

# Temple Sinai

*Where Judaism Blooms in the Desert*

## January Shofar

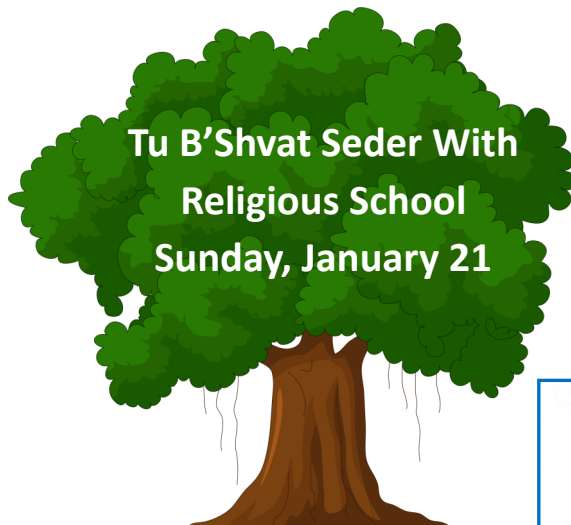
2024

5784



**Bingo Night**

**Wednesday, January 3 at 6:30 PM**



**Brotherhood Nature Walk  
Sunday, January 21**



**Brotherhood Dinner &  
A Movie**

**Thursday, January 18  
5:30 PM**



**Women of Sinai Annual  
Luncheon & Fashion  
Show Friday, January  
26 at 12:00 Noon**

## From the Rabbi

*This is a recent d'var Torah that I gave at Sinai on December 15, 2023, the first Shabbat after Hanukkah ended:*

Israel is in a war against terrorists. Jews worldwide are mostly in support of Israel's aims, to destroy the terrorist infrastructure in Gaza while preserving civilian life. Meanwhile outside of Israel, here in the West, we are seeing acts that are anti-Jewish at synagogues, in public right-of-ways, on college campuses. This is a challenging time to be Jewish. It has always been a challenging time to be Jewish.

I have discerned this from two reasons:

The first is that we are a tiny people in the scope of the world population. There are perhaps 16 million Jews in the world (17 million depending on how you are counting) out of a worldwide population of over eight billion people. We are a rounding error.

The second is that most people in the world have never met a Jewish person. I'm not talking about in foreign countries. Even here in the United States where 90% of American congressional districts have no discernible Jewish population. We congregate along the coasts and in some urban cities. The population of the United States is 330 million—we are, on a good day, six-seven million, or about 2% of the overall population.

As an example of this let me share with you a time when I was doing interim rabbinic work on Florida's west coast in a suburban area. A group of confirmands came to the synagogue from a local Methodist Church. After the usual questions about the sanctuary: why the head covering, what are those lights on the wall, one student, a 16-year-old asked me what we thought of the second coming.

I had to think fast: Jesus does not play a role in Jewish life and we did not affirm his divinity. This is just one example of how we live around others, thinking that they understand our lives, and they do not.

Even at a recent Hanukkah party that I attended I had to explain to the non-Jews present why we observe Hanukkah.

There are many millions of people who just do not think about Jews, Judaism, or Jewish practices.

Then there are those who have never met a Jew who attract attention through their acts of vandalism, violence, and protest. This has been recently magnified on college campuses. In the US the president of the University of Pennsylvania resigned after her mishandled appearance before a House committee.



**Rabbi David Novak**

At campuses like Columbia and UCLA there are protests where students are making it challenging for Jewish students to study, let alone be Jewish. These attract attention. I read an article that shows that in many, many college campuses that is not the case. “In the Shadow of War: Hotspots of Antisemitism on US College campuses” a study produced at Brandeis, found that at a number of schools, including Duke, Washington University in St. Louis, Tulane as well University of Florida, Brandeis, Cal Tech, Florida Atlantic, Florida State, Penn State, University of Central Florida, CU Boulder, University of Delaware, and University of Miami Jewish students report far lower—though still significant—levels of antisemitic hostility.

