

March 2024

Bulletin



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

March 2024

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



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

FRIDAY, MARCH 01

5:30 PM Erev Shabbat Service and
First Friday Dinner

FRIDAY, MARCH 08

7:30 PM Erev Shabbat Service

SATURDAY, MARCH 09

10:00 AM Egalitarian Traditional Minyan Service

FRIDAY, MARCH 15

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

SATURDAY, MARCH 16

10:00 AM Bat Mitzvah Service for Lily Smyser

FRIDAY, MARCH 22

7:30 PM Erev Shabbat Service

SATURDAY, MARCH 23

5:30 PM Purim Dinner and Shpiel
7:30 PM Ma'ariv Service and Megillah Reading

FRIDAY, MARCH 29

7:30 PM Erev Shabbat Service

Purim 2024 - The Little Mermaid-ele

We've been planning and rehearsing, and we're excited to present this year's fabulous Purim Shpiel,
"The Little Mermaid-ele."

The fun begins on **Saturday night, March 23, at 5:30 PM** as we gather for a festive Purim meal. Sinai Temple will provide the entrée; we ask you to contribute an accompaniment (enough for about 12 people).

Please RSVP at <https://sinaitemplecu.shulcloud.com/form/Purim.html>



THE LITTLE MERMAIDELE

Following dinner, at about 6:45 PM, we will gather in the sanctuary as a talented cast of many present our Purim Shpiel!

Following the shpiel, we'll conclude Shabbat and welcome the festival with Havdalah. Then you're invited to stay as, at about 8 PM, we have a brief egalitarian traditional festival service, followed by the reading of the whole megillah.

Sunday morning, at 11 AM, join us for the greatest Purim carnival in town!
Fun for the entire family!

From Rabbi Alan Cook's Desk



For better or for worse, one of the events for which Champaign-Urbana is most well-known (at least among a certain cohort) is “Unofficial St. Patrick’s Day.” We can debate whether this celebration of over-

indulgence, designed to bolster bar revenues, is a positive or ignominious legacy for our community, but that’s a conversation for a different forum.

I think the broader concept of doing things “unofficially” is an interesting one for us to consider, particularly within the context of Judaism. We have fixed times and seasons in which we’re supposed to celebrate, but we’re also taught to strive to recite 100 blessings every day, as an expression of gratitude for all that we have and a recognition that we should live in a state of awe and wonder. In our liturgy, as well, we have moments for keva, fixed prayers—those expressions that were codified by the rabbis of old and have come to be accepted as efficacious formulae for praising or making requests from God. Yet we also maintain room for kavana, those reflections that come from the heart, the unofficial expressions of our faith. Unlike some other faiths, which insist on the use of an intermediary to converse with God, Judaism maintains that each of us have the capability to enter into prayer and appeal to the Divine. It could be said that we are “officially unofficial” in this regard.

Last month, Lil wrote in her presidential message about our fabulous youth representative to the board, Sarah Bleill. Sarah represents another facet of “officially unofficial” life at Sinai Temple: her input is certainly valued, and she brings forward important voices from her peers, though her role is an ex-officio position. More broadly, she represents our youth constituency, an important part of our demographic as we build for the future.

As I write this, we have just celebrated our February iteration of Shabbat Rocks!/ Next Dor, our monthly services for our younger worshippers and their families. This program has been steadily rebuilding in the past year, thanks to the energies and efforts of Rabbi Jody, and February saw our largest crowd since before COVID! It is so heartening to watch these infants, toddlers, and students immersing themselves in Temple life and excited to be part of our community. One young person separated from her parents and grandparents, and came into the 7:30 PM service to sing and dance with the slightly more adult crowd—one of our favorite types of “officially unofficial” participation.

