

December 2023

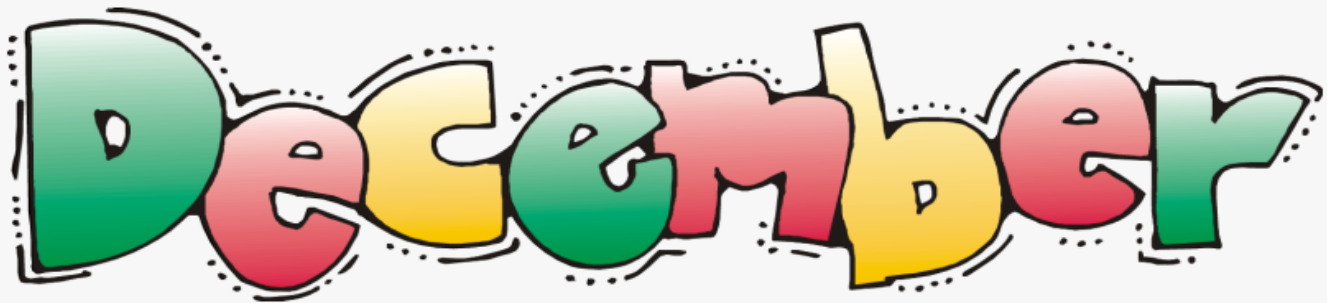
Bulletin



Rabbi Alan Cook
Rabbi Emeritus Norman Klein
Rabbi Emeritus Isaac Neuman Z"l

December 2023

3104 W. Windsor Road ☆ Champaign, IL 61822 ☆ (217) 352-8140 ☆ www.sinaitemplecu.org



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 01

5:30 PM Erev Shabbat Service and
First Friday Dinner

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 08

7:30 PM Erev Shabbat Service

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 09

10:00 AM Egalitarian Traditional Minyan
Service

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15

5:30 PM Shabbat Rocks! & NextDor Service
7:30 PM Erev Shabbat Service

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22

7:30 PM Erev Shabbat Service

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23

10:00 AM Egalitarian Traditional Minyan Service

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 29

7:30 PM Erev Shabbat Service

FRIDAY, JANUARY 05

5:30 PM Erev Shabbat Service and First Friday Dinner

SATURDAY, JANUARY 06

10:00 AM Egalitarian Traditional Minyan Service

Chinese Dinner and a Movie - December 24

We've lost count of what number this is, but our sort-of-annual Chinese Dinner and a Movie event is back this year! On Sunday, December 24 join us beginning at 4 PM as we enjoy a movie with our Sinai Temple friends. We'll have two options available, one geared toward families, and the other with a slightly more serious focus. Watch your e-mail blast for titles to be announced closer to the event.

Following the movies (at about 6 PM), we'll join together for a delicious Chinese dinner. The cost will be \$15 per adult (14 and older) and \$10 per child, with no household paying more than \$50. Please be sure to RSVP at <https://sinaitemplecu.shulcloud.com/form/Chinese2023.html>, so that we can ensure proper food quantities.

From Rabbi Alan Cook's Desk



I was recently interviewed by a reporter for the Daily Illini who was doing a story on Chanukah. We discussed a number of aspects of the holiday, as I sought to provide a meaningful overview of the themes of the festival.

I've done many such interviews in my career, and so I was able to anticipate many of her questions: Who were the Maccabees? What was the miracle of the oil? How do you play dreidel? Do you prefer applesauce or sour cream on your latkes? (Applesauce always, by the way)

Then she posed a question that doesn't come up as frequently, "What are some favorite memories that you have of the holiday?"

Many of you know that I am prone to wallow in nostalgia when I have the opportunity. So this question, of course, opened that door. I began thinking about past Chanukah celebrations, and my mind went to December of 1983. The first weekend of December that year was Shabbat Chanukah, and it was then that I celebrated my Bar Mitzvah.

B'nai Mitzvah were a big deal in South Florida in the 1980s, often featuring elaborate parties with DJs or bands, multi-course meals, take-home swag, and elaborate themes. In contrast to my peers, my parents informed me rather emphatically that the theme of my Bar Mitzvah would be "Bar Mitzvah," with Chanukah being a secondary theme. We began the evening celebration in the sanctuary, with Havdalah and the lighting of the Chanukah candles. Then we transitioned to the social hall for the actual party.