Those that exhibited higher levels of antisemitic hostility were Boston University, Columbia, George Washington, NYU, OSU, Queens College, Cal, UCLA, UCSC, Michigan, Penn, and University of Wisconsin: all schools with higher levels of Jewish students. Most of the students polled experienced hostility toward Israel from other students; 30% reported encountering hostility toward Israel from faculty.

In a very small survey of students an Op-Ed writer in the Wall Street Journal queried 250 students who were saying “from the river to the sea” if they knew what it meant.

Nearly half of the students who embrace the slogan were able to name the river and the sea. Some of the alternative answers were the Nile and the Euphrates, the Caribbean, the Dead Sea and the Atlantic. Less than a quarter of these students knew who Yasser Arafat was (12 of them, or more than 10%, thought he was the first prime minister of Israel). Asked in what decade Israelis and Palestinians had signed the Oslo Accords, more than a quarter of the chant’s supporters claimed that no such peace agreements had ever been signed.

Would learning basic political facts about the conflict moderate students’ opinions? Of the 80 students who saw the map, 75% similarly changed their view.

A third group of students claimed the chant called for a Palestine to replace Israel. Sixty percent of those students reduced their support for the slogan when they learned it would entail the subjugation, expulsion or annihilation of seven million Jewish and two million Arab Israelis. You get the point: college students are using a phrase without understanding the geopolitics behind what they are screaming. But it rhymes!

Last night we watched as our Hanukkah candles burned brightly, all eight of them complemented by the shammash. Hanukkah is a time that represents our being here in a world where being here has never been easy. The lights that we add each night progressively promote the miracle of our being. More than the cruse of oil that the Maccabees found and our sages codified, our lighting the menorah is a symbol in our homes that we will continue to persist, whether people know about who we are and what we do or not.

Our diaspora community together with our brothers and sisters in Israel lit and brought light into the world. Many of the Hanukkah menorahs in the destroyed kibbutzim were rescued and lit. We are still bringing light into the world.

Shabbat Shalom.

**In Recognition of the Boards of Temple Sinai,  
Brotherhood and Women of Sinai**

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From the President

Happy New Year to every one of you! I hope you had an enlightening Hanukkah and are ready to start a new year of health and happiness and togetherness and of course peace.

Over the last six months, we have welcomed 32 new members to our Temple family. Our latest new member is Rabbi Ruth Adar who was the installing officer for Rabbi Novak and who lives in the Bay Area. Welcome, Rabbi Adar. We are so glad you have joined our other new members.....including Rhona Bader, Douglas Badger & John McDonald, Fred Bailey, Stephan & Martha Benoff, Steven Berger, Farla Binder, Marlene Binder, Minette Brown, Anita Charish, Danielle Cohen, Ben Farber and James Rateliff, Fred & Sherry Fern, Roy & Elizabeth Freedman, Flair Garrett, Rosanne Glassberg, Sonja & Danielle Hemple, Nikki Jacobson, Marvin Kanfer, Susan Kanfer, Barb Laws, Debbie & Barry Lipsett, Jerry Marks, Barry & Arlene Morgan, Michael & Phyllis Moscovich, Leah & Greg Papazian, Teri Prats, Sandra Richman, Richard Seigle, Stephen Weiss & Martin Frank, Richard Wortman & David Schreiber, and Shaw Zaidens & David Supornick. We hope to see all of you often!



**President Nancy Singer**

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You may have noticed that the large poster announcing our congregational trip to Israel in May 2024 is no longer in the lobby. Due to circumstances as they are in the Middle East, our trip has unfortunately been cancelled. We hope to be able to plan another trip in the future if the situation settles down.

We also had wanted to have a weekend Shabbaton with a prominent Jewish scholar this fiscal year but we don't have the funds for this. If you would like to help fund such an event, please contact me and if there is enough enthusiasm, perhaps we can raise the needed funds from our congregants.

