

April 2025  
Nisan - Iyyar 5785



the  
valley  
temple



PASSOVER BEGINS APRIL 12  
SEE BACK PAGE FOR SEDER DETAILS

## RELIGIOUS SERVICES

**FRIDAY, APRIL 4, 7:30 P.M.**  
Shabbat Service with Dan Nichols

**SATURDAY, APRIL 5**  
9:30 a.m. Torah Study  
10:30 Shabbat Service with Dan Nichols  
Torah Portion – *Vayikra*, Leviticus 1:1-5:26

**FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 7:30 P.M.**  
Family Shabbat Service

**SATURDAY, APRIL 12**  
9:30 a.m. – Torah Study  
10:30 a.m. – Shabbat Service  
Torah Portion – *Tzav*, Leviticus 6:1-8:36

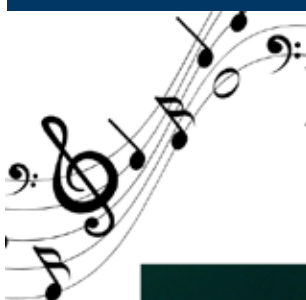
**SUNDAY, APRIL 13, 10:30 a.m.**  
Passover Festival Morning Service

**FRIDAY, APRIL 18, 7:30 P.M.**  
Shabbat Service

**SATURDAY, APRIL 19**  
9:30 a.m. - Torah Study  
10:30 a.m. – Ending Festival Service  
with *Yizkor* prayers  
Torah Portion – *Yom Sh'vi-i shel Pesach*,  
Exodus 14:30-15:21

**FRIDAY, APRIL 25, 7:30 P.M.**  
Shabbat Service

**SATURDAY, APRIL 26**  
9:30 a.m. – Torah Study  
10:30 a.m. – Shabbat Service  
Torah Portion – *Sh'mini*,  
Leviticus 9:1-11:47



## DAN NICHOLS AT VALLEY TEMPLE



**FRIDAY, APRIL 4**

SHABBAT SERVICES 7:30 P.M.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 5**

SHABBAT SERVICES 10:30 A.M.

&

EVENING COFFEE HOUSE 7:30 P.M.

*Please bring a nut-free dessert to share*  
ADULTS ONLY

**SUNDAY, APRIL 6**

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL CONCERT 11:00 A.M.

the  
valley  
temple  
145 springfield pike  
wyoming, oh 45215



*From the Rabbi*  
**Sandford R. Kopnick**

### THE STORY OF PASSOVER TODAY

There are so many ways that our Pesach story is relevant today. The idea that we were oppressed, enslaved, and abused and now free should resonate. The times we Jews have faced oppression are so numerous, and it seems that we cannot find a 100-year period that even our “safe havens” have not found remarkably difficult challenges.

The inquisition, the ghettoization, the Shoah (Holocaust), the quota system, restricted neighborhoods, restricted professions, Jewish doctors not allowed to practice in hospitals, anti-Israel protests, marches, and rants which have anti-semitic overtones, official anti-Jewish rhetoric from other religious leaders, and so much more. The current world-climate about Israel only adds to the list.

And this year, so many of our younger folks (and a few of the elders, too) are angry or confused about the situation between Israel and Gaza.

So many of us are thinking about the phrase “next year in Jerusalem,” and how to say it in a way that makes sense. Here’s my two cents:

Passover is our chance to reclaim the ideal of freedom. During this holiday, we are expected to appreciate the freedom we have, and acknowledge the need for others to be free. We can take this holiday to be grateful that we are not slaves in the land of Egypt, and pray that all who are oppressed will find their way to freedom. That is one way to understand, “next year in Jerusalem.”

I am not happy about the displacement of the inhabitants of Gaza. I am also not happy about the Hamas leadership that took hostages, allowed so many of their brethren to be killed rather than attempt to resolve the conflicts. I am not suggesting that the Gazans got what was coming to them—but neither am I willing to call Israelis oppressors. Rather, I pray that both sides will find a hopeful refrain—that has the bondage of this situation end with hope, faith, opportunity for freedom, and mutual respect for those who actually wish to have peace.

So my heart may be heavier this Passover, but my sense of hope for the future will be renewed some because we will recount the tale of our journey from oppression to freedom—even while looking at the world’s dysfunction and saying—Dayeinu—enough!

**Have a meaningful Passover.**

Sandford R. Kopnick, Rabbi

### VALLEY TEMPLE TEENS AT THE RELIGIOUS ACTION CENTER IN WASHINGTON, D.C.



Valley Temple high school students Henry Bernay, Eli Pinsky, Sadie Munitz, Lily Plum Gartenlaub and Sarah Moeller, accompanied by Rabbi Kopnick, visited Washington, D.C. in February to lobby their Senators and Congresspeople about topics that are important to the them and the Reform Movement.



