



December 2021
Tidings



Message from the Clergy

When the world shut down in March 2020 due to Covid, we launched our Daily Virtual Morning Minyan to give our members an opportunity to come together each day for prayer and connection.

Over the last 20 months, the minyan has grown into a warm, embracing, deeply invested community that attracts participants from across the country. It is my honor to share this beautiful testimonial about the impact of the daily morning minyan by Michael

Laufer, one of our regular participants from New York City. Michael lost both of his parents during Covid. He found us online and has been saying Kaddish for them in our minyan for many months now. He offered this reflection during the minyan recently on the occasion of completing one year of saying Kaddish for his father Beryl Laufer. It is a stirring tribute to his parents and to the impact our minyan has made on his life. Michael has truly found a spiritual home in our online minyan community, as have many others both locally and beyond Omaha. We can all be proud that Temple Israel is touching lives so powerfully through prayer, even and especially in the new virtual world.

The minyan meets Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. on Zoom. I hope you will give it a try!

In friendship and gratitude,
Rabbi Stoller

Reflection on Morning Minyan *by Michael Laufer*

October 25, 2021

This morning, on the occasion of completing my one-year mourning period after the death of my father, I appreciate this opportunity to share a personal reflection.

A little over a year ago, on September 7, 2020, my parents celebrated their 68th wedding anniversary. A significant and hugely important accomplishment and yet, because of the Covid restrictions, there was no party and there were no family visits. They had a quiet dinner in their assisted living apartment in New Orleans together. They were isolated – but they had each other.

At age 66, I was fortunate. Both of my parents were still alive – my father was 92 and my mother was 90. I had not been able to see them in person at all in 2020, and even though my brother lived nearby, he was not allowed to visit either. This was difficult for us but far more difficult for them.

Four weeks later, my father suffered a stroke from which he never recovered and passed away three weeks after. Fortunately, I was able to travel to New Orleans and spend much of those three weeks with him. Covid restrictions made the funeral and shivah... different. The virtual embrace of family, friends, and community was helpful, but as those of you who have experienced a loss in the last 20 months know, it was not exactly what was needed and not exactly what our souls yearn for at times of loss.

In normal times, there are probably five or six morning minyans in my neighborhood in New York that I could choose from to say Kaddish. But when I got home last November, there was nothing in person. And so, I began a search of online minyanim. I traveled around the country virtually – Rhode Island, midtown Manhattan, Florida, even Toronto. It did not take me long to find comfort, community, and familiarity here -

in Omaha – and this is where I have started most days of the last 12 months!

As you know, the morning service provides us an opportunity to begin our day with expressions of gratitude, the offerings of praise, and opportunities for reflection. Gratitude – praise – reflection. Things that many of us do not experience on a regular basis. And those of us who do engage in this regular ritual, whatever brought us here, soon find great meaning in this service. We find a connection to our tradition – the discipline of our ritual – and as importantly, we are comforted by the security of a familiar community.

There is an old joke about why Stein and Katz attend services so regularly. The story goes that Stein goes to talk to Gd, and Katz goes to talk to Stein.

An Orthodox rabbi, whose writings I came across a few years ago, offered an additional perspective.

He wrote that while many Jews say that they attend services to talk to Gd, he said that if he is being really honest, he attends services to talk to himself.

And so, as I say the daily kaddish for my father for the final time, I too offer gratitude and praise. Gratitude for the existence of this very special group. Praise for the community that has been formed – even on Zoom. And I offer gratitude and praise also to Rabbi Stoller who created and has served as the real spiritual leader of this group – whose warmth of personality and welcoming presence is so meaningful for us all. I express my gratitude for the opportunity to spend this jarring and difficult year with all of you. This has been a most special time each day for me to worship, but most importantly, to talk to myself. And I have needed it. Thanks to you all.

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Message from the President

As Chanukah approaches, I am reflecting on how much has changed since last year. While we have still face a long journey ahead, I am reassured that this year's celebration will be uplifting for us all. For my family, this year will mean a return to having friends together for latkes and mark a new experience of lighting the menorah with a child away at college. Wow!



