



SINAI BROOKLINE  
A VIBRANT AND INSPIRING  
JEWISH COMMUNITY

December 2025  
Kislev 5786  
Vol. LXXVIII  
Issue 4

# December Services

*NOTE: Join us for services in our Sanctuary OR by livestream video.  
Links to services can be found in our weekly Connect emails.*

Friday, Dec. 5	6:00 PM	Erev Shabbat Services with Jacob's Ladder Band
Saturday, Dec. 6	9:30 AM	Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class Service
Friday, Dec. 12	6:00 PM	Erev Shabbat Services with Shabbat@Six! Band
Saturday, Dec. 13	10:00 AM 10:30 AM	Tot Shabbat (in the Religious School) Shabbat Morning Services, including the Bar Mitzvah of Jonah Simchowitz
Friday, Dec. 19	6:00 PM	Erev Shabbat Services, followed by Chanukah Community Dinner (see details on p. 8)
Friday, Dec. 26	6:00 PM	Erev Shabbat Services

*Please note: Thursday, Dec. 25-Thursday, Jan. 1: The Temple Sinai Administrative Office will be closed.*

For a complete listing of upcoming events at Temple Sinai, go to our website: [www.sinaibrookline.org](http://www.sinaibrookline.org).



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[www.sinaibrookline.org](http://www.sinaibrookline.org)

Andrew Vogel SENIOR RABBI  
Talia Stein ASSOCIATE RABBI  
Jen Zak DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
Becca Sendor-Israel EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Frank Waldorf RABBI EMERITUS  
Erin Deemer PRESIDENT  
Paul Kelly ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT  
Nessa Goldhirsch Brown OPERATIONS COORDINATOR

*Please celebrate with us!*

**Temple Sinai's  
Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class  
Saturday, Dec. 6  
16 Kislev 5786  
9:30 a.m.  
Parashat Vayishlach**

*Marion Cohen  
Erin Deemer  
Tania Erlij  
Mneesha Gellman  
Daniel Harsha  
Justeen Hyde  
Tracy Moshe  
Jennifer Sullivan  
Caitlin Vaughn Schaffer  
Matt Weyant*

For over 15 months, the Adult B'nai Mitzvah class at Temple Sinai has been learning Hebrew, discovering the meanings of Jewish prayer, studying the Torah portion, and exploring our Jewish journeys as individuals. Please join us to celebrate our Adult B'nai Mitzvah with this special service, when we are called to the Torah.

Attend in person in the Sanctuary  
or remotely via Zoom

# Announcements

## From the Library Committee

Sinai Library is partnering with the Jewish Book Council to celebrate its 100th anniversary **Nov. 13-Dec. 14**. Look for our display table outside Weintraub with our “New-ish and Jew-ish” book selection. Participate in our Jewish Book Bingo competition (with book-related prizes), and put book, podcast, and film suggestions into our suggestion box on the display table. Stay tuned for a community reading event in early 2026!

Check out our library offerings in the Weintraub Community Room or online at [www.librarycat.org/lib/TempleSinaiBrookline](http://www.librarycat.org/lib/TempleSinaiBrookline).

## Weekly Sunday Afternoon Mah Jong

Join us to play at our weekly Sunday Sinai Mah Jong games! All who play are welcome to this friendly game. Come enjoy an afternoon of strategy, community, and enjoyment. Mah Jong sets will be provided, but feel free to bring your own set, and please bring your own card, if you have one. Whether you are a seasoned expert or still learning the game, you are welcome to join! If you are a complete novice, please contact **Robin Orwant** at [rorwant@gmail.com](mailto:rorwant@gmail.com) ahead of time. Please note: this is not a class for learning how to play the game.

## Our Rabbis Are Here for You

As your rabbis, we are here for you, as always, and we hope to be present with you in both times of joy as well as times of sadness. We hope we may offer support, express sympathy, join with you in prayer, celebrate with you, and otherwise be present for you in your life. **In the case of a death in your family**, please notify one of us, even if the funeral is out of town. Please contact us in the case of any kind of illness as well, so we may be helpful to you and your family.

Both our rabbis, Rabbi Andy Vogel and Associate Rabbi Talia Stein, are available for spiritual support for members in life cycle and life crisis moments, officiation at many life cycle events, and consultation on Jewish matters. Rabbi Vogel is often the primary contact in the case of a life event, and Rabbi Stein is also available. Please reach out to us. And, as always, our Caring Network volunteers are available to support you in a variety of ways—let us know how we may be helpful to you.