## Rabbi/Educator's Message Austin Zoot

There was a phrase that was thrown around a lot when I was a kid growing up in Reform Jewish space. We were frequently described as the “lowest common denominator,” the idea that because Reform Judaism was welcoming and inclusive of those from a wide swath of backgrounds, we were in some way the least objectionable and least impactful of the movements. This was for topics like Hebrew use in services, where we wanted to make sure the “lowest common denominator” could still understand the service, or when evaluating the Jewishness of someone whose parents were of inter-religious backgrounds.

As a counter-reaction, I noticed that any time Jews came together from across the religious spectrum, there was an aim for the most stringent observance of the law, in order to prevent offense from those with more rigid relationship to Jewish life. Meals served were to meet the strictest expectations of kashrui, often despite the bureaucratic challenges that provided. Female clergy from progressive movements were sidelined in order to ensure the more Orthodox practitioners weren't confronted with anything that made them uncomfortable. The values of more liberal Jewish communities were expected to be superseded, as if the reason for our flexibility was an unwillingness or disinterest in practice, rather than a devotion to a different ethic.

This has resulted in the modern attitude that sees different programs, organizations, and publications identifying themselves with the things they DON'T believe. One stark example: a billboard funded by the organization Jew Belong reads, “So you eat bacon. God has other things to worry about.” Now, at face value, I understand the idea that historically, a great many Jews who do not keep kosher have felt shunned or condescended for their personal choices. It makes a lot of sense to try to welcome those Jews back into the fold by telling them that they are at liberty to decide how they live out their Jewish values in their own daily lives. But I struggle with the idea that kashrui is something to scoff at or disregard. Keeping kosher is one of the ways (of the MANY ways) that Jews have welcomed intention, sanctity, and purpose into our daily lives. To disengage from kashrui is perfectly acceptable. To disregard it is to change the very fabric of how our people have made choices about our practices for centuries.

We have work to do in bridging the gap between the warmth and inclusion that are foundational to making sure we are accessible to all without crossing the line toward throwing out the baby with the bath water. Judaism is a faith based on a communal set of moral guidelines, and the debate of them and engagement with them is essential to getting the full value out of the experience. If someone chooses to find beauty and intention in our faith without Kashrui (or any other element you want to insert in that space), then that is perfectly fine, and they

deserve a space in our home. Yet, we cannot dismiss caring about some of the important details of Jewish historical practice without risking the very foundations of our peoplehood.

The work of being a Reform Jew, then, isn't to disregard that which doesn't work for us and to define ourselves by the lowest form we can practice. Instead, it is to critically assess every part of what it has historically meant to be a Jew and to curate the experience that feels most authentic, meaningful, and profound. We do this best in a community that shares our essential pillars, like respect for other people's rights to choose differently than we do. Because we might come to very different answers based on our findings, but getting to ask the question with other people who find the pursuit worthwhile is the best prize of all.

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.*

## MISHEIBERACH

Bernice Blatt  
Michael Gelfand  
Ron Kull  
Pam Levinson  
Jan Rosenbaum Sass  
Sharon Feldstein  
Ken Mitman  
Jenny Broh  
Laura Beasley

## OUR SYMPATHY

Beth Schwartz (Gene Smiley) on the death of her mother, Ida Schwartz.





## President's Message Neil Berman

Hi all.

This newsletter should have reached your mailbox before Passover, and I wish everyone a meaningful holiday. For those not fans of matzah, it is only a week, and the bakeries will still be running when it is over! And, for those not a fan of Ohio Winters, Spring has arrived, and we can all be grateful.

April should be a busy month at the Valley Temple. Besides the second night Seder, religious school, and other activities, the Board will be moving toward the finish line on the consideration of Rabbi Zoot to become our Associate/Successor Rabbi. Ultimately, if that change is approved, it would mean that Rabbi Zoot would become Senior Rabbi upon Rabbi Kopnick's retirement. We have received many helpful comments and the Board is grateful for everyone's input as we look ahead to a final decision on this important transition.

In addition, we are working through a hiring process for an Administrator. During this transition period, Amanda has kept the office running at a high efficiency as our Acting Administrator. We have also have greatly benefitted by volunteers during this time.

Also, this is my last promotion in the newsletter for the April 26th fundraiser, *A Night of Art*. We are planning on a fun and unique evening. I hope you can make it!

Soon, you will receive a notice for our annual meeting. Please try to attend to be updated on all the changes at Valley Temple, a brief review of our finances, and other important issues.

Best,

Neil Berman,  
President

**Thank you to Sweet Butter  
Bakery for their donation of  
Purim hamantaschen  
in memory of Wendy Walsh.**



valley temple  
**SISTERHOOD**

## MEETINGS & PROGRAMS

Join sisterhood today! Please send your 2024 – 2025 dues right now at <https://valleytemple.com/sisterhood/>.

