

Purim  
March 2



the  
valley  
temple

a refreshingly positive jewish experience



March 2026  
Adar - Nisan 5786

## FEBRUARY RELIGIOUS SERVICES

### MONDAY MARCH 2

7:00 p.m. *Purim Schpiel* & *Megillah* Reading

### FRIDAY, MARCH 6, 7:30 p.m.

Shabbat Service

### SATURDAY, MARCH 7

9:30 a.m. – Torah Study

10:30 a.m. – Shabbat Service

Torah Portion – *Ki Tisa*, Exodus 30:11-34:35

### FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 7:30 p.m.

Family Shabbat Service

### SATURDAY, MARCH 14

9:30 a.m. – Torah Study

10:30 a.m. – Shabbat Service

Torah Portion – *Vayak'heil-P'kudei*,  
Exodus 35:1-40:38

### FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 7:30 p.m.

Shabbat Service

### SATURDAY, MARCH 21

9:30 a.m. – Torah Study

10:30 a.m. – Shabbat Service

Torah Portion – *Vayikra*, Leviticus 1:1-5:26

### FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 7:30 p.m.

Shabbat Service with Friday Night Live

### SATURDAY, MARCH 28

9:30 a.m. – Torah Study

10:30 a.m. – Shabbat Service

Torah Portion – *Tzav*, Leviticus 6:1-8:36

# PURIM



## March 2



5:30 - 7:00 - Carnival & Raffle

- 6:00 - Dinner opens for all... ○

Pizza, chips, drink, hamantashen ★

○ Proceeds go to the Youth Group

**OPEN TO ALL!**

7:00 - Service/Schpiel  
Hamantashen to follow!



## Congregational Second Night Passover Seder

Thursday, April 2 at 6:00 p.m.

See p. 6 for the reservation form!



## From the Rabbi Sandford R. Kopnick

Rabbi David Locketz served as our intern in 2002. Since he was ordained, he has served the Bet Shalom congregation outside of Minneapolis, MN. He has been the senior rabbi for 10 years now, and has been at the forefront of one of our most important commandments: “Remember the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.”

I recently had a wonderful conversation with someone who tends to vote conservatively. That same week, I had a conversation with a leader in the Jewish community who was wondering whether the issue of immigration and the tactics the US government is employing is something with which we Jews should be concerned. The answer is: Yes—of course!

We can argue about whether the US should be in the current situation regarding immigration after generations of inactivity toward actually reforming our immigration system. But human beings—many of whom are here legally, are being profiled, and treated unjustly. The tactics of masked immigration officials not producing a warrant or any evidence to the apprehension of many who look like they are immigrants is not the America we should want to live in.

In a few weeks we will, again, read the Haggadah. When we do, we will be challenged to retell the story of our people’s escape and later our arrival at Sinai. *In the 20th Century*, so many Jews who read the *Haggadah* didn’t need the phrase, “next year in Jerusalem,” because the US was even better. *Now*, I’m hearing about folks making plans for the day they feel they might need to move from the U.S. due to history repeating itself.

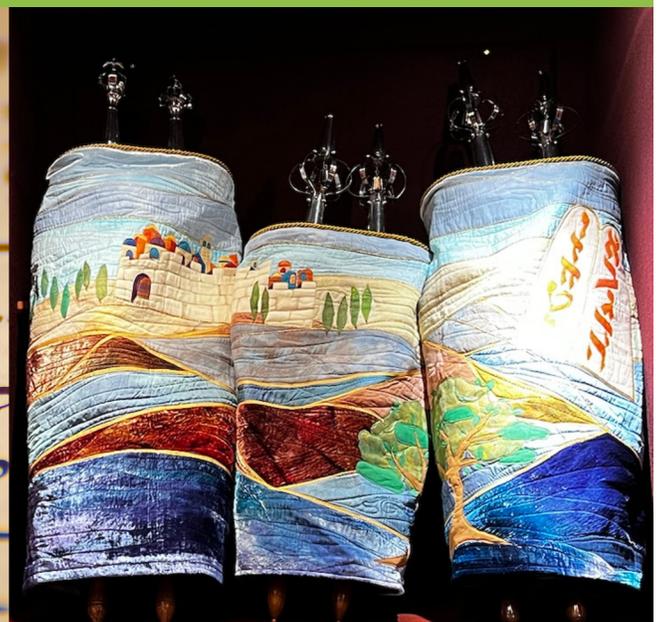
My friend Rabbi Locketz is delivering food weekly to immigrants who are afraid to leave their houses due to the government’s threat of instant deportation without due process. He witnesses first hand the fear of families who might be separated and kids who are too worried to go to school. He is teaching Torah as he facilitates Temple members’ learning about how to bear witness and help the immigrant community—the overwhelming number of which are law-abiding and productive.

So, what do we do? It is time to be Jews. No matter what party we choose to embrace, we can disagree with a governmental approach that is illegal and anti-American in its approach to this issue. Go to the rallies. Get trained to bear witness for the Haitians in Springfield or any other neighbors about whom we should worry. And most of all—speak up, for we sure could have used our neighbor’s voices to cry out loudly and convincingly on our behalf throughout our history.