In December, we inaugurated what we hope will be a fun first Wednesday evening of each month playing Bingo. 52 people had a great time! Please join us on Wednesday, January 3 at 6:30 pm for session # 2 and invite your friends to join you.

Our Board of Directors welcomed Marlene Lynn as a member of the Board. She is off to a great start with Emergency Preparedness and will present some important information to all congregants at a Special Congregational Meeting on Sunday morning, January 28. Come for coffee and bagels at 9:30 with the program beginning at about 10:00. This is for you.

Thanks to those who donated to our Israel Emergency Fund. We sent \$3,140 to the Federation from Temple Sinai.

Please spread the word to ladies in the other congregations in this valley about our Fashion Show luncheon on Friday, January 26. Last year's event was great, and we anticipate an equally enjoyable luncheon this year.

See you at the shul! (Toni, get well quickly!)

**Nancy**





TEMPLE SINAI PRESENTS

# BINGO NIGHT

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3 AT 6:30 PM

JOIN US FOR AN EVENING OF FUN & PRIZES  
GIVE US A CALL (760-568-9699) WE'LL SAVE YOU A SEAT

**\$18 FOR SINAI CONGREGANTS**

**\$20 ALL OTHERS**

**INCLUDES 8 CARDS PLUS COFFEE, DESSERTS & WINE**

(BYOB IF YOU WANT SOMETHING ELSE TO DRINK)

**ADDITIONAL CARDS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE**

**BRING YOUR FRIENDS AND YOUR DAUBERS**

(WE WILL ALSO HAVE DAUBERS FOR SALE FOR \$1.00 EACH.)



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## From the Educator

Shalom Temple Sinai Congregants, Families, and Students,

All of us at Temple Sinai Religious School want to wish you a successful end of 2023.

We are all looking forward to a peaceful and healthy year ahead.

Our school is currently on winter break.

December was a very busy month for our students, staff, and toddlers.

Talia Lizemer, Educator

On Friday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Temple Sinai hosted a Family Hanukkah Shabbat. Congregants and guests lit their own

Hanukkah menorahs while reciting the blessings. The service continued with Rabbi David Novak sharing a children's Hanukkah story.

On Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, Temple Sinai's Religious School held a Hanukkah Celebration. The students created their own dough menorah, listened to stories, and invited the parents and families to see their song and dance performance. It was followed by the older students' play retelling the story of Hanukkah. Of course, latkes and sufganiyot were enjoyed by all.

The toddlers attending Temple Sinai's Tot Shabbat program were also introduced to the holiday of Hanukkah, by sensory activities and games.

Hanukkah celebrates light over darkness. At Temple Sinai's Religious School, we teach our students that one of the Jewish laws around the celebration of Hanukkah is sharing light with others.

To spread the light, our students created Happy Holiday cards that were gifted to our dedicated custodians. Adrian and Ben go above and beyond to ensure that our sessions run smoothly, and that our teaching spaces are healthy, clean, and spotless. They both provide us with a comfortable learning environment, assist us with our snacks, and help move furniture around to accommodate the students and staff.

Our security guards were also shown appreciation, for their vigilance and dedication in keeping us safe. The students and staff acknowledged their unwavering commitment to our well-being and shared (through cards and gifts) that it does not go unnoticed.

Warmly,

Talia Lizemer-Hawley  
Congregational Educator



## Brotherhood Dinner & A Movie Thursday, January 18 5:30 PM

### “Tango Shalom”

An Orthodox rabbi enters a tango contest hoping the prize money will save his school from bankruptcy.

### Mediterranean Dinner

(Roast chicken, Greek salad, hummus & pita and dessert)

**\$25.00 per person**

Please call the temple office (760-568-9699) to RSVP.

## Temple Sinai Congregational Meeting

Sunday, January 28

Emergency Preparedness  
presentation by Marlene Lynn

Bagels 9:30  
Meeting 10:00

Come share your voice.



