



the
valley
temple

September 2025
Elul 5785 - Tishrei 5786

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 7:30 P.M.

Shabbat Service

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

9:30 a.m. – Torah Study

10:30 a.m. – Shabbat Service

Torah Portion – *Ki Teitzei*,

Deuteronomy 21:10-25:19

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 7:30 P.M.

Shabbat Family Service,

featuring the Friday Night Live Band

Prospective Member Open House at 7:00 p.m.,

followed by Shabbat service

featuring Friday Night Live

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

9:30 a.m. – Torah Study

9:45 a.m. – Tot Shabbat

10:30 a.m. – Shabbat Service

Torah Portion – *Ki Tavo*,

Deuteronomy 26:1-29:8

SELICHOT

8:00 p.m. – Adult Education Program

9:30 p.m. – Dessert Buffet

10:00 p.m. – *Selichot* Service

and Torah cover changing

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 7:30 P.M.

Shabbat Service

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

9:30 a.m. – Torah Study

10:30 a.m. – Shabbat Service

Torah Portion – *Nitzavim*,

Deuteronomy 29:9-30:20

EREV ROSH HASHANAH, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

6:00 p.m. – Musical Experience at
20th CENTURY THEATER IN OAKLEY
NO TICKET REQUIRED

8:00 p.m. *Mishkan HaNefesh* Service at
THE VALLEY TEMPLE, WITH LIGHT
RECEPTION TO FOLLOW

ROSH HASHANAH, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

9:00 a.m. – Family Service

10:15 a.m. – Tot Service

10:45 a.m. – *Mishkan HaNefesh* Service

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 7:30 P.M.

Shabbat Service

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

9:30 a.m. – Torah Study

10:30 a.m. – Shabbat Service

Torah Portion – *Vayeilech*, Deuteronomy 31:1-30

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

10:30 a.m. – Cemetery Service

United Jewish Cemetery

in Montgomery

7885 Ivygate Lane



L'shanah Torah!

5786



From the Rabbi Sandford R. Kopnick

JUDAISM EVOLVES AS WE DO

I've frequently lamented that *bar/bat/kabalat mitzvah* happens when our kids are around 13. While puberty heralds both physical adulthood and a pretty awkward time for a kid, it was the reason that historically, Jewish kids took on adult responsibility. When life expectancy was far less than today, this made more sense.

B'nai mitzvah was for Judaism what turning 18 or 21 is for the secular world—the age of legal adulthood. I hold no misconceptions that if we expect 18 or 21-year-olds to become *b'nai mitzvah*, we would likely have no *b'nai mitzvah* ceremonies or students. However, creating this lifecycle event at 13 can sometimes give the unintended message that kids have learned what they'll need to function fully as a Jewish adult. Yeah, right!

When trying to help our students make the commitment to continue their formal Jewish education through high school graduation (our time for confirmation), I ask them to consider what they've already learned and how they've valued it. Bible stories are frequently presented to young children without being given modern context. Most young kids are concrete learners. When entering high school, that black and white approach starts to see the gray area. And while things like Math and Science are more black and white than gray, Torah and the breadth of Jewish learning is more sustainable when we can revisit the black and white lessons with an awareness of the gray.

I frequently ask our kids to tell me how the world came to be. Some will tell the story of the "days of creation," and some will tell the story of Adam and Eve. Many will not realize that these two stories are separated

between chapters 1 and 2 in Genesis. Other students will tell me of the Big Bang or Theory of Evolution. Frequently, the scientific explanation nudges out the biblical narrative – and kids stop embracing Torah because it is seen to be "untrue."

Frankly, telling a second grader about evolution or big bang is not usually developmentally appropriate – but helping a student in 9th grade think about Genesis 1 and 2; why there may be two different stories, and how to reconcile big bang-- and going from chaos to order as the Torah says-- is far more age appropriate for high school.