May this year’s Passover Seder inspire us to acts of compassion and justice as we seek to define what “next year in Jerusalem” can mean in this current American moment.

Sandford R. Kopnick, Rabbi

*Our beautiful  
new Torah covers,  
donated in memory  
of Wendy Walsh.*



## Rabbi/Educator's Message Austin Zoot



When Howard Shultz originally imagined his dream for the future of Starbucks, it involved personalized mugs for regulars at each location. The on-again-off-again CEO of the largest name in coffee saw his chain as a way to establish a “third space,” an alternative to work and home for convening, conversing, and community building. To accomplish this, Shultz hoped that each customer who called their local Starbucks home would have their own mug and could refill it to their heart's content, embodying the idea that building impactful space requires the trappings of home.

Of course, decades later, that idea seems a far cry from the reality of today. In fact, the popular cultural notion of Starbucks is the misspelling of names on cups, fundamentally undermining the original intent of the franchise. As the organization has grown more corporate, they have lost the central idea that made them unique in the first place. But the original message remains just as important today as it ever was: people need a place they can feel comfortable and at ease, where they can join with others and share the trappings of togetherness.

The original third space in a person's life was intended to be their religious congregation. This was a space dedicated to their well-being, to meet up with other like-minded individuals for important conversations or idle chats. But, as other businesses have tried to take up more and more of the cultural attention share, religious institutions have wound up competing with everyone else for time, money, and engagement. To make matters worse, it isn't exactly like the average American has ample time to bum around and drink coffee at their leisure. Instead, we have created a society of constant bustle, of running from one obligation to the next. Our congregation knows all-too-well that we are just one of a variety of options. How, then, do we give people the experience of feelings like Valley is their home when we

are all constantly on the run?

You might notice the next time you're here that we have set up a new coffee bar and drink station in the lobby. We have found that, whether it be parents sitting during Hebrew School or people waiting to have a meeting, there are many opportunities when offering a cup of coffee or a soda can make a difference in the kind of hospitality that comes with the place. No, we don't think this is going to revolutionize the way our congregation operates; but we do know the power of living out our values in every aspect of the “business.” We want to make sure that our lobby feels warm, welcoming, and like the kind of place where you want to sit and have a beverage and a chat. So, we are building it, with the hopes that it will cause you to come (or, more realistically, to stay).

This isn't going to be the best cup of coffee you've ever had; after all, most people don't find Starbucks to be the best quality coffee they've ever tasted. Rather, the point of the operation is to show that we are constantly looking for ways to allow our physical infrastructure to live out the values with which we want to fill our space. And in this case, there is no better way to enjoy the depths of what Judaism can be in our lives than by offering you a drink, engaging you in conversation, and continuing to try to make this place feel like your home away from home. I sure hope you'll come on down.

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.  
March 1, 8, & 29; April 12, 19, & 26; May 3

Hebrew School - Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.  
March 10; April 14, 21, & 28

**We are having such a great year!**



**President's Message**  
**Neil Berman**

Dear Friends,

As we move into March, I am grateful to see the end of the recent stretch of very cold weather and the return of longer, brighter days. I am writing this in mid-February, and I have to say the melting snow is nice to see, and the 30s seem tropical! The change in season is a welcome reminder that renewal is always possible. My wife, Susan, believes Spring begins March 1st, and although it doesn't always work out, I am fully supporting her optimistic outlook.

With Passover approaching, we begin preparing for one of the most meaningful observances in our Jewish year. Passover calls on us to remember the story of our liberation, to reflect on the meaning of freedom in our own lives, and to gather with family and community around the *Seder* table. We hope to see as many of you as possible at the Congregational *Seder*. The story of the Exodus retains its resonance in today's troubled world.

In a small congregation like ours, these shared moments matter deeply. Whether you join us for services, Torah study, community events, Hebrew classes, or adult education, your presence strengthens this synagogue.

Thank you to everyone who leads, volunteers, and participates. I look forward to being together as we prepare for Passover and continue building a strong and welcoming community.

Best,

Neil Berman,  
President

**MAZAL TOV**

Mazal Tov to Steve and Marnie Hayutin on the marriage of their daughter, Nina to Tony

**MISHEIBERACH**

We pray for healing for:  
Bernice Blatt  
Michael Gelfand  
Pam Levinson  
Jan Rosenbaum Sass  
Louis Beck  
Sharon Feldstein  
Robert Pollack



**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
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
- Rummage Sale June 14. Look in the Bulletin for Drop off dates beginning May 31.
- 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/)

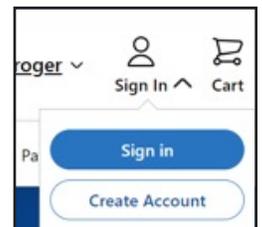
**KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS POINTS**