Freepik.com



## GENEROUS DONATIONS

### GENERAL FUND

#### Yahrzeit

**Samuel Benach**

**Adele Benach**

By: Jean Carrus

**Samuel Span**

By: Janet Ball

**Bernie Gusto**

By: Lynn Hannan

**Harold & Jean Solomon**

**Theodore Kaplan**

**Jerry Solomon**

By: Hannah Kaplan-Solomon

**Eric Cooperman**

By: Ethel Cooperman

**Steve Manning**

By: Reesa Manning

**Max Olshansky**

**Ray Olshansky**

By: Mitzie & Jack Olshansky

**Rose Kaplan**

By: Diane Kaplan-Berk

**Stanley Amdur**

**Florence Egendorf**

By: Judy Egendorf

#### IN HONOR OF

**Gail & Saul Jacobs' 175th Birthday**

By: Betty & Neil Colt

**The Speedy Recovery of Toni**

**Robinson**

By: Nancy Singer

Renée & Ron Partelow

#### IN MEMORY OF

**Lee Weinstein**

By: Hannah Kaplan-Solomon

**Thelma Brown Byers**

By: Lori & Michael Sanford

Mitzie & Jack Olshansky

**Lee Newman**

By: Ruth & Sidney Lapidus

Mitzie & Jack Olshansky

Rena Magged

Micki Greenspan

#### TZEDAKAH

Robert Beder

Deborah & Edward Benveniste

Diane Kaplan-Berk

Janet Ball

### RABBI AVI LEVINE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

#### Yahrzeit

**Dr. Brian Hill**

By: Rod Hill

#### IN MEMORY OF

**Lee Newman**

By: Fred Fabricant

### RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

#### IN HONOR OF

**Hanukkah Shabbat Service**

By: Jessica Prince & David Wilborn

#### IN MEMORY OF

**Rabbi Shimon Paskow**

By: Lynn Hannan & Glen Cox

**Shirley Ohringer**

By: Elizabeth & Sheldon Ohringer

#### TZEDAKAH

Elaine Eldred

### GAIL & SAUL JACOBS FOOD DELIVERY FUND

#### IN HONOR OF

**Gail & Saul Jacobs' 175th Birthday**

By: Miriam Spencer

Linda Rosenblatt

Diane Fohrman

Barbara & Bill Green

Micki Greenspan

Nancy Singer

Betty & Neil Colt

### CANTORIAL MUSIC FUND

#### IN MEMORY OF

**Lee Newman**

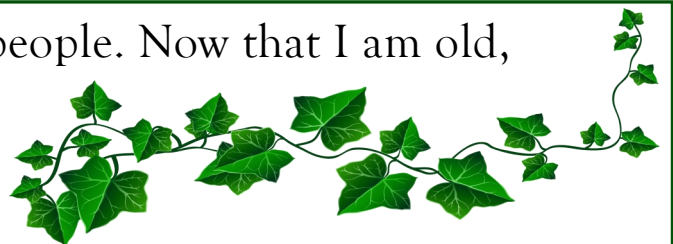
By: Lynn Hannan & Glen Cox

#### TZEDAKAH

Diane Kaplan-Berk

“When I was young, I admired clever people. Now that I am old,  
I admire kind people.”

– Abraham Joshua Heschel



# A Prayer for Israel in this Time of War

by Rabbi Naomi Levy

God, our Strength and Protection, we pray for the State of Israel in this devastating time of war, shock and grief. Our hearts are breaking, God. We pray for the lives of the innocent civilians who have been heartlessly kidnapped by Hamas, bring them home, watch over them, God. We pray for the lives of the soldiers who have been taken captive, we pray for their safe return, shelter them, God. We pray for the souls of the innocent victims who were brutally slaughtered. Send comfort and strength, God, to the grieving. Send healing to the injured, and strength and wisdom to their doctors and nurses. We pray for all our brothers and sisters in Israel in this time of tragedy and crisis.