After the high holidays, I spoke with Jewish leaders from around the country who were impressed with how our clergy and staff blended the experiences of being remote with the experiences we had together in the sanctuary. Temple Israel is seen nationally as an innovator in this new landscape. We are known as a congregation that recognizes we have indeed crossed into something new as a community. Thank you Rabbi Stoller, Rabbi Berezin, Cantor Alexander and the entire staff for your dedication to our congregation.

Moving forward into this new, multi-modal era takes flexibility and resources. I am delighted to share with you that Temple Israel's patron and sponsor program has returned to its pre-pandemic levels, and the gifts that so many of you have made are supporting the technology upgrades, programming initiatives, and personal outreach it takes for our congregation to thrive. If you are not yet a patron or sponsor, there is still time to be a part of these programs. Please contact the Temple Israel office to learn more about joining this effort.

I have always thought of Jewish life as a balancing act between what we do in our homes and what we do as a community; these balances have changed dramatically in the past 18 months. As we all find our own ways to live with uncertainty, I encourage you to engage in ways that add some heft to the communal side of that balance. Whether through Shabbat services, programs with our Tri-Faith partners, or a variety of social activities, our Reform Jewish community in Omaha thrives when each of us stretches our curiosity and shows courage to strengthen our connections.

This year I am entering the Chanukah season with a blend of excitement, patience and gratitude. Thank you all for being in this together and for nurturing this community that has sustained us for 150 years and counting.

Happy Chanukah!
Dan Gilbert

A handwritten signature in grey ink that reads "Dan Gilbert". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



Friday Shabbat Styles at Temple Israel

Shabbat B'yachad is Temple Israel's signature Friday evening service featuring a tapestry of contemporary and familiar Shabbat melodies.

Classic Shabbat is an elegant worship service featuring classical cantorial music in a traditional Reform style, familiar English prayers, and a Torah reading.

Shabbat Shirah is a soulful musical service "in-the-round" with energetic and participatory singing in the style of modern Reform-Israeli, and post-denominational minyanim. Shabbat Shirah literally means "Shabbat of Singing." As its name suggests, this service is all about singing – and we want to hear your voice! Some of the melodies will be familiar and others will be new, but do not fear: all the words will be provided in Hebrew, transliteration and English so you can participate easily. And even if you find the words difficult at first, we want to invite you to hum along or sing "yai-lai-lai" or just close your eyes and take it all in. Our wonderful musicians Tom Friedman (guitar), and Darci Gamertl (oboe) or David Downing (cello) and drums (TBD) will be accompanying us in leading the service.

See the schedule on page 12.

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Youth Learning Programs

*Cooking and planting,
singing and dancing,
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learning and advancing.*

We've got it all in YLP this year as we reopened our in-person experiences with brand new ways to engage in Jewish education. Students and parents are able to participate like never before. Our new nature, cooking, and dance spaces have especially been a huge hit! Tots through teens and beyond all have a place at Temple Israel to learn, grow, connect, and discover.





Calendar

Class Dates

December 1, 5, 8, 12, 15, 19, 22

YLP Chanukah Celebration

December 5

Upcoming Tot Eevnts

Dec 5 – Temple Tots

Dec 17 – Tot Shabbat

Family Learning Days

December 12 – 4th Grade

December 19 – 6th Grade

Temple Israel FAMILY CAMP!

For Families with Tots through 2nd Graders
(Older siblings welcome!)

April 1-3, 2022
Calvin Crest Camp, Fremont, NE



Youth at Temple Israel

OTYG has had three events so far this year including Kickoff at Zorinsky Lake, a trip to Vala's Pumpkin Patch and a lock-in at Temple Israel. We're excited to have an event on **Saturday, December 4 from 4-7:30 p.m.** where our teens will come together for a white elephant gift exchange for Chanukah and give back to the community by creating care bags for people without homes. Dinner will be served, and we're asking folks to bring a gift with a value of no more than \$15. Stay tuned for our 2nd semester calendar of events!



Our 7th and 8th grade classes have enjoyed a lock-in this year. More programming is to come soon for those grades to come together and enjoy time outside of classes. Plus be on the lookout for youth group-style programs for grades 4-6!



Our teen high school education program, Keshet, is focusing on *v'havatah l'reicha kamocho*, love your neighbor as yourself. Each week we meet to have conversations about various neighborhoods in Omaha, how Jews have affected Omaha's development and learn about injustices that face our community and what Jewish texts say about them. There are also volunteer projects that this group will be doing.