Freezing Jewish learning in time is not helpful to our people. Lifelong learning allows for modern challenges to be confronted through our Jewish tradition. Making the leap of faith to believe in God is not too difficult – unless we spend a ton of time working to be sure God **doesn't** exist. That's why it's called a leap of faith. I love the discussions I get to have with our high school students – and with our adult learners. And while I love the *bar/bat/kabalat mitzvah* students, too – I struggle to be sure they understand that their service is important and worthy of celebration, but not an end. I hope you do, too.

L'shanah Tovah!

Sandford R. Kopnick, Rabbi



Join Rabbi Kopnick and others from Valley Temple **Thursday, October 30 at 10:30 a.m.** for an audio-led tour. You can save your spot and send \$26.50 for a discounted ticket to Valley Temple.

The largest collection of artifacts from Auschwitz outside Europe is coming to Cincinnati.

This exhibit highlights the profound humanity of those who survived, and those who perished, in one of the most infamous sites of the Holocaust. Featuring more than 500 artifacts from the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and more than 20 international museums, the exhibition traces the rise of Nazi ideology and the transformation of Auschwitz from an ordinary Polish town into a place where unimaginable atrocities and extraordinary human resilience intersected.



Rabbi/Educator's Message Austin Zoot

"But through repentance, prayer, and righteous giving, we can transcend the harshness of the decree."

These words from Un'taneh Tokef, a central aspect of our Yom Kippur liturgy, remind us that we are not passive victims of the judgements of our actions. We have agency, our tradition teaches us, to reframe how we interact with the world, and are given an opportunity to create a path forward that maintains the sacred covenant between our people and God.

This isn't something that happens overnight or just when the bill comes due. Judaism does not offer a kind of divine vending machine, releasing good "credits" when good deeds are inserted into the slot. Rather, we are obligated to take the time and spend the attention to establish what it means to repent, how we are going to engage in righteousness, and create an opportunity for meaningful prayer. In much the same way that you wouldn't run a marathon without training, stretching, and practice, so too can the Holidays only be most meaningful when we prepare ourselves for the spiritual work ahead.

That is why the month leading up to Rosh Hashanah is considered so sacred. The month is called Elul, which is an acronym for the phrase: Ani L'Dodi V'Dodi Li, "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine." This phrase, pulled from the Song of Songs, is often used in wedding ceremonies to commemorate love. But in this case, the love is not between spouses but between us and God. Elul is the time for us to practice our thoughtfulness, to get ourselves into spiritual shape for the holidays that are fast approaching. Some use this time to invest in

self-care and meditation. Others use it as a time for journaling, photography, and other mindfulness activities. But however one chooses to engage in the work of getting ready for Rosh Hashanah, the focus is clear: this is a practice that is meant to center around love and compassion, not shame and sorrow.

In our world, we so often prioritize distractions, sound-bites, and a flurry of activity. Sitting quietly with our thoughts and feelings can be incredibly jarring, especially considering the themes that are inherent to our holiday season. Thus, in order for us to truly get the most value out of our time in prayer together at the end of this month, how can each of us invest in a process for the preceding month to strengthen our muscles of reflection and thoughtfulness?

There are no "right" ways to practice spiritual presence. The only "wrong" way is to avoid the work altogether. So let's get ourselves ready for the work ahead. It can be a source of powerful community, love, and fulfillment, if only we give it the chance.

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.

Upcoming Religious School Dates

Sundays at 9:45 a.m.

September 7 @ 10 a.m. - All Family Kick Off!

September 14 - First Day!

October 5, October 12, October 19, October 26

Hebrew School - Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.

September 16, October 7, October 14, October 21, October 28

We are looking forward to a great year!



President's Message Neil Berman

As we look back on another year that has felt tumultuous in the wider world, I am reminded of how steady and uplifting our Valley Temple community has been. Here, we find strength in each other, in shared prayer, in learning, and in the everyday acts of kindness that bind us together.