Watch over Israel, God, spread Your shelter of peace over the land and over all our brothers and sisters who live there. Shine Your light upon Israel's leaders, officers and advisers, help them to overcome all divisiveness and to act with clarity and determination. Protect the men and women who defend Israel, let them be safe and may they be victorious over the Hamas terrorists who attacked our people. Watch over them, God. Hear their prayers. Bring peace, God. Let it rain down from the heavens like a mighty storm. Let it wash away all hatred and bloodshed. Peace, God, please, God.

God of the brokenhearted, God of the living, God of the dead, gather the souls of the victims into Your eternal shelter. Let them find peace in Your presence, God. Their lives have ended, but their lights can never be extinguished. May they shine on us always and illuminate our way.

Amen.

Brotherhood Nature Walk  
**Sunday, January 17 at 10:00 AM**  
Oswit Canyon

Meet at the parking area along South Palm Canyon Drive adjacent to the Canyon Heights neighborhood and the south trailhead for the S. Lykken Trail.

Please RSVP to Gordon Kramer at [gordeve@aol.com](mailto:gordeve@aol.com) so we do not miss you.



Photo credit: Theresa Sama

**Plumbing the Psalms for Healing, Comfort and Hope**

Jewish tradition includes 150 poems—known as “psalms”. Within these psalms people have found healing, comfort and hope. Beginning Thursday, January 18th at noon Rabbi Novak invites you to a seven week class.

No prior experience or Hebrew knowledge necessary. After the first week, we will read a psalm each week and start working on our own.

Join us on January 18 at noon in the social hall.



## **Birthdays**

1/2

Alicia Rodriguez

1/4

Alex Cassuto

1/5

Toni Robinson

1/7

Sharon Danoff-Burg

1/8

Hannah Solomon

1/9

Ann Loeb  
Clarice Lubel  
Ann Miller

1/10

David Schreiber

1/12

Roy Freedman

1/13

Rhona Bader

1/14

Gail Jacobs

1/15

Len Foster

1/16

David Bell

1/17

Noah Papazian  
Barbara Borden

1/20

Sandy Schachter

1/21

Resa Fremed

Diane Simon

Joan Wine

1/23

Karol Gordon

1/24

Rob Bernheimer

1/26

Nona Solowitz

1/28

Ron Borden  
Stephen Ezer

1/29

Andra Ready  
Evelyn Alden

1/30

Sharyn McKee

1/31

Mike Hankin

## **Anniversaries**

1/9

Carole & Robert Adelstein

1/14

Clarice & Gabe Lubel  
Ilene & Richard Harris





Women of Sinai Invites our community to a  
**Luncheon and Fashion Show**

Friday, January 26 at 12:00 PM at Temple Sinai.

Featuring the latest in stylish outfits  
from Shirley's Boutique El Paseo.

Doors open for pre-show shopping  
at 11:00 AM.

\$40 per person

This event sold out last year, so get  
your tickets early!



Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Number in party \_\_\_\_\_ Who would you like to sit with? \_\_\_\_\_

Pay by Check \_\_\_\_\_ Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration: \_\_\_\_\_ CCV \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Billing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Send checks payable to:

"Women of Sinai" ☆ Temple Sinai, 73251 Hovley Lane West ☆ Palm Desert, CA 92260  
or call the temple office 760-568-9699 for credit card payment.

**Sunday afternoon, March 17**

Concert by our own Wayne  
Abravanel and special guest  
rabbinical student  
Adina Lawson.

Check back here for details.