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



**OUR SYMPATHY**

To the family of Richard Kuhr

To Robyn (Tim) McCarrick on the death of her mother and Eli Shupe on the death of his partner, Toby Ruben



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

## MARCH

### 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:

- 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:

Linda Lazar  
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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 appreciation of Rabbi Kopnick; *from Steve & Marnie Hayutin*  
In honor of Louis Beck's birthday; *from Ken & Diane Mitman*  
In memory of Richard Khur  
In memory of Richard Kuhr; *from The Kuhr Family*

### ALLEN & SELMA WIENER BERKMAN SOCIAL ACTION FUND

In memory of Anne Michelle Lovell; *from Linda & Jeff Lazar*  
In memory of Elveda Pitts; *from Gail Lewin*  
In memory of Toby Cohen; *from Linda & Jeff Lazar*

### CAMP SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In memory of Kathleen Mulloy; *from Kathie & Ivan Tamarkin*  
A Chanukah Gift; *from Craig & Debby Hoffheimer*

### VALLEY TEMPLE GENERAL FUND

In honor of Dolph Berman; *from Murray H. Newman*  
In appreciation of The Valley Temple;  
*from Julie & Marc Silverman*

### BRYNA SCHWARTZ MEMORIAL ONEG & HOSPITALITY FUND

In memory of Dr. Stuart Silverman;  
*from Nancy & Dolph Berman*  
In memory of Richard Kuhr; *from Nancy & Dolph Berman*  
In memory of Ellie Shott; *from Nancy & Dolph Berman*  
In memory of Betty DuCovna; *from Herb DuCovna*

### ROBERT & CHARLOTTE LANZIT ADULT EDUCATION FUND

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



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

*We are grateful to Sue & Andy Spohr and family for subsidizing this year's Seder.*

# Congregational Passover Second Night Seder

## Thursday, April 2 at 6:00 p.m.



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

## Firm deadline of March 26

(price drop from last year)

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

**NEW** Families \$30 (2 adults & children under 18):

# of Adults \_\_\_\_\_ Children (4-12) \_\_\_\_\_ Teens \_\_\_\_\_ 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!"**



## THE VALLEY TEMPLE ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

# MAY 2, 2026

**Hamantaschen or Babka?** Or maybe both? You'll have the opportunity to sample lots of scrumptious Jewish desserts when you join us at Valley Temple's Great Jewish Bake Off on May 2, 2026.

In addition to showcasing your baking talents by entering the congregational Bake Off Competition, you'll also have a chance to try out your Rice Krispie Treats construction skills, and enjoy an evening of fun, conversation and just being together.

So make sure to save the evening of May 2 in your calendars, but before tickets go on sale, we really need your help and support to make this event an epic success. We want to surpass our fundraising goal of \$15,000 and your contribution is not only an investment in the Valley Temple, but 10% of our fundraising efforts will also support our 2026 Tikkun Olam Partner, Project Connect, which removes educational barriers for Cincinnati Public Schools' families experiencing homelessness.

### **There are two ways you can participate:**

#### **1. Become a Sponsor:**

Take a look at the description of the sponsorship levels and the perks you'll receive at the various levels. No matter what level you choose, you'll receive tickets to the event and lots of recognition and appreciation. Plus, you'll feel great knowing that your contribution will support two great causes! Go to this link to register as a sponsor:  
<https://donorbox.org/the-great-jewish-cook-off-sponsorship>

#### **2. Donate Auction Items:**

We're looking for new items that can be auctioned off to the highest bidder. We would love your donations of Cincinnati Team Sports or Cultural Arts tickets. Or consider building a basket of goodies such as wine, beauty or pet care products. Perhaps you have a time-share or vacation home that you could donate for a weekend get-away? Please email [ValleyTempleFundraiser26@gmail.com](mailto:ValleyTempleFundraiser26@gmail.com) or simply drop off your items at the Temple office with your name and contact information attached.

More information will be forthcoming about how to enter your treats in the Bake Off and buy general admission tickets. Right now, we're asking you to become an early supporter and make sure our 2026 event is a smashing success! Sign up today!!

Questions? Contact [ValleyTempleFundraiser26@gmail.com](mailto:ValleyTempleFundraiser26@gmail.com)

## **Thank you for your support!**



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

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

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## Two Rabbis, Three Opinions: a Kopnick/Zoot Book Discussion



Who gets to define what Judaism is?

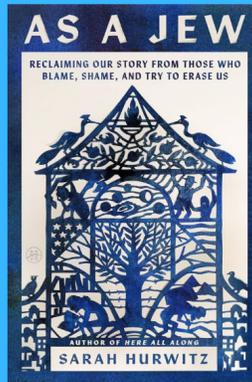
Where do anti-Semitic tropes come from?

How do we explain Judaism to non-Jews?

What is "Cultural Judaism?"

Is it possible to be an anti-Zionist Jew?

What is a "cool Jew"? Do I want to be one?



Explore these questions and more!  
Tuesdays, March 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:30

You do NOT need to have read the book...but copies are available at Temple to borrow!