March is the month we nominate next year's officers. If you want to get involved, please call either President!!

### MONTH

April  
May

### MEETING DATE

April 6th  
May 4th (Religious School Picnic)

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](https://bit.ly/GeneralMeetingsVTS)

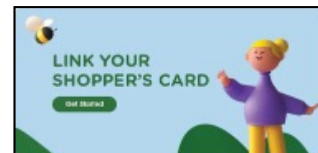
## Upcoming exciting activities:

- New slate of officers for the 2025/2026 year was presented at the March meeting and will be voted on at the April Meeting.
- MAH JONG Party open to everyone and has been moved to June 22
- Rummage Sale – July 2025 – Please start to save large furniture items. We need many donations to help make this a success. If you have any items now you want to get rid of, call us and we can get it.
- We're hosting a Plant Sale for all Temple members. Please consider going to the website and buying some of these beautiful flowers: [vtsisterhood.fpfundraising.com](https://vtsisterhood.fpfundraising.com) (see ad on p. 7)

Co-Presidents:

Robyn McCarrick ([mccarrick626@yahoo.com](mailto:mccarrick626@yahoo.com)) and  
Elizabeth Woosley ([efwooz@gmail.com](mailto:efwooz@gmail.com))

## KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS POINTS

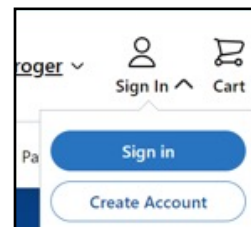


PLEASE ALLOCATE your Kroger community rewards to Valley Temple Sisterhood (you still get all of your same personal rewards – they just allocate a donation to us based on your spending).

How do you do that?  
Simply follow this link

<https://www.kroger.com/community/community-rewards>

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





## BLUE BIN DONATIONS

For the month of April, we will be supporting the Transgender Health Center at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. This clinic, started in 2007, provides a team of compassionate specialists for assessment, management and treatment of patients up to age 25 who identify as transgender or gender nonconforming. Per their website, *"Transgender is an umbrella term for people who experience their gender differently from their sex assigned at birth (usually male or female). These individuals experience a consistent and persistent discomfort with gender identity, which may cause extreme distress. Gender identity is one's psychological sense of being male, female, some of both or neither."*

Science teaches us that it's not a fact that all humans come in only two varieties: XX for female and XY for male. It's beyond the scope of this note, but we know that up to the 7th week of pregnancy, the gonad remains undifferentiated, possessing the potential to develop into either testes or ovaries, and many hormonal, genetic and environmental factors can influence this differentiation. Sound confusing? Not believable? Just ask our Jewish sages. The Talmud contains not less than eight gender designations in our sacred texts.

Our Blue Bin donations to support the clinic include personal care items for patients in all stages of transition:

- shaving cream (no razors)
- shampoo (for all hair types)
- deodorant
- toothbrush
- toothpaste
- mouthwash
- bars of soap
- face wash
- lotion
- conditioner
- floss
- q-tips
- tampons
- pads
- chapstick

In addition, if you would like to contribute money for the purchase of gender-affirming garments such as BINDERS you may send money to the Valley Temple Social Action fund, and we will purchase a variety of sizes and types.

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. Money can also be sent to the Temple's Social Action Fund, to be allocated for this effort.

We work closely with the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC) nationally, and in Ohio (RAC-OH) throughout the year, to coordinate advocacy activities and education related to public policies that have been identified by the Union of Reform Judaism (URJ) and local/ state congregations.

**THE RAC WEBSITE REMINDS US:** "As Jews, we believe that all people are made in the image of God, and each of us is holy and sacred. As Reform Jews, we believe that caring for the most marginalized members of our communities is part of tikkun olam, repairing the world."

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](mailto:lazarjl1@fuse.net)  
(513) 260-1026

Helen Waits  
[bindywaits@gmail.com](mailto:bindywaits@gmail.com)  
(513) 310-7633



# Sustaining the Generations

We gratefully acknowledge  
the following contributions:

## RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In appreciation of Rabbi Kopnick; *from Christine Riley*  
In memory of Wendy Walsh; *from Esther Grubbs*

## RABBI/EDUCATOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In memory of Arthur Hoffheimer, Sr.;  
*from Craig & Debby Hoffheimer*  
In memory of Wendy Walsh; *from Jeff & Linda Lazar*  
In appreciation of The Valley Temple; *from Tyler Friedman*  
& *Corinne Wiesner-Friedman*