With Rosh Hashanah approaching, we are offered a chance to begin again—individually and as a community. I encourage you to find ways to become more involved, whether through services, study, social action, or simply by being present with one another. While we cannot control what happens globally, we can continue to nurture our own sacred space, rooted in connection, tradition, and hope.

Thank you for being part of this community and for helping to make it a source of light in uncertain times. May this New Year bring you and your loved ones health, peace, and joy.

Best,

Neil Berman,
President



The Men's Club will be having their first meeting on Sunday, September 14th at 10 am. We will discuss ideas and plans for the 2025-2026 year. Look forward to seeing old faces and are always welcoming new members to the club!

MISHEIBERACH

Bernice Blatt
Michael Gelfand
Ron Kull
Pam Levinson
Jan Rosenbaum Sass

Sharon Feldstein
Ken Mitman
Jenny Broh
Laura Beasley

MAZAL TOV

Mazal Tov to Les & Carol Appel on the birth of their grandson, Elijah Appel



valley temple
SISTERHOOD

Our annual Dues mailing will happen after the High Holidays, but if you want to get ahead of the game – send your 2025-2026 dues right now at <https://valleytemple.com/sisterhood/>

MEETINGS & PROGRAMS

Join Sisterhood Today!

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
September	September 14th
October	October 12th
November	November 2nd
December	December 7th (Chanukah Exchange)
January	January 11th
February	February 1st
March	March 1st
April	April 12th
May	May 3th (Religious School Picnic)

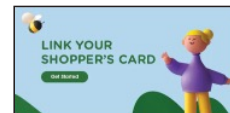
Some exciting things to look forward to:

- Opening of Sunday School Picnic
- Sisterhood Shabbat
- Sisterhood Brunch
- Rosh Hashanah Honey & Challah
- Mah Jong Party / Hanukkah Party
- HER Cincinnati Party
- Other events throughout the year.

If you have any questions, contact any of our officers for the 25-26 year.

- Co-Presidents: Elizabeth Woosley and Linda Lazar
- VP Programming: Stacey Spivak
- VP Membership: Sharon Kollasch
- Recording Secretary: Sue Mantel
- Co-Corresponding Secretary: Laura Beasley, Helen Waits
- Treasurer: Cindy Cronin
- Past President: Robyn McCarrick

KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS POINTS

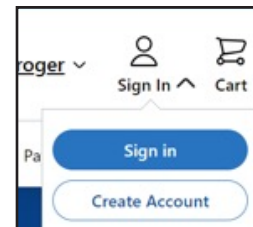


PLEASE ALLOCATE your Kroger community rewards to Valley Temple Sisterhood (you still get all of your same personal rewards – they just allocate a donation to us based on your spending).

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





Tikkun Olam

SEPTEMBER

BLUE BIN DONATIONS

Valley Temple members have been very generous in support of our monthly "Blue Bin" donations throughout the past year.

We will be having our annual High Holiday food drive for the Valley Interfaith Food and Clothing Center (VIFCC). Bags will be passed out at the Rosh Hashanah services (September 22-23) and returned with food items at Yom Kippur services (October 1-2).

Prior to the food drive, we will be collecting the following, much needed items for the VIFCC in the Blue Bin:

- Size 5/6 Diapers
- Baby Wipes
- Laundry Pods
- Menstrual Products - Pads

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 will be found in the monthly newsletters and weekly emails.

Our Tikkun Olam committee has ideas for the other months of the year, all of which contribute to the welfare of residents in our community who have become marginalized. The current situation is leaving more and more people in that category, and we must weigh which non-profits to support each month. We are currently working on our donation calendar for 2025-2026 and would love to have more people join us, sharing your ideas and passions!

For any donations throughout the year, if delivering to the temple is not convenient, you can send a check to the Valley Temple Social Action fund and we will make sure it goes to the designated agency, or order items and have them delivered to the temple.