I was not interested in the sort of dance-centric celebrations that my classmates were holding, so we opted instead for a performance, hiring a group of local musicians who called themselves the American

Balalaika Company. They entertained the crowd with Jewish folk songs and puppetry. I have a vague recollection that there may have been some juggling and plate spinning, as well. It certainly was different from the other B'nai Mitzvah celebrated at the congregation that year, and probably struck many of my friends as odd. But when you think about it, this display was entirely in keeping with the Chanukah theme.

Perhaps most famously, Chanukah celebrates the so-called miracle of the oil. But that in itself can also be seen as a metaphor for the need to bring light into places of darkness—both literally, in the season in which the nights are becoming longer, and figuratively, as we seek to spread love and hope into the world. Additionally, Chanukah represents a triumph of the Jewish people over the efforts by the Syrian-Greek empire to have us assimilate into their culture and abandon the unique elements of our heritage. The show at my Bar Mitzvah was a nod to the folk traditions of our people's past, reminding us that another key theme of the festival is that we must remember from whence we have come, and cling tightly to our Jewish pride.

As I write this, our world is still in a state of upheaval. Our brothers and sisters in Israel continue to fight for their existence. Israelis and Palestinians alike continue to suffer casualties in this devastating conflict, and we continue to mourn these tragic losses, as we pray for the conclusion of this conflict, and a lasting peace that affirms the hopes of all peoples to live freely and peacefully.

This year in particular, we need Chanukah, to remind us where we came from, to celebrate the strength and resilience that our people has always shown, even in dark times, and to allow the lights of hope, love, peace, and understanding to burn ever-brightly.

L'Shalom,
Rabbi Alan

From President Lil Levant

As some of you are aware, I was fortunate to recently travel to Washington D.C. along with nearly 100 UIUC students and Champaign-Urbana community members to attend the March for Israel. It was a tremendous event; it was inspiring to be with well-over 200,000 Jews from all over the United States standing in support of Israel. While we may not all have agreed with every statement made from the stage, it is an awesome feeling to have experienced the power of community at this challenging time.

The experience of being at Sinai Temple, especially lately, has been just as inspiring. It is wonderful to be united as a Jewish community. Whether it be at Friday evening Shabbat Services, Saturday morning ETM services, First Fridays, or Shabbat Rocks, it has been very fulfilling and comforting to spend time together. Recently, for instance, we welcomed the musical trio Soul Zimra to a Shabbat evening service; as I write this, I am remembering the wonderful service that our CUTY youth led for us. These and many more events inspire us and enrich life at Sinai Temple.

Many of us are grappling with the conflicted emotions we are feeling about the war; on top of which, the exponential rise of antisemitism is overwhelming. I pray that Sinai Temple will continue to be a center of healing and strength for each of us. I pray that despite our individual perspectives that may occasionally differ, we will continue to be a community of support and respect for one another.

With Chanukah around the corner, we will have the opportunity to celebrate together once again. On Wednesday, December 13, Sinai Temple will host a Chanukah dinner and concert for the Jewish community of C-U.

Please look for the link elsewhere in the bulletin, and in our E-Newsletters to RSVP ahead of time.

Shalom,

Lil

Sinai Temple Gift Shop Chanukah Showcase

ONE DAY ONLY!

Sunday, December 3

9:00am-1:00pm

Get ready for great deals on everything you and your family need to celebrate Chanukah!

Watch for more info about special discounts in your weekly email!

Stock up on hostess gifts, candles, and chocolate gelt... Add a beautiful new menorah to your collection... Decorate your home with lights, banners, and more... Grab dreidels for your kids' classmates... And don't forget something special for your pets!



From Rabbi Jody Cook's Desk

There is a rabbinic debate in the Talmud (Shabbat 21b) about how to light the Hanukkah candles in the hanukkiyah. Beit Shammai (the House of Shammai) teaches that we should start with all 8 candles lit and decrease the number of candles as we celebrate Hanukkah each night. Shammai supporters explain that just as the oil that was recovered in the temple was consumed, we should start with the most full hanukkiyah and remove light each day, symbolizing the oil that was being used. Beit Hillel, the House of Hillel, is known for disagreeing with Shammai. In this case, Hillel teaches that we should start with one candle and add another candle each night. Hillel's reasoning is that the added brightness symbolizes our perseverance and our joy. The Maccabees survived and rebuilt the desecrated synagogue. Even though they had very little, they overcame obstacles and defeated a much larger and stronger army.