Brought to you by Women of Sinai and Brotherhood



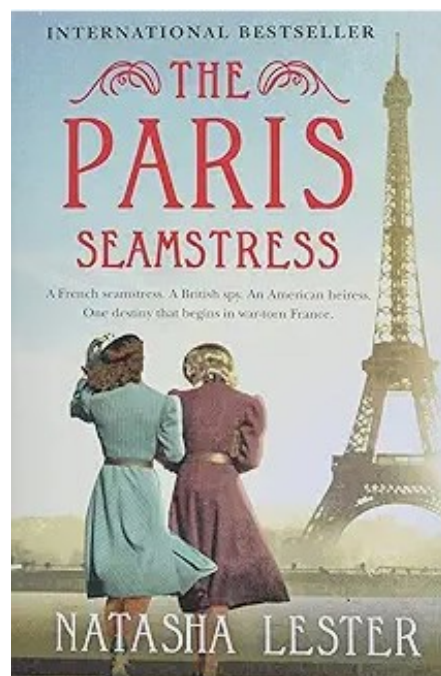
January's Women of Sinai Book Club Read:

## **The Paris Seamstress**

by Natasha Lester

Wednesday, January 17 at 10:30 AM

Fabienne Bissette journeys to the Met's annual gala for an exhibit featuring the work of her ailing grandmother Estella — a legend of women's fashion design who fled Europe in 1940. But as Fabienne begins to learn more about her beloved grandmother's past, she uncovers a story of tragedy, heartbreak and family secrets that will dramatically change her own life.



**A BELATED HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO RABBI NOVAK!**

**IN HONOR OF HIS BIRTHDAY, THE TEMPLE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMISSIONED A  
DRAWING OF HIS BEST GIRL BINAH.**

# January 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> Temple Office Closed 	<b>2</b> 	<b>3</b> Chair Yoga 10:30 Mah Jongg 1:00 Bingo Night 6:30 PM	<b>4</b> 	<b>5</b> Erev Shabbat Oneg 5:00 Service 5:30 Sanctuary & Livestream	<b>6</b> Torah Study 8:45 Shabbat Morning Service 10 AM <b>Chapel &amp; Zoom</b>
<b>7</b> No Religious School	<b>8</b> Temple Office Closed	<b>9</b> No Torah in Translation	<b>10</b> Chair Yoga 10:30 Mah Jongg 1:00	<b>11</b> 	<b>12</b> Erev Shab- bat Oneg 5:00 Service 5:30 Sanctuary & Livestream	<b>13</b> Torah Study 8:45 Shabbat Morning Service 10 AM <b>Chapel &amp; Zoom</b>
<b>14</b> No Religious School	<b>15</b> Martin Luther King Day  Temple Office Closed	<b>16</b> Torah in Trans- lation 4:00 on Zoom	<b>17</b> Book Club 10:30 Mah Jongg 1:00	<b>18</b> Psalms Class 12:00 Brotherhood Dinner/Movie 5:30 PM	<b>19</b> Erev Shab- bat Oneg 5:00 Service 5:30 Sanctuary & Livestream Guest: Jewish Family Services	<b>20</b> Torah Study 8:45 Shabbat Morning Service 10 AM <b>Chapel &amp; Zoom</b>
<b>21</b> Religious School Tu B'Shvat Seder 11:00 Brotherhood Nature Walk 10:00	<b>22</b> Temple Office Closed	<b>23</b> Torah in Trans- lation 4:00 on Zoom	<b>24</b> Chair Yoga 10:30 Mah Jongg 1:00	<b>25</b> Tu B'Shvat Psalms Class 12:00	<b>26</b> WOS Luncheon 12:00 Erev Shabbat Oneg 5:00 Service 5:30 Sanctuary & Livestream	<b>27</b> Torah Study 8:45 Shabbat Morning Service 10 AM <b>Chapel &amp; Zoom</b>
<b>28</b> Religious School 9:30 Congregational Meeting 10:00 (Bagels 9:30)	<b>29</b> Temple Office Closed	<b>30</b> Torah in Trans- lation 4:00 on Zoom	<b>31</b> Chair Yoga 10:30 Mah Jongg 1:00			



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