

Tu BiSh'vat  
February 1



February 2026  
Sh'vat - Adar 5786

## FEBRUARY RELIGIOUS SERVICES

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 7:30 p.m.**  
Shabbat Service with Torah Cover Dedication

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7**  
9:30 a.m. – Torah Study  
10:30 a.m. – Shabbat Service  
Torah Portion – *Yitro*, Exodus 18:1-20:23

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 7:30 p.m.**  
Family Shabbat Service

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14**  
9:30 a.m. – Torah Study  
10:30 a.m. – Shabbat Service  
Torah Portion – *Mishpatim*, Exodus 21:1-24:18

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 7:30 p.m.**  
Shabbat Service with Friday Night Live

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21**  
9:30 a.m. – Torah Study  
9:45 a.m. – Tot Service  
10:30 a.m. – Shabbat Service  
Torah Portion – *T'rumah*, Exodus 25:1-27:19

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 7:30 p.m.**  
Shabbat Service

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28**  
9:30 a.m. – Torah Study  
10:30 a.m. – Shabbat Service  
Torah Portion – *T'zaveh*, Exodus 27:20-30:10

# PURIM

*March 2*



• *Carnival at 5:00 p.m.*

*Dinner at 6:00 p.m. (as part of Carnival)*

○ *Service/Schpiel at 7:00 p.m.*

★ *Hamentashen to follow!*



## SPRING FUNDRAISER!

**SAVE THE DATE: SATURDAY MAY 2, 2026**

**KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR MORE INFORMATION!**

**THE NIGHT WILL INCLUDE FUN, FOOD, AND FRIENDS!**

if you are interested in sponsorships, please contact Beth Schwartz.





## From the Rabbi Sandford R. Kopnick

### WHY TORAH COVERS?

There is a phrase from our tradition: “Without sustenance, there is no Torah.” (Avot 3:14). During the Shabbat Service on Friday, February 6, we will dedicate three new Torah Covers which will adorn our Ark for at least a generation. Each cover will have the inscription “in loving memory of Wendy Walsh” inside—touching the scrolls. Not only did we need new Torah covers, but it was a natural way to honor Wendy’s memory and her 44 years of service to our congregation.

I was surprised that there was criticism about this choice—but after some reflection, it made sense. Wendy’s mission in our congregation was to be sure that Sol and I (and Austin) had all that we needed to deliver Torah to the congregation. Her work in the “sustenance” parts of Valley (ie billing, building and grounds, administration, etc.) facilitated Torah (ie. services, religious school, adult ed, celebrations, holiday observances, etc.). Without sustenance, there is no Torah.

Frankly, I love the fact that Wendy’s memory will be triggered whenever someone eats a piece of carrot cake, thinks about a scrapbook, sees her remarkable family, and whenever they send something back in a restaurant that didn’t get an order right. But I believe that Wendy’s work in our congregation facilitated many successful initiatives for learning, innovation in worship, adult learning opportunities, trips to Israel, holiday commemorations, and creativity that could have never happened absent her orchestrating the logistics. Without her behind-the-scenes support, the programs would have been lesser. And to memorialize that herculean and consistent effort with a special space in our sanctuary—well it seems to be the highest honor. In addition, we needed these new covers—and she would have loved the practicality that comes with the honor.

I am positive that Wendy would have been both surprised and very touched by the way we are choosing to memorialize her presence with us. Your ongoing connection to Valley, your care for Kelli and Amanda in the office during these months of mourning and transition, and your participation in creating this tribute are all additional ways we are making the memory of the righteous to be for a blessing. I look forward to seeing you on February 6 as we remember this wonderful friend and facilitator of Torah.

Sandford R. Kopnick, Rabbi

## CONSECRATION 2025-2026



Rabbi Kopnick and Rabbi Zoot join Temple President Neil Berman and Religious School Chair Stacy Spivak with the consecrants for the 2025-2026 school year.

## Second Night Seder



## Thursday, April 2

Watch your mail for more information.



