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Andrea & David Knarr

In memory of Carol Magnus; Andy & Sue Spohr

In memory of James Mulloy; from Kathie & Ivan Tamarkin

CAMP SCHOLARSHIP FUND CHANUKAH GIFT

In honor of Adam Fischer; from Bob & Jeannie Hiller

In honor of The Zoot Family;

from Melissa & Brad Singer

In honor of Valley Temple rabbis and staff;

from Sam & Laura Lobar

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Jenny Broh

In memory of Ronald Ran; from Sharon Ran

In memory of Nathan Goodman;

from Donna Goodman

From Kathie & Ivan Tamarkin

In honor of Rabbi Kopnick; from Jeff & Laurie Marks

From Linda & Jeff Lazar

From Ellen & Mark Kovacic From Neil Bortz

From Mark Sass & Jan Rosenbaum Sass

From Diane & Ken Mitman From Izar & Stacey Spivak

From Rabbi Gerry & Carenjean Walter

From Amy Paul & Jerry Newfarmer

BRYNA SCHWARTZ MEMORIAL ONEG & HOSPITALITY FUND

In memory of Stacy McAnulty;

from Mark Sass & Jan Rosenbaum Sass

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Ken & Diane Mitman In memory of Laurel Fischbaum; from Ken & Diane Mitman

In honor of Consecration; from Brian & Valerie Meeron

In appreciation of The Valley Temple;

from Marc & Julie Silverman

In memory of Janice Spieler; from Helen & Elliot Spieler

In memory of Sybil Kerman; from Helen & Elliot Spieler

BRYNA SCHWARTZ MEMORIAL ONEG & HOSPITALITY FUND CHANUKAH GIFT

In honor or Donna Goodman;

from Jody & Kent Finley

In memory of Adele Broh, Phyllis Boering & Todd Boering;

from Jenny Broh & Children

In memory of Barry & Arlene Goldhoff;

from Dedra & Dan Perlmutter

In honor of Adam Fischer; from Bon & Jeannie Hiller

From Herb DuCovna

From Mark Sass & Jan Rosenbaum Sass

From Diane & Ken Mitman

From Eli Shupe

From Amanda Stein and Tom Enneking

VALLEY TEMPLE GENERAL FUND

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Trebor Lefebvre,

Lori Norris, Jon Gruebele, & Beth Anne Demeter

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Gerry & Sally Korkin

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Jody & Kent Finley

In memory of Carol Magnus;

from Rabbi Gerry & Caren Walter

In memory of Maryanne Keen; from Andrea & David Knarr

RABBINIC LEADERSHIP FUND

In memory of Carol Magnus; from Neil Berman & Susan Marmo

THANK YOU FOR SPONSORING AN ONEG SHABBAT

Families of Consecrants

Steve & Nicole Deutsch in memory of his mother, Lore Deutsch.

NOW GIVING IS EVEN EASIER
Go to ValleyTemple.com and click on "Giving"

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Bill & Betsy Cusack	02/06/1988
Rick & Karen Michelman	02/18/1996
Ashlee Justice Crowell & Kevin Crowell	02/22
Aubrey & Arlene Herman	02/20/1972
Chuck & Ricklie Vordenberge	02/25/1984
Aron & Kara Schneider	02/26/2000

MAZAL TOV

Marc & Kim Deitsch on the birth of their daughter Layla Jane. Proud grandparents Marcia and Mark Chetwood.

Matthew Moler and Emily Bishop-Moler on their recent marriage.

MISHEIBERACH

Bernice Blatt Michael Gelfand Ron Kull Pam Levinson Jan Rosenbaum Sass Sharon Feldstein Ken Mitman



145 springfield pike wyoming, oh 45215

Sandford R. Kopnick, Rabbi
Austin Zoot, Rabbi/Educator
Wendy Walsh, Temple Administrator
Solomon T. Greenberg, Rabbi Emeritus
Neil Berman, President
Robyn McCarrick & Elizabeth Woosley,
Co-Presidents, Women of Reform Judaism
Steve Deutsch & Scott Steinberg,
Co-Presidents, Men's Club

513-761-3555

WEBSITE: www.valleytemple.com E-MAIL: wendy@valleytemple.com NON PROFIT ORG. U.S. POSTAGE PAID CINCINNATI, OHIO PERMIT NO. 2333

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



JOIN US ON
March 1 at 6:30 p.m.
Tickets are \$54 / person.

This includes a dinner and dessert, a silent auction, a split the pot, art trivia and fun participating in a Bob Ross style painting project (google him if you are too young to remember!) You will be receiving an invitation and rsvp card in the mail shortly. Feel free to bring your friends!