This year – whether you light candles according to Beit Hillel or Beit Shammai, think about ways that you add brightness to our world and about things that you recognize as adding brightness. As days are getting shorter, filling our spaces with understanding and empathy will help create light in our lives.

I want to highlight (more light!) some of the amazing things that happened last month in our congregation. On November 17, we filled the South Pod and the sanctuary TWICE for Shabbat. We had 13 CUTY (Champaign-Urbana Temple Youth) members lead Shabbat services. From the opening song to the closing benediction, Althea, Ava, Avery, Elise, Gabe, Hannah, Matthew, Maya, Max, Nessa, Orli, Sarah and Sophia shared their thoughts, led the prayers and delivered the drash. Their connection to Sinai Temple is strong; their Jewish pride is even stronger. On the same night, we saw how Shabbat Rocks is attracting more and more participants and how families with younger children are making a commitment to prioritize our third Friday Shabbat experience. This month, we will experiment with bringing back the NextDor Service. NextDor is intended to be a Shabbat service for Hebrew School aged participants. It will give 3rd-7th graders an opportunity to practice the prayers they are learning in Hebrew School and to lead portions of the service. Families are encouraged to attend either Shabbat Rocks or NextDor – whichever is a better fit. Older students are also welcome to come to NextDor without a parent/caregiver. All third Friday Shabbat participants will be together for dinner before the service and for the oneg Shabbat immediately following the service.

Finally, a group of 13 Sinai Temple Religious School students and friends painted hanukkiyot, dreidels and latke platters at The Pottery Place. Students look forward to seeing their Sinai Temple friends at religious school – but seeing them out in the community is an extra-special treat!

Please mark your calendars for upcoming dates and events! We hope to see you at the Sinai Temple Hanukkah party!

Rabbi Jody Cook

Director of Education

Green Team and Mitzvah Project

Green Team Tip

Perhaps you noticed recent articles about the alarming amount of food waste that ends up in landfills. While loss occurs at many stages of food production and distribution, one recent estimate notes that households are responsible for at least 40 percent of food waste in the United States.

This is an area where all household members can step up and help eliminate food waste! Basic steps recommended by the Environmental Protection Agency include:

- **PLAN AHEAD** – Have a list when you go to the grocery store, so you don't buy more than you need.
- **SERVE SMART** – Prepare a plate so portions aren't out of control.
- **LOVE YOUR LEFTOVERS** – Package and label leftovers for your refrigerator or freezer. Plan a meal for using them up!
- **COMPOST, DON'T TRASH** – Set up a home compost bin for recycling food scraps

With the weather turning colder, you may be turning to soups as part of your meals. Whether you are making soup from scratch or opening up a can, add your leftover veggies and pantry items for a delicious and comforting dish that uses up food at hand.



Chanukah Celebration - December 13



Save the date! Wednesday, December 13 please plan to join us for our annual Chanukah celebration at 5:30 PM. Bring your Chanukiyah as together we light the candles for the seventh night (or design your own for a chance to win cool prizes)! We'll enjoy a delicious dinner catered by Maize, along with latkes and donuts. The cost for dinner is only \$8 per person. Following dinner, we'll have a fun and energetic concert, featuring music from Rabbi Neal Katz.

Rabbi Neal Katz is the rabbi of Congregation Beth El in Tyler, TX, and more importantly, he was an HUC-JIR classmate with Rabbis Alan and Jody Cook.

Neal has been making Jewish and folk music for over thirty years. He grew up in the youth groups and summer camps of the Reform Movement and was a song-leader for three summers in Israel working with teen Israel trips. In addition to three summers as the student rabbi and song-leader at Camp Ben Frankel in Carbondale, IL, Neal song-led for a Progressive Jewish Summer camp in Belarus in the summer of 1999. He has shared his music around much of the US and with a number of European Jewish communities.

He is a self-proclaimed "non-profit junkie," as he has served on numerous local and statewide boards in Texas. Neal is also an adjunct teacher at the University of Texas at Tyler, where he teaches an "Introduction to Judaism" course.

Neal has produced 4 solo CDs and has been involved in numerous other CD projects and musical productions. He is looking forward to spending a night of Chanukah with his new friends in Champaign-Urbana!

To RSVP for dinner and the concert, please visit <https://sinaitemplecu.shulcloud.com/form/Chanukah2023.html>

Sinai Temple Announcements

Mi Shebeirach list

Sinai Temple maintains a Mi Shebeirach list, in order that we might lift up the names of those facing illness or hardship in our weekly healing prayers. This list has grown in the past year, and we are no longer certain that every name on it is current.