## FRANCIE BROWN MEMORIAL OFFICE FUND

In memory of Wendy Walsh; *from Alan & Margie Schneider*  
In memory of Wendy Walsh; *from Fred & Anne Straus*  
In memory of Wendy Walsh; *from Cincinnati Sound Chorus*  
In memory of Wendy Walsh; *from Jody & Kent Finley*  
In memory of Wendy Walsh; *from Ginny & Chuck Myer*  
In memory of Wendy Walsh; *from Jenny Broh*  
In memory of Wendy Walsh; *from Helen & Ernie Waits*  
In memory of Wendy Walsh; *from Symie & Jay Menitove*  
In memory of Wendy Walsh; *from Neil Berman*  
& *Susan Marmo*  
In memory of Wendy Walsh; *from Mark & Ellen Kovacic*  
In memory of Wendy Walsh; *from Shelia DeSantis*  
In memory of Wendy Walsh;  
*from Craig & Debby Hoffheimer*  
In memory of Wendy Walsh; *from Randy Solomon*  
In memory of Wendy Walsh; *from Barb Katz*

## ALLEN & SELMA WIENER BERKMAN SOCIAL ACTION FUND

In memory of Jonathan Marks; *from Sam & Laura Lobar*  
In memory of Jonathan Marks; *from Jeff & Linda Lazar*  
In memory of Ida Schwartz; *from Jeff & Linda Lazar*  
In memory of Toby Cohen; *from Jeff & Linda Lazar*  
In memory of Debbie Solgan; *from Jeff & Linda Lazar*

## L'CHAYIM CONGREGATIONAL CARE FUND

In memory of Abe Wolpo; *from Craig & Debby Hoffheimer*  
In memory of Frances Wolpo;  
*from Craig & Debby Hoffheimer*

## JANE MUNICK GARDEN FUND

In memory of Peggy Barrett; *from Jody & Kent Finley*  
In memory of Peggy Barrett; *from Jeff & Linda Lazar*

## CAMP SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In memory of Carol Magnus;  
*from Craig & Debby Hoffheimer*  
In memory of Ida Schwartz; *from Rachel Hodesh*  
In memory of Sophie Feldman; *from Helen & Elliot Spieler*

## BRYNA SCHWARTZ MEMORIAL ONEG & HOSPITALITY FUND

Wishing speedy recovery for Jenny Broh;  
*from Jeff & Linda Lazar*

## ROBERT & CHARLOTTE LANZIT ADULT EDUCATION FUND

*In appreciation of The Valley Temple; from Tom Steger*

**NOW GIVING IS EVEN EASIER**  
**Go to [ValleyTemple.com](http://ValleyTemple.com) and click on "Giving"**

**We will soon announce a special fund  
in memory of Wendy Walsh.**

## Translating Judges

### April 22 & 29

### 7:30 p.m.

**with Rabbinic intern Rocki Schy**

In this two-part adult education program, Rocki will share their thesis, which was written about the Book of Judges. We'll talk about translation, interpretation, and the challenges presented in this book!







**JOIN US ON  
APRIL 26  
at 6:30 p.m.**

**Tickets are  
\$54 / person.**

**RSVP BY  
APRIL 5TH!**

**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!**

*Sisterhood Flower Sale*

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](mailto:valleytemplesisterhood@gmail.com)

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ORDER AT [VTSISTERHOOD.FPFUNDRAISING.COM](http://VTSISTERHOOD.FPFUNDRAISING.COM)



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Amanda Rosenberg, Admin. Assistant  
Neil Berman, President  
Robyn McCarrick & Elizabeth Woosley,  
Co-Presidents, Women of Reform Judaism  
Steve Deutsch & Scott Steinberg,  
Co-Presidents, Men's Club  
Wendy Walsh, 1957 - 2025

513-761-3555

WEBSITE: [www.valleytemple.com](http://www.valleytemple.com)

E-MAIL: [admin@valleytemple.com](mailto:admin@valleytemple.com)

# CONGREGATIONAL PASSOVER SEDER

SUNDAY, APRIL 13 | 6:00 P.M.



Please return to The Valley Temple 145 Springfield Pike | Wyoming, OH 45215

**FIRM RSVP DEADLINE OF FRIDAY, APRIL 4**

Number of adults \_\_\_ @ \$36-50\* each for a total of \$\_\_\_

Number of children (12 & under) @ \$15 each for a total of \$\_\_\_

Number of children (age 3 & under) @ FREE if no meal ordered\_\_\_

We ask that you consider a suggested  
\$5.00/person additional donation to  
MAZON to feed the hungry.

**TOTAL ENCLOSED \$\_\_\_**

**INDICATE MEAL CHOICES BELOW:**

# CHICKEN Adult \_\_\_ Child \_\_\_

# BRISKET Adult \_\_\_ Child \_\_\_

# VEGETARIAN Adult \_\_\_ Child \_\_\_

**\*Please choose what you pay. If you need  
financial assistance, please call Rabbi  
Kopnick for a confidential conversation**

~Let all who are hungry come and eat... provided they have a reservation!~