## Rabbi/Educator's Message Austin Zoot

Last month, a congregant approached me after services. They mentioned that, during my sermons, I frequently make references to books I'm reading and resources that I consult when I am preparing. They asked if I might share a reading list of my recommendations for works that would benefit someone who wants to learn more. So that's what we're going to do here! These are five suggestions for books that might interest you if you want to deepen your Jewish knowledge or engage in intriguing Jewish conversation. These are just five of my favorites; if you enjoy this and want more suggestions, I'm always happy to talk books!

### 1. *God Is Here: Reimagining the Divine*

by Rabbi Toba Spitzer

Talking about God makes a lot of people uncomfortable. Which is why Rabbi Spitzer's book is so powerful; it teaches people how to talk about God as well as how to take ownership of our own imaginations about God. Deeply rooted in Jewish texts, Spitzer gives a whole new access to theology that is a powerful tool for Jews finding their way.

### 2. *The Second Mountain: The Quest for a Moral Life*

by David Brooks

From school to career to retirement, there is a very clearly laid out path for what a person "should" do. But David Brooks examines what happens when we make huge accomplishments, only to find we are missing the fulfillment we were promised along the way. The Second Mountain is a poignant reminder of what it means to prioritize the right parts of life, and how we can all strive for something larger than personal achievement.

### 3. *As a Jew: Reclaiming Our Story From Those Who Blame, Shame, and Try To Erase Us*

by Sarah Hurwitz

As American Jews, many of us know all too well what it feels like to assess our tradition through the lens of a

Christian-dominant culture. Former speechwriter Sarah Hurwitz dives into the ways that Jews have tried to find a home in larger society, and the ways in which we have struggled to be accepted. This book is so interesting, we are doing a book club conversation about it at Valley in March!

### 4. *Morality: Restoring the Common Good in Divided Times*

by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

The last book he wrote before his death, *Morality* is Rabbi Jonathan Sacks' attempt to make sense of the reality of the world of the early 2020s, and to try to implement some of the ethical underpinnings of Judaism to fight back. Prioritizing the "we" culture over the "I," Sacks tries to speak to the complex realities that got us here, and what we can do to overcome our situation.

### 5. *Have A Little Faith*

by Mitch Albom

Part biography of two faith leaders, part spiritual awakening, *Have A Little Faith* is a beautiful examination of the role religion can play in our lives, and the vital importance of clergy who can show us the way. I have read this book every year since I was a teenager, and I cry every time. It is an ever-present reminder of how incredible it is to meet your heroes, especially when they are exactly as admirable as we imagined.

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.

February 1, 8, & 22; March 1, 8, & 29

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

February 3, 10, 17, & 24; March 10

Welcome back from break!





## UPCOMING MEETINGS & PROGRAMS

The 2025-2026 year for sisterhood is shaping up to be a great year. Mark your calendar so that you do not miss any of our outstanding 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](http://bit.ly/GeneralMeetingsVTS)

MONTH	MEETING DATE
February	February 1st - HER Cincinnati
March	March 1st - Member Brunch
April	April 12th
May	May 3th (Religious School Picnic)

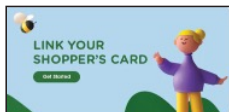
### Some exciting things to look forward to:

- Sisterhood Shabbat – April 24
- Mah Jong Party – Spring/Summer
- Woman of Rockdale Sisterhood Seder – March 29
- Other events throughout the year including fundraising opportunities.
- We are Hosting a Plant sale for everyone. Please go to the website and buy some of these beautiful flowers: <http://vtsisterhood.fpfundraising.com/>

**Join Sisterhood Today!**

To find out more, or pay your 2025-2026 Sisterhood dues, visit [valleytemple.com/sisterhood/](http://valleytemple.com/sisterhood/)

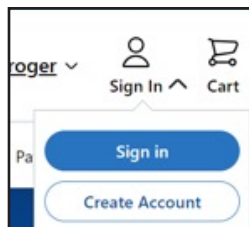
## KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS POINTS



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



## MAZAL TOV

Mazal Tov to Annie & Logan Zoot  
on the birth of their son, Levi Ari Zoot

Abby & Nick Koucky and Sue Bortz on the  
birth of their daughter and granddaughter, Laila

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to the Temple the following new members:

Elizabeth Rancourt  
Ken Setser & Patrick Gautraud  
Gary & Tara Roth and Family  
Zach & Lauren Cane and Family  
Kim Blatt

## MISHEIBERACH

We pray for healing for:

Bernice Blatt  
Michael Gelfand  
Pam Levinson  
Jan Rosenbaum Sass  
Louis Beck  
Richard Kuhr

## OUR SYMPATHY

Mary Stagaman on the death  
of her husband, Ron Kull

Jeff (Laurie) Marks on the death  
of his mother, Phyllis Marks Rotman

## Torah Study



Every Shabbat  
Morning  
at 9:30 a.m.