At the end of this month, we will celebrate Purim (see elsewhere in this bulletin for all of the fun details)! On Purim, everything becomes topsy-turvy, in accordance with chapter 9, verse 1 of the Book of Esther, which tells us v’na’hafoch hu—it was all turned upside down (literally, in context, the evil decree of Haman was reversed). We see the unofficial become official, and vice-versa. We are taught that we should become so silly on Purim (traditionally, through the use of intoxicants, though today we understand that this is not appropriate for everyone) that we cannot distinguish between the evil Haman and the heroic Mordecai. We have great fun in both official and unofficial ways, as we celebrate our survival and the downfall of our adversary.

I wish you all a happy Purim—I look forward to officially (or unofficially) welcoming you to our festivities.

L’Shalom,

Rabbi Alan

From President Lil Levant

As much as we value Sinai Temple as a holy community in which to worship, there are many other ways to find your niche at Temple. We've been steadily ramping our programming back up to pre-COVID levels. I encourage you to take the time to check out all of the fun and exciting things that are happening. I want to highlight a few of them:

For those of you who were able to be with us for Trivia Night, I'm pretty sure you would agree that it was a fabulous evening. A sincere thank you to Rabbi Jody who single-handedly was determined to bring this popular event to fruition once again. Also, a big thanks to our emcees, Eli Hess and Sophia Libman who did an excellent job keeping the evening going smoothly. Thanks also to all those who brought delectable desserts for the Dessert Dash auction. It was gratifying to see so many of you at this fun event. We raised over \$2,500 due to the generosity of our members and friends of Sinai Temple.

We also recently experienced the amazing Baking Series led by Dana Mor. Dana presented four

different cooking demonstrations and each were phenomenal. We learned how to prepare babka, bagels, date bars and pasta – all from scratch! It was not only fun to learn together but we had the opportunity to cook, taste, have great conversation and take the extras home. Thank you to Dana Mor for your inspiring cooking instruction. Many of us cannot wait for the next series.

As Rabbi Alan has noted previously, our beloved congregation recently celebrated its 120th birthday! As we look forward to the next 120 years (and, hopefully, beyond), we are proud to serve the Jews of East Central Illinois through worship and ritual, education, and through enjoyable and community-building programming.

Please continue to read the weekly Temple E-Newsletter to learn about more events that are being planned in the coming weeks.

Take good care,
Lil

Purim Carnival

Sunday, March 24 at 11 AM—1 PM

Costumes are encouraged! Games, prizes, crafts, face painting, activities, and food! Advanced purchase of pizza lunch plates are encouraged. We will have a limited amount of extra pizza, but by pre-purchasing it will guarantee you having a lunch plate and will help us with ordering the right amount of pizza!

Please invite friends – this is a great event to share with community members who might be interested in learning about Purim and Sinai Temple!

Pre-purchase of tickets and pizza lunch (optional but encouraged) at the link provided below:

<https://sinaitemplecu.shulcloud.com/form/purimcarnivalregistration.html>



From Rabbi Jody Cook's Desk

Every year, particularly at the time of the High Holy Days, I hear people ask the question, “Are the holidays early this year?” The lunar based calendar can cause challenges for people, especially for non-Jews, who don’t know that our holiday dates are not fixed on the Gregorian calendar. During the time of the Sanhedrin (Rabbinical Supreme Court), the perpetual calendar was set. There is a 19-year cycle, which includes 7 leap years in every 19 years, and with this, we can know the exact date of 1 Tishrei (Rosh Hashana) or 25 Kislev (Chanukkah) every year for eternity. This year, 5784, happens to be a leap year, and we observe an additional month (yes – we also have a leap year on our secular calendar and add in one day, February 29) of Adar. The Rabbis teach us that when the month of Adar enters, we should be happy...this year, we have two months to celebrate Adar and bring joy to the world!

Adar is one of my favorite times of year – and one of my busiest times of the year. Sinai Temple Religious School will take a short spring break in March, but we will have tons of programming and activity for all ages. Please see the information about the annual Purim Carnival on March 24. Parents, grandparents, community members and of course, children, are invited to come to the carnival in costume. We will have games, raffle prizes, face painting, crafts, quiet activities and more. Don’t forget to pre-register for a pizza lunch plate!