We're thrilled to share that we have over 20 teen interns working at Temple Israel on Sunday mornings! The interns make the learning experience so much more meaningful for our younger kids by being great role models and leaders. Some of our teens are working in classrooms, but this year we've opened new opportunities including office work, logistics and set-up, audiovisual responsibilities and a social media internship. We look forward to continuing to grow this program for years to come!



Check out our Camp Resources Page!

Our camp page is now live at templeisraelomaha.com/camp! On this page, you can find scholarship resources offered by Temple Israel and other Omaha Jewish organizations towards camp and learn more about some of our camp partners! Please contact Youth Engagement Coordinator Ben Cohen, 402-905-0254, to answer any questions about Jewish Summer Camp or resources from Temple Israel.

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Chanukah at Temple Israel

Chanukah Service *(IP) (Z)*

Friday, December 3, 5:45-7 p.m.

Join us for a special, family-friendly Chanukah service! We invite you to bring your favorite chanukiyot with candles as we light up the Simon Community Court at 5:45 p.m. Ben Mazur will lead us in some Chanukah songs as we move into the Schragger Sanctuary for our annual Chanukah service. Our new 6-foot Chanukiah, built by Chris Blake, will also be on display.

Chanukah Dinner *(IP)*

Friday, December 3, 7-9 p.m.

Our Chanukah menu includes brisket or salmon, vegetables, latkes with applesauce and sour cream, and sufganiyot. There will be a special craft area and dreidel games with Dani Howell during dinner to help occupy our younger congregants. Adults are \$18, children are \$9 and there is no charge for ages five and under. RSVP online by Friday, November 26. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Mindi Marburg.

Chanukah Winter Gear Drive (IP)

Friday, December 3, 5:30-8 p.m.

Sunday, December 5, 9:30 a.m. - Noon

After such a successful drive last year, we are bringing back our Chanukah Winter Gear Drive this year as a way to "spread the light" to others in our community. We're partnering with Together to assist in their outreach to families and those who are homeless during the winter. To that end, we would like to ask people to bring the following new or gently-used items as gifts to donate: winter coats, hats, gloves, scarves, hand/foot warmers, sleeping bags and tents. We have two opportunities for you to donate. You can drop off items on December 3 during our Chanukah service and dinner and on December 5 during Youth Learning Programs. We are especially grateful to OTYG Social Action Vice President Hannah Dysico for leading this effort. If you have any questions or would like to help with the drive, please contact Ben Cohen.



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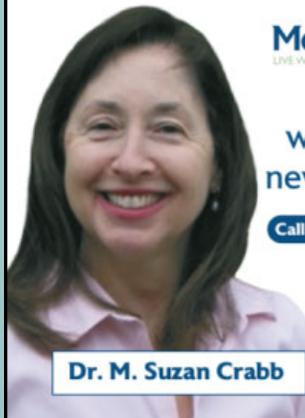
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Calendar

Shabbat Service Schedule (IP) (Z)

Fridays, 6 p.m.

November 26 | Shabbat B'yachad

Antisemitism: Ancient Plague, Modern Threat

December 3 | Shabbat B'yachad

Antisemitism: Ancient Plague, Modern Threat

December 10 | Shabbat Shirah

December 17 | Classic Shabbat

Sages of the Talmud: Personalities and Legacies

December 24 | Shabbat B'yachad

Sages of the Talmud: Personalities and Legacies

Torah Study (IP) (Z)

Saturdays, 9:15 a.m.

Jewish Law & the Quest for Meaning (IP) (Z)

Mondays, 11 a.m.

Rabbi Stoller, who is pursuing a doctorate in Jewish law, will guide us in exploring the wisdom of our Jewish sages and discover insights that will change our perspective on modern living, deepen our relationship with God, and transform our way of being in the world.

Community Beit Midrash (IP) (Z)

Wednesdays, 7 p.m., JCC

December 1 | Be Fruitful & Multiply (Pru u'rvu); But What if We Can't?

December 8 | Anti-Semitism: Historically & Today

December 15 | Greatest Hits of Pirkei Avot

Temple Israel Blood Drive (IP)

Sunday, December 5, 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Temple TED Talk (IP)

Sunday, December 5, 11 a.m.