## Tot Shabbat



Saturday, February 21  
at 9:45 a.m.





### BRING DONATIONS TO THE **BLUE BIN** IN THE TEMPLE LOBBY

As we have in the past several years, we will be supporting Sweet Cheeks Diaper Bank for the months of February and March.



Sweet Cheeks is part of “COVERD” of Greater Cincinnati, and of the National Diaper Bank Network. According to the Network: “1 in 2 U.S. families with young children cannot afford enough diapers to keep their infant or child clean, dry, and healthy. These babies are more vulnerable to painful rashes and urinary tract infections and have more trips to the doctor. 1 in 4 parents miss work or school because they can’t afford the diapers required to leave their baby in Childcare. Clean diapers are a basic need of every baby and toddler.”

In 2024, Sweet Cheeks worked with 44 partner agencies to distribute over 2.5 million diapers to over 4 thousand children per month. Help us keep the next generation dry, clean, and healthy by donating diapers and wipes to our Blue Bin!

Because they purchase a large percentage of the diapers they distribute, another way to contribute is to send money to the Valley Temple Social Action Fund, or by using the QR code to donate directly to Sweet Cheeks.



### Queen City Kitchen:

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:

February 22, 2026  
May 3, 2026  
June 28, 2026  
August 23, 2026

### 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:

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(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 memory of Sam Darnell; *from Helen & Elliot Spieler*  
 In memory of Sidney Berkowitz; *from Buz & Barbara Stewart*  
 In memory of Jerry Beasley; *from Rick & Laura Beasley*  
 In memory of Donald Miller; *from Mark & Robin Miller*  
 In appreciation of The Valley Temple;  
*from Jay & Cherie Brandt*  
 In memory of Fan Colish; *from Lynn & Neil Kravitz*  
 In memory of William Bachmann;  
*from Ken & Diane Mitman*  
 In memory of Sue Trenkamp; *from George Trenkamp*  
 In memory of Laurie Ruskin; *from George Trenkamp*

### RABBI/EDUCATOR DISCRETIONARY FUND

In honor of the birth of Levi Ari Zoot;  
*from Sam & Laura Lobar*  
 In memory of Miriam Berkowitz; *from Buz & Barbara Stewart*  
 In memory of Harold, Christine, & Janice Wright;  
*from Jon & Susan Hoffheimer*

### ALLEN & SELMA WIENER BERKMAN SOCIAL ACTION FUND

In memory of Eugene Lazar; *from Jeff & Linda Lazar*  
 In memory of Richard Solgan; *from Jeff & Linda Lazar*  
 In memory of Don Pollack; *from Bernice Pollack*

### ALLEN & SELMA WIENER BERKMAN SOCIAL ACTION FUND CHANUKAH GIFT

In memory of Joseph von Birgelen; *from Ken & Diane Mitman*  
*From Mark Sass & Jan Rosenbaum Sass*  
*From Amanda Stein & Tom Enneking*  
*From Laura & Sam Lobar*  
*From Jeff & Linda Lazar*  
*From Mark & Ellen Kovacic*  
*From Herb DuCovna*  
*From Buz & Barb Stewart*

### CAMP SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In memory of Meyer & Helen Silver; *from Sue Price & Family*  
 In memory of Janice Spieler; *from Helen & Elliot Spieler*

### CAMP SCHOLARSHIP FUND CHANUKAH GIFT

In memory of Adele Broh & Phyllis Boering;  
*from Jenny Broh*  
*From Kathleen & Ivan Tamarkin*  
*From Mark Sass & Jan Rosenbaum Sass*  
*From Amanda Stein & Tom Enneking*  
*From Helen & Elliot Spieler*  
*From Donna Goodman*  
*From Rabbi Gerry & Carenjean Walter*  
*From Jude & Louis Beck*  
*From Wendy Wasserman*  
*From Chuck Frank & Jan Goldstein*  
*From Jim & Pam Levinson*  
*From Matthew Moler*