In addition to the carnival, Sinai Temple Religious School coordinates our largest annual fundraiser – the Purim Greetings. The deadline to purchase mishloach manot greetings is approaching – please remember to fill out your paper form or to complete the form at Purimproject.com. This fundraiser allows us to offer programming for the community, purchase classroom materials, host family Shabbat dinners and more.

Finally, this year, we are doing an intergenerational hamantaschen bake, partnering with CUJF/PJ Library. All are welcome (please sign up in advance) to bake together, share stories and meet other members of the community. Please bring a rolling pin! Sign up information will be available in upcoming email blasts. Please see the flyer below for more details.

Be happy – it’s adar!

Rabbi Jody Cook
Director of Education

Intergenerational Hamantaschen Baking

Sunday, March 17 at 3 - 5 PM

Sinai Temple and PJ Library/CUJF invite you to an intergenerational Hamantaschen Bake! Learn a bit about the history of hamantaschen, share your favorite filling, and bake some delicious Purim treats. Please sign up in advance so we can purchase enough flour and fillings! If you have a rolling pin, please bring it along.

This is for people of all ages - please see flyer for more details.

To sign up in advance:

<https://sinaitemplecu.shulcloud.com/form/Hamentaschen->



L'Dough vaDough

PJ LIBRARY AND SINAI TEMPLE INVITE YOU TO INTERGENERATIONAL HAMENTASHEN BAKING

Join us to learn a simple recipe for hamentaschen dough, sample fillings, and create delicious hamentaschen for Purim!

Sunday, March 17th
3:00-5:00PM
Located in Sinai Temple

All ages welcome! Children under 7 must be accompanied by an adult.
RSVP by March 14th!!

Champaign-Urbana Jewish Federation SINAI TEMPLE

Green Team and Events

Green Team Tip

Once the weather gets warmer, some of us have the urge to get outside and clean up the yard where dead leaves, brown annuals from last year, twigs, and assorted accumulated debris may look unsightly.

Consider resisting this impulse! According to the University of Illinois Extension

<https://extension.illinois.edu/blogs/good-growing/2023-03-02-when-should-i-start-cleaning-my-garden>

it's better to channel your inner procrastinator. Waiting until the middle of the spring allows insects and other wildlife to complete their overwintering cycle. Moths, butterflies, and bees are among the critters that depend on leaves, flower stalks, and other debris to nurture their young.

If you want to clean up the most visible areas, put the trimmings in loose piles at the edge of the yard. Pruning part of old flower stalks from perennials, and leaving a few inches of the stalk intact, will allow insects to utilize them and won't get in the way of new growth.

So, consider that you are not being lazy by waiting until mid-May, or until overnight temperatures are above 50 degrees. You are helping our local wildlife and beneficial pollinators!



Lily Rose Smyser Bat Mitzvah

Saturday, March 16 at 10 AM



Lily Rose Smyser will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on March 16, 2024 at 10 am (mistake of 9am published in the invitation). Lily is a third-generation member of Sinai Temple, the daughter of Pete and Cyndi Smyser and granddaughter of Louis and Shirley Liebovich. She is also the niece of Scott and Rebecca Simmons, active members of Sinai Temple, and cousin to Bella, Scarlett, Lorelei and Maverick Simmons. Lily is a 7th grade student at Jefferson Middle School. She began her Jewish education late in third grade at Sinai Temple and chose to continue her religious education when given the choice. It was a stressful decision, and we are proud of the one that she made. For Lily, her Bat Mitzvah is an expression of pride of the Jewish history in part of her family and celebrating mitzvahs. She is an incredibly kind and giving person who is always willing to help and do the right thing.

Lily has several passions. She loves doing drama and participating in productions including Jefferson's current production of The Wizard of Oz. She is an avid artist that enjoys most of the visual arts including drawing and building things from recycled materials. Lily expresses her concern for the creatures of the earth by worrying about climate change, especially the effect on the arctic environment and the declining populations of polar bears, which is the theme of her Bat Mitzvah. Further, she adores her 7 adopted cats Ivy June, Stella Luna, Firefly Nova, Mr. Smore, Chippy, Raven Nebula and especially Poppy Magnolia. She recently experienced her first significant death when we lost Peeky and Tabitha Ann in January 2024. Since she was born, she has accompanied her parents to animal shelters, to help groom the animals so that they are more presentable for adoption and bring donated supplies. She encourages everyone to adopt.