Rosh Chodesh: Love Yourself Empowerment Event (IP)

Hosted by Annette van de Kamp and Courtney Saylan

Tuesday, December 7, 7:15-8:30 p.m.

We can only take care of others if we take care of ourselves. That means treating our minds, bodies and spirits well and reminding ourselves we deserve to be kind to us. Annie Nogg, a life coach based in San Francisco with deep Omaha roots, will facilitate an exercise with participants involving the creating of a "Vision Board." Where do you see yourself in the coming months? Afterwards, Katherine Finnegan will teach some yoga techniques after explaining the importance of taking care of your body as part of loving yourself. Healthy snacks will be provided. There is no cost, but RSVPs are required.

2nd Sunday Breakfast Service at Stephen Center (IP)

Sunday, December 12, 9 a.m. - Noon

Thursday Morning Class with Rabbi Azriel (IP) (Z)

The Books We Did Not Learn About in Religious School

Thursday, December 16, 10 a.m.

Join us at Temple Israel or via Zoom as Rabbi Azriel will lead us in discussion about

Temple Israel Book Club (IP) (Z)

"Poverty and Profit in an American City" by Matthew Desmond

Sunday, December 19, 10:30 a.m.

Brad Sperling Memorial Fund for Education of Young Children

Vicki Perlmeter in Honor of Marlen Frost's
Retirement

Camp Scholarship Fund

Sissy Silber in Memory of Eliot Brown and
Rose Gross Katelman

Cantor Alexander Discretionary Fund

Shelly and Arnie Ban in Memory of Hubert Sommer

Cantor Wendy Shermet Music Fund

Maxine and Jack Noodell in Memory of
Betty Abramson

Caring Fund

Sheila Tomps in Memory of Bernie Ostravich

Cemetery Improvement Fund

Lorrie and Gary Katelman in Memory of
Stanley Katelman
Barbara and Alan Levin in Honor of the
Temple Israel Cemetery

Education Fund

Charney Rosinsky in Memory of Leo Taub

General Donation Fund

Gale and Ken Spatz in Honor of Temple Israel
Kevee Kirshenbaum in Memory of
Myrna Kirshenbaum
Brandy Bailey-King in Memory of Bernie Ostravich

Joanie and Marty Lehr Presidential Discretionary Fund

Tammy and Carl Birnberg in Honor of the Birth of
Joanie Lehr's Great Granddaughter

Rabbi Azriel Fund for Jewish Professionals

Miles Remer in memory of Richard Self

Rabbi Azriel Youth Engagement Fund

Rosalie Greenspan in Memory of
Maurice Greenspan
Stephanie Edheimer in Honor of
Mark Goldstrom's Birthday

Rabbi Stoller Discretionary Fund

Ellen and Bob Gordman in Memory of
Brandon Thomas
Judy Kaiman in Memory of Herbert Kaiman
Susie and Jim Silverman in Memory of
Diane Malashock's Brother
Maxine and Jack Noodell and Susan and James
Polack in Memory of Bernie Ostravich

Social Justice Fund

Lourdes Secola in Appreciation of Morning Minyan,
In Honor of Dr. Jim Coll, Dr. Kevin Donly, Dr
Mario Guelmann, Dr. Reyes and Dr. Herber
Simmons Jr.'s various awards and In Memory of
Dr. Paul Fine, Suzy Rubin and Toby Fellman

Sol and Jeanette Krizelman Social Justice Fund

Sheldon and Trish Krizelman in Memory of
Sol Krizelman

Sylvia and Jerry Kaiman Adult Education Fund

Sheila Tomps in Honor of Jerry Kaiman's Birthday

Temple Israel Youth Group Fund

Kathy Malashock in Memory of Barbara and
Stanley Malashock

Marriage נישואין

Mazel tov on the marriage of...

Elizabeth Snyder and Jeremiah Jepsen. Parents are Mike and Jane Snyder and Larry Jepsen.

Ashley Nelson and Ben Noodell. Parents are Tony and Linda Nelson and Ann and David Noodell.

Jennifer Hoberman and Jeff Prochazka. Parents are Cookie and Jerry Hoberman and Doug and Shirley Prochazka.

In Sympathy נחמה

The Congregation records with sorrow the deaths of our members' relatives...