***All the non-profits that we support throughout the year need volunteers. Several of our temple members are already doing this. If you have any extra time during the week, please check the websites of each of these agencies and see how you can help!

SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVITIES

We work closely throughout the year with the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC). RAC is the Social Action arm of the Union of Reform Judaism (URJ) and the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR). RAC works to educate, inspire, and mobilize around federal, state, provincial, and local legislation on more than 70 pressing socioeconomic issues, including gun violence prevention, immigration, reproductive rights, criminal justice reform, LGBTQ rights, and climate change. Ohio is one of 7 states, plus Washington DC, to have a RAC affiliate. For RAC-OH, the key issues we've mobilized around for the past year were reproductive rights and fair elections.

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." Current campaigns include "Advocating for Immigration Justice" and "Advocating for LGBTQ+ Rights". You'll also find Reform movement statements on Gaza and the West Bank in Israel.

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

IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO BE CONCERNED FOR THE LIFE TO COME. OUR IMMEDIATE CONCERN MUST BE WITH JUSTICE AND COMPASSION IN LIFE HERE AND NOW, WITH HUMAN DIGNITY, WELFARE AND SECURITY.

RABBI ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL





Sustaining the Generations

We gratefully acknowledge
the following contributions:

FRANCIE BROWN MEMORIAL OFFICE FUND

In memory of Wendy Walsh; *from Rabbi Jeremy Barras*
In memory of Wendy Walsh; *from Amanda Stein*
& *Tom Enneking*

BRYNA SCHWARTZ MEMORIAL ONEG & HOSPITALITY FUND

In memory of Diane Bongard; *from Ken & Diane Mitman*

VALLEY TEMPLE GENERAL FUND

From Stephanie Beck
In memory of Marsha Kuhr; *from Andrea & David Knarr*

CAMP SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In appreciation of Rabbi Kopnick; *from Michelle Zeigler*

ALLEN & SELMA WIENER BERKMAN SOCIAL ACTION FUND

From Nate & Kelli Gleiner
From Randy Solomon
From Jenny Broh
From Linda & Jeff Lazar

Thank you to Leticia Baltes & Family for sponsoring a recent Oneg Shabbat in honor of her son, Max Baltes becoming a Bar Mitzvah



**NOW GIVING IS
EVEN EASIER**



Go to ValleyTemple.com & click on "Giving"

Selichot

Saturday, September 13

Rosh Hashanah

Monday, September 22 & Tuesday, September 23



HIGH HOLY DAYS 5786

High Holy Day tickets will be mailed to
homes soon. If you need extra tickets or
have questions, call the office or email
Kelli at kelli@valleytemple.com

Yom Kippur

Wednesday, October 1 & Thursday, October 2

Sukkot: Monday, October 6 - Sunday, October 12

Simchat Torah: Monday, October 13

PLEASE JOIN US!

TOT SHABBAT



**SATURDAY,
SEPTEMBER 13
@ 9:45 A.M.**

**The next step of your
Jewish journey starts
here...**



**Religious School Kickoff
September 7th, 10am
at Valley Temple**

Learning for the whole family!



145 springfield pike
wyoming, oh 45215

Sandford R. Kopnick, Rabbi
Austin Zoot, Rabbi/Educator
Solomon T. Greenberg, Rabbi Emeritus
Kelli Gleiner, Administrator
Neil Berman, President
Linda Lazar & Elizabeth Woosley,
Co-Presidents, Women of Reform Judaism
Steve Deutsch & Scott Steinberg,
Co-Presidents, Men's Club
Wendy Walsh, 1950 - 2025

513-761-3555


WEBSITE: www.valleytemple.com

E-MAIL: kelli@valleytemple.com

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Prospective Member



OPEN
HOUSE

Friday, September 12
@ 7:00 p.m.

**Shabbat
Family Service**
featuring the
Friday Night Live Band
will follow the
open house at 7:30 p.m.