Starting with the first Shabbat after the High Holidays (Friday, Sept. 29), we began our Mi Shebeirach list anew. Rabbi Alan will maintain the list with the name of the individual, the name of the person who requested that they be added to the list, and the date that they were added to the list. Names will be removed from the list after one month (four Shabbatot), unless a specific request is made to maintain them. Thank you for your understanding.

Sinai Temple Gift Shop

***All Gift Shop profits go to
support the Religious School***

The Gift Shop is now open by appointment & during Sinai Temple Religious School Hours!

Please contact **Jessica Kopolow** to set up an appointment. You can reach her by email at jessicakopolow@yahoo.com or by phone at 217-417-8699.

Cash or checks are always welcome. Credit cards accepted for charges over \$25. We accept Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover, using SQUARE.

December Book Group

The Book Group meets the second Sunday of each month at 2:00 PM.

We meet in a hybrid format, both in person in the Sinai Temple Library and via Zoom. The Zoom link is provided for those who are outside the C-U area.

**December 10:
The Violin Conspiracy
by Brendan Slocumb
Facilitator: Natalie Frankenberg**

**RSVP's required by Friday, December 8 to
nataliefr@comcast.net**

Thanksgiving Mitzvah

Thank you to everyone who helped us fulfill the mitzvah of Ma'achil R'eivim (Feeding the Hungry). At the risk of omitting any of our wonderful volunteers, particular thanks is due to Ben and Jess LeRoy, Rae Spooner, Jill and Randall Rosenbaum, and Rabbi Jody.

Gentle Chair Yoga

Tuesdays at 9:30 AM—ONLINE

For those who would like to do chair yoga online with Robin Goettel while in your home, please contact her at robinfans1@gmail.com.

Sinai Temple Donations

Temple Donations October 16 to November 15, 2023

BUILDING FUND

Dov Cohen & Andrea Aguiar
Adrenne Dietchweiler
Lilyan Levant
Gene & Julia Robinson
Susan & Michael Roughton
Bob Smith & Elyse Rosenbaum
Mitchell & Ann Sussman
Barry Weiner
Diane Gottheil

FRIENDS OF RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Adrenne Dietchweiler
Diane Gottheil

GENERAL FUND

Nathan & Maggie Ackerman
Mark & Mary Belding in Memory of Richard Newman
Sue & David Brim in Memory of Henrietta Israel
Schwartz
Ann Einhorn in Memory of Richard Newman
Carmel & Inbal Elazar
Leia & Gavin Flure
Audrey Golden
Barbara & Lawrence Gordon in Honor of the birth of
our granddaughters, Margot Harriet and Claire
Goldie, daughters of Elana Gordon & Jacob Cohen
Diana Jaher in Memory of Frederic Jaher
Gayle & Ira Kopin in Memory of Dr. Eli B. Mandel
Judith Siess & Stephen Bremseth
Michael Vodkin in Memory of Larry Vodkin
William Youngerman in Memory of Richard Newman

KITCHEN FUND

Adrenne Dietchweiler
Marcey Goldstein
Lilyan Levant
Gene & Julia Robinson
Bob Smith & Elyse Rosenbaum
Pete & Cyndi Smyser
Mitchell & Ann Sussman
Barry Weiner
Diane Gottheil

MLK SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Diane Gottheil

RABBI DISCRETIONARY FUND

Buddi Tepper in Memory of Ann Sapoznik

RENOVATION FUND

Natalie Frankenberg in Memory of Richard Newman

SAFETY & SECURITY FUND

Adrenne Dietchweiler
Marcey Goldstein
Lilyan Levant
Gene & Julia Robinson
Bob Smith & Elyse Rosenbaum
Mitchell & Ann Sussman
Barry Weiner
Diane Gottheil