Lily would like to thank her tireless Hebrew school teacher Sara Topolosky and her tutor, the one and only, Rabbi Jody who seems to have an endless list of tasks that she contributes to Sinai Temple. This year her relationship with her tiny Hebrew school class of Asher, Jacob and Shira has grown through delivering challah on Friday nights and dinners together. Thank you so very much for the bonds that have grown between our families this year. We would be grateful to anyone that would attend the service on March 16 to celebrate "Lil-Bil's" special day with us or via the Sinai Temple live stream.

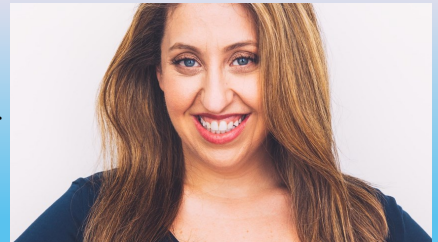
Sinai Temple Announcements

Save the Date!

Pamela Rae Schuller - April 7

On Saturday evening April 6, cellist YoYo Ma will be at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts as a stop on his farewell tour. It's an event not to be missed.

But Sinai Temple is pleased to present another not-to-be-missed event on **Sunday night, April 7**, as we welcome activist and comedienne **Pamela Rae Schuller**. Ms. Schuller's presentations combine comedy and storytelling to talk about valuing differences and inclusion through telling her story of growing up with Tourette Syndrome and her journey to embrace it. Her comedy has been seen and heard on Netflix, NBC, and Sirius XM. It will be an evening of laughter and learning.



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.

March Book Group

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

During March,
we will meet via Zoom.

March 10:

Horse

by Geraldine Brooks

Facilitator: Sandy Hynds

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

Passover Showcase

Sunday, April 14

Mark your calendar and watch the Weekly Monday newsletter and April bulletin for more information!

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 January 16, 2024, to February 15, 2024

ALPINER STERN FLOWER FUND

Gary & Tonya Bernstein in Memory of Herman
Bernstein

BUILDING FUND

David Dorman & Barbara Jones
Joyce Eisenstein
William & Phyllis Gingold
Lee & Evan Melhado
Dana Rabin & Craig Koslofsky
Ira & Lynn Wachtel

FRIENDS OF RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Drs. Arthur & Marcia Siegel in Honor of Jacob
Epstein's Bar Mitzvah

GENERAL FUND

Richard Akresh
Lee Feldman
William & Phyllis Gingold in Memory of David
Gingold
Paula Kaufman
Dana Mor & Avior Elemualem
Anne & Bill Heiles in Memory of Mischa
Mischakoff and Matthew Mischakoff

GINSBERG LIBRARY FUND

Susan & David Brim

KITCHEN FUND

David Dorman & Barbara Jones
Joyce Eisenstein
William & Phyllis Gingold
Dana Rabin & Craig Koslofsky
Ira & Lynn Wachtel

MUSIC FUND

Alexander Scheeline & Alice Berkson in Memory
of Barbara Orden

RABBI DISCRETIONARY FUND

Bette & John van Es in Memory of Charles Kozoll

RENOVATION FUND

Dana Rabin & Craig Koslofsky
Jan & David Sholem in Memory of Faye Sholem,
Leon Ades, Ruth Ades, and Lois Mecklenburger

SAFETY & SECURITY FUND

David Dorman & Barbara Jones
Joyce Eisenstein
William & Phyllis Gingold
Dana Rabin & Craig Koslofsky
Ira & Lynn Wachtel