Earnest Lee Birt, preceded in death by his father Robert Lee Birt. He is survived by his two children, Logan Miller and Aidan Miller, wife Holly Birt and his four stepchildren, Aaron Baker, Cameron Baker, Saraya Baker and Tyson Baker, his mother Josephine Birt, and his sister Robin Lynn Birt.

Dr. Ann Cohen, preceded in death by her husband Dr. Ira Cohen. She is survived by her four children and her grandchild Ben Cohen and seven other grandchildren.

Lois Endelman, preceded in death by her husband Robert Endelman and her son C. Randy Endelman. She is survived by her children Sue (Paul) Blackman and Michael (Krista) Endelman, her daughter in law Penny Endelman, and her eight grandchildren.

Lee E. Fredricks, preceded in death by his father, Terry Fredricks; his grandparents, David Fredricks, Dr. Harry Henderson, Jr., Irma Henderson; and his aunt Betsy Levine. He is survived by his mother, Sally Fredricks; brother, Jeff (Jill) Fredricks; sister, Claire (Rob) Osborne; grandmother, Arlene Fredricks; nieces and nephews, Henry Fredricks, Harrison Fredricks, Evelyn Fredricks, Theodore Fredricks, Ella Osborne, William Osborne; many aunts, uncles, and cousins; and his beloved dog, Dakota.

Marilyn Manvitz, preceded in death by her husband, Justin (Judd) Manvitz, and her parents, William and Betty Lerner. Marilyn is survived by her children, Todd (Wendy) Manvitz, Lisa (Kyle) Hutchings; grandchildren, Alissa (Matt) Arbeiter, Diana (Jason) Williams, and David Manvitz. Whittany, Steffany, Bradley, and Victoria Hutchings; great grandchildren, Addison and Jackson Williams; and her loving sister, Gloria Sax.

Leon (Lee) Martin, preceded in death by his parents, Miriam and Sol Martin, and his brother Howard Martin. He is survived by his sisters-in-law Sandi Martin and Inky Martin, several nieces and nephews, and many friends, including his special friend and neighbor Gail Christiansen.

Stanley Irving Mazur, survived by his wife Marcia, three siblings, four children, ten grandchildren, and four great grandchildren.

Franki (Gross) McIntyre, preceded in death by her mother, Lucille Katelman, her stepfather Abe Katelman, her father Gordon Gross, and her stepmother Evelyn Gross. She is survived by her husband Ron McIntyre, son and daughter-in-law David and Sue Ruttenberg; daughter and son-in-law Sherryl and Jack Anderson; stepson Greg (Susan) McIntyre and stepdaughter Tammy Armstrong; grandchildren: Brittany Reenen, Stevie Cruz, James Ameet, Taylor Anderson, Maddy Anderson, Katie Ruttenberg Kroll, Lauren Ruttenberg, and Kelsey Ruttenberg; ten great grandchildren, sister Sandi Martin; nieces Jody Nyquist and Angela Horner; nephews Brian Martin and Kevin Martin; special caregivers who are like family, many friends, and adored pets Sadie and Charlie.

Gerald H. Meyer, preceded in death by his parents, Rhea and Abe Meyer. He is survived by his sister, Arlene Hart; his nephew, Dr. Richard Hart; his niece, Robyn Katsorelos (Tony), his great nephew, Austin Katsorelos, and his great niece, Alexandra McAndrew (Michael).

Bernie Ostravich, brother of Allen Ostravich

Joan Sandra Rosen, preceded in death by her parents Harold Carter and Irene Ellis, her husband Paul Rosen, and her brother Gary Carter. She is survived by her sons John Rosen and Adam Rosen, and her brother Robert Carter.

Mendel Rosenberg, survived by his wife Sandra Rosenberg, his children Renee (Sam) Silverstein, and Stuart (Kathi) Rosenberg, his grandchildren Geoffrey Silverstein (Allyson Freeman), Sara (Jeremy), Jaclyn (Kevin), Jamie (Joey), Allison, Laura (Ben), and Corey, his great-grandchildren Sophy, Ruben, Simon, Sydney, and Naomi, and nieces nephews, cousins, and friends.

David Sherman, survived by his son Aaron (mother Susan Long), his parents Michael and Patty Sherman, his sister Ali, nephews Isaac and Noah, friend Nichole Williams, loving family and friends.





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