TRADITIONAL MINYAN

Gene & Julia Robinson in Memory of Richard Newman

Sinai Temple Memorials for December 2023

Friday, Dec. 01	Philip Applebaum (4 Dec) Annette Sudman Baich (8 Dec) Da'vid Efergan (21 Kis) Sidney Feinberg (6 Dec) Louis Nathan Glaser (2 Dec) Sara Goldring (21 Kis) Ida Gorodetsky (24 Kis) Morris Gottheil (3 Dec)	Sally Grusby (2 Dec) Judith Harrison (24 Kis) Lily Helman (23 Kis) Bernard Hymowitz (20 Kis) Abraham Lapedes (6 Dec) Fred Lewin (4 Dec) Herbert Elsworth Lyon (5 Dec) Benjamin Pearlstein (2 Dec)	Isaiah Shavitt (8 Dec) Linda Vodkin (23 Kis)
Friday, Dec. 08	Harriet Mae Davis (12 Dec) Doris Dorman Feinberg (9 Dec) Pesselle Rothenberg Friedman (2 Tev) Jewel Berenson Friend (12 Dec) Jacob Benjamin Hamburg (15 Dec) Norma Klein (10 Dec) Joseph Kuhn (15 Dec) Ethel Lesht (9 Dec)	Joseph Linowes (26 Kis) Minnie Lipson (11 Dec) Helen Wollstein Loeb (10 Dec) Judith Rosencranz (15 Dec) Sarah Rubinstein (9 Dec) Rose Sapoznik (11 Dec) Shirley Senoff (27 Kis) Demitri B. Shimkin (26 Kis)	Sylvia Siegel (30 Kis) Peter James Stolurow (11 Dec) Mary Elizabeth Stone (12 Dec)
Friday, Dec. 15	Sylvia Arnold (7 Tev) Rebecca Rubenstein Blockman (18 Dec) Rosa B. Bower (19 Dec) Gilford Currier (17 Dec) Ethel Depper (5 Tev) Frances Dessen (18 Dec) Florence Zibel Dooley (18 Dec) Frieda Forst (18 Dec) Rabbi Benjamin M. Frankel (21 Dec) Lilia Gaptov (22 Dec) Arthur Golub (22 Dec) Frada Green (21 Dec)	Audrey Rezits Huber (21 Dec) Phillip C. Katz (18 Dec) Jewel Kurland (19 Dec) Sally Levitt (20 Dec) Joseph Levy (19 Dec) Natalie Yawitz Levy (16 Dec) Marilyn Libman (16 Dec) Sandra Molasky (5 Tev) Morris Olefsky (18 Dec) Clare Herman Perkel (20 Dec) Rose L. Prince (16 Dec) Sadie Rudnick (22 Dec)	Jeanette Schomer (10 Tev) Leah Schwartz (10 Tev) Hyman Simon (18 Dec) Jack Aaron Simon (17 Dec) Albert Leland Stern (16 Dec) Ethel Bower Stern (17 Dec) Linda Weiner (22 Dec) Ralph Weinstein (6 Tev) Charles A. Wolff (19 Dec) Ruth Youngerman (21 Dec)
Friday, Dec. 22	Ruth B. Ades (23 Dec) Adrienne Merkel Berenbaum (29 Dec) Nathan H. Cohen (28 Dec) Morris Dessen (24 Dec) Bette Jane Dunn (27 Dec) Abe Egherman (16 Tev) Nata Fleys (28 Dec)	Jean Eva Ginsberg (25 Dec) Helen S. Golub (25 Dec) Janice Greenberger (27 Dec) Evelyn J. Helgesen (23 Dec) Rachel Korman (14 Tev) Bobbie Rudolph Kulwin (25 Dec) Ruth Lasker (28 Dec)	Robert Marshak (23 Dec) Dr Isaac Morhaim (16 Tev) Isaac Reyman (27 Dec) Alice Rauh Scheeline (23 Dec) Sadie Yavner Small (13 Tev) William J. Weiner (16 Tev)
Friday, Dec. 29	Joseph C. Aub (30 Dec) Rosalyne Bernstein (30 Dec) Johanna Braunfeld (3 Jan) Abraham Braverman (20 Tev) Boris Brotherson (4 Jan) Sylvia Bursztyn (23 Tev) Ruth Herman Garfinkel (3 Jan) Stanley Gordon (4 Jan)	Milton Gorodetsky (24 Tev) Belle Halpern (1 Jan) Rosalie Jaffe (1 Jan) Elsa Klaiman (1 Jan) Jeanette Cohen Levy (1 Jan) Leo Lewis (30 Dec) Dena Linado (4 Jan) Sidney Sinow (31 Dec)	Maybelle Solon (3 Jan) Sol Tax (4 Jan) Isaac Tepper (1 Jan) Harry A. Topolosky (2 Jan) Frieda G. Wollstein (5 Jan)

Bulletin Submission: The deadline for the **January Bulletin** is **December 15**. All submissions may be edited for length and content. **EMAIL submissions to:** Gary Bernstein at stoffice@sinaitemplecu.org