Sinai Temple Memorials for March 2024

Friday, Mar. 01	<p>Sakip Altay (4 Mar) Mack Bernard Braun (8 Mar) David S. Choldin (6 Mar) Irving Cohen (3 Mar) Stanley Depper (24 Ada) Oscar Einhorn (25 1Ad) Arthur Fagan (7 Mar) Rita Mae Goodman (22 1Ad) Bernice Goldstick Hess (3 Mar)</p>	<p>Ethel Hymowitz (22 Ada) Bernard Karsh (7 Mar) William Klaiman (6 Mar) Sam Klugman (8 Mar) Clarence Libman (2 Mar) Jack Marco (4 Mar) Shirley M. Newman (8 Mar) Charles O. Silverman (25 Ada) Mortimer B. Sitron (2 Mar)</p>	<p>Minnie Slutsky (8 Mar) Joseph Solon (2 Mar) Ruth Marieke van Es (6 Mar) Jerome S. Wachtel (28 1Ad) Rosalie Willis (3 Mar) Colonel Uzi Yairi (6 Mar)</p>
Friday, Mar. 08	<p>Sylvia Kadish Cohen (13 Mar) Bess Frankenberg (15 Mar) Philip Freedman (15 Mar) Murray Friedman (9 Mar) Zola Joseph Goodfriend (12 Mar) Carl Greenstein (15 Mar) Sarah Westerman Konick (15 Mar) Harriet Mildred Lavey (10 Mar)</p>	<p>Mollie Leavitt (9 Mar) Paul Michael Mischakoff (12 Mar) Raymond Perlov (15 Mar) Pauline Lou Rabin (15 Mar) Solon Aaron Reyman (9 Mar) Delores Jean Rosenbaum (15 Mar) Edith Sapoznik (10 Mar) Ted Sher (11 Mar)</p>	<p>Hiram Gene Slottow (11 Mar) Rosetta Kuhn Victor (9 Mar)</p>
Friday, Mar. 15	<p>James Adler (17 Mar) Fritz Braunfeld (18 Mar) Sidney S. Feldman (19 Mar) Annette Lewis Glaser (20 Mar) Christopher Kanis (21 Mar) Joyce Levy (22 Mar) Harry Lipson Sr (20 Mar)</p>	<p>Alan Pall (22 Mar) Helen Tepper (22 Mar) Maxine Weiner (8 2Ad) Bill Wiese (21 Mar)</p>	
Friday, Mar. 22	<p>Edwin M. Banks (24 Mar) Phillip Bedein (28 Mar) Samuel Cossman (28 Mar) John Porter Davis (29 Mar) Edward L. Edlitz (26 Mar) Gary Fromm (23 Mar) Bertha Ginsburg (28 Mar) Isadore Ginsburg (29 Mar)</p>	<p>Harry Hirshenson (25 Mar) Theodore Hymowitz (26 Mar) Shirley L. Kaplan (15 Ada) Ben Kaufman (24 Mar) Ida Klugman (28 Mar) Charles F. Loeb (25 Mar) Rose (Bebbe) Mandel (29 Mar) Charles Miller (26 Mar)</p>	<p>Harry Miller (28 Mar) Sonya Pearlman (23 Mar) Abraham M. Reider (13 Ada) Gayle Riches (13 2Ad) Eugenia Coleman Roddis (13 Ada) Evan Gordon Sarney (25 Mar) Edward I. Siegal (25 Mar) Anna B. Vineberg (27 Mar)</p>
Friday, Mar. 29	<p>Rose Shore Applebaum (30 Mar) Jack Diamond (3 Apr) Barbara Ferdman (4 Apr) Joshua David Gottheil (4 Apr) Paul Karsh (1 Apr) Adam Koslofsky (4 Apr) Arthur Lerner (31 Mar)</p>	<p>Fania Levin (30 Mar) Wolf Lewis (2 Apr) Irma Lipson (4 Apr) Abraham Loeb (4 Apr) Beverlee Mirell (1 Apr) Nina Nelson Seidenberg (4 Apr) Marcus Tager (4 Apr)</p>	<p>Irving Weinberg (21 2Ad)</p>

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