### L'CHAYIM CONGREGATIONAL CARE FUND

In memory of Jerry Beasley; *from Dan & Dedra Perlmutter*  
 In memory of Jerry Beasley; *from Jenny Broh*  
 In memory of David Hochstein; *from Cheryl & Steve Hecht*

### ROBERT & CHARLOTTE LANZIT ADULT EDUCATION FUND

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

### LOUISE MARKS RELIGIOUS SCHOOL FUND

In memory of Sybil Kerman; *from Helen & Elliot Spieler*

### SASS FAMILY MUSIC FUND

In memory of Robert F. Stewart; *from Buz & Barb Stewart*  
 In memory of John Siegel; *from Ellen & Mark Kovacic*

### VALLEY TEMPLE GENERAL FUND

In appreciation of The Valley Temple;  
*from Michael & Janelle Gelfand*  
 In memory of JoAnne Steinberg; *from Larry Steinberg*

### VALLEY TEMPLE GENERAL FUND CHANUKAH GIFT

In appreciation of The Valley Temple; *from Ned Lanzit*  
 In memory of Sue Trenkamp & Laurie Ruskin;  
*from George Trenkamp*  
 In memory of Abram Spivak; *from Izar & Stacey Spivak*  
 In memory of Jay Price; *from Izar & Stacey Spivak*  
*From Andrea & David Knarr*  
*From Jody & Kent Finley*  
*From Cheryl & Steven Hecht*

### FRANCIE BROWN MEMORIAL OFFICE FUND

In memory of John & Ruth Terhar; *from Jody & Kent Finley*

### BUILDING FUND

In memory of Ron Kull; *from Ivan & Kathie Tamarkin*

### ART FUND

In memory of Ida Tamarkin; *from Ivan & Kathie Tamarkin*

*Thank you to Andrea Beck and Fred Gartenlaub  
 for sponsoring a recent Oneg Shabbat  
 in memory of Gerald Taft*

*Thank you to Marcia & Mark Chetwood,  
 Marc & Kimmy Deitsch, and Michael & Jessica Deitsch  
 for sponsoring a recent Oneg Shabbat  
 in memory of James Weiss*

*Thank you to Sue & Mike Mantel and Family for  
 sponsoring a recent Oneg Shabbat  
 in memory of Robert Powell.*

*Thank you to Steve & Nicole Deutsch for sponsoring a  
 recent Oneg Shabbat in memory of Lore Deutsch*

*Thank you to Laura & Sam Lobar, Diane & Ken Mitman,  
 and Jenny Broh for sponsoring the Oneg Shabbat  
 in memory of Wendy Walsh*



**NOW GIVING IS  
EVEN EASIER**



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# Adult Education



## The Strange Adventures of Mordechai and Esther:

*How the Rabbis Created An Even Stranger Story Than the Megillah*

with Dr. Jason Kalman, Professor at HUC-JIR

**Thursdays, February 5, 12, 26**

**at 7:00 p.m. at the Temple**

Dr. Kalman's sessions are offered due to the blessing of the Lanzit Adult Education Endowment and Fund.

## THE KOPNICK/ZOOT PERSPECTIVE ON: *AS A JEW* BY SARAH HURWITZ

**Tuesdays, March 3 & 10 at 7:30 p.m. at the Temple**

*Copies of the Book are available to borrow from Rabbi Kopnick*

Join us as we delve into this contemporary challenge to relevant Jewish observance in a modern world from this former political speech writer and active Jewish American. OK to come if you haven't read the book--but so much better if you have!







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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

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

*Please join us*

AS WE MARK THE FIRST YARHZEIT OF  
WENDY WALSH, Z"l  
WITH A

# TORAH COVER DEDICATION

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6 AT 7:30 P.M.



The new Torah covers will be dedicated as a gift from the congregation in Wendy's memory.  
Please join us in welcoming Wendy's daughter Emily and her family for this special event.

ONEG SHABBAT WILL FOLLOW SERVICE • NO RSVP REQUIRED