### How to Reach Rabbi Vogel and Rabbi Stein

**By phone:** Call the Temple Sinai office at 617-277-5888. Please leave a voicemail message if we are unavailable when you call. **By email:** Email us at [RabbiVogel@SinaiBrookline.org](mailto:RabbiVogel@SinaiBrookline.org) or [RabbiStein@SinaiBrookline.org](mailto:RabbiStein@SinaiBrookline.org). We check email regularly, but please call for more urgent matters. **To set up an appointment:** Please call or email either of us directly, or contact Paul Kelly, our administrative assistant, who schedules appointments for Rabbi Vogel. If you need to change an appointment, please call Paul Kelly in the Temple office. **In an emergency or a death in your family:** If outside regular office hours, please call Rabbi Vogel on his cell phone at 617-257-6848. (Email is less reliable in this instance.)

*Temple Sinai honors individual journeys of Judaism, joyfully embracing and connecting our members in community. We are enriched by engaging in lifelong study of Torah, seeking holiness through meaningful worship, and bringing justice, healing and caring to our world. We each aspire to deepen communication, broaden commitments, and gain inspiration bound only by the limits of our dreams.*

## Be Part of Temple Sinai's Caring Network—It's a Mitzvah!

Temple Sinai's Caring Network is made up of congregants who've agreed to be contacted when another member is facing an important life event—the birth or adoption of a child, a death in the family, or an illness or injury—and needs support. Our volunteers do a variety of tasks: they make phone calls, deliver meals, attend *shivas*, or help out with shopping or errands. Most tasks are **one time only** and volunteers can do as much or as little as they wish.

Our most frequent activity is **providing a meal**, and—although many committed members have signed up to help—given the frequency with which we provide meals (typically 2-4 times each month!), we sometimes have to scramble in order to meet the needs. If you haven't done so already, **please consider adding your name** to our volunteer list. Our goal is 100% member participation. If you're already on our list, **please consider responding** next time a request goes out. (While home-cooked meals are always appreciated, take-out is fine too, and reimbursement is available if needed.) We rely on our volunteers to care for our congregants and your actions are very much appreciated by the recipients.

The Caring Network coordinators are

- **Lissa Saidel-Goley** and **Marsha Canick** for those dealing with grief and mourning following a loss.
- **Sheri Iskenderian** for those experiencing issues related to illness and injury.
- **Marsha Canick** for families welcoming new children through birth or adoption.
- **Emma Reinhardt** writes notes and cards on our behalf.

**Joel Match** and **Jane Silberberg** chair the Caring Network. **Rabbi Andy Vogel** and **Rabbi Talia Stein** direct our activities. Have questions? Ready to sign up? Email us at [CaringNetwork@SinaiBrookline.org](mailto:CaringNetwork@SinaiBrookline.org).

## Temple Sinai CALENDAR LU'ACH

CONTENT EDITOR: Jane Ellin  
PRODUCTION EDITOR: Beth Winickoff

The deadline for material to be included in the Sinai Calendar/Lu'ach is the 1st of the previous month (email [news@sinaibrookline.org](mailto:news@sinaibrookline.org)). For advertising rates and information, please call the Executive Director, Becca Sandor-Israel.

Temple Sinai Calendar/Lu'ach Produced monthly by  
Temple Sinai, 50 Sewall Avenue, Brookline, MA 02446  
617-277-5888 • [sinaibrookline.org](http://sinaibrookline.org)

Member of the Union for Reform Judaism; affiliated with the Synagogue Council of Massachusetts

## Adult Learning

### Introduction to Judaism

Join us for a 16-session in-person course exploring Jewish life—holidays, life cycles, sacred texts, history, and more. Open to all, including interfaith couples, seekers, and anyone looking to deepen their Jewish learning. Contact Rabbinic Intern

Abi Oshins at [abi@sinaibrookline.org](mailto:abi@sinaibrookline.org) for more information.

Fee: \$275/individual \$375/couples. *We're committed to ensuring cost is never a barrier. Contact us for a confidential conversation about financial assistance.*

**16 Wednesdays, Jan. 14-May 13, 7:00-9:00 p.m.**



### Thursday Morning Study Group

*with Rabbi Andy Vogel and occasional guests*

Join us each Thursday for a lively and friendly class with Rabbi Vogel. We study a wide variety of topics, rotating to a new field of study about every six weeks or so. Thursday Study includes discussions, films, text study, and an occasional guest speaker. One of our December topics will be the poetry, music, Jewish journey, and life of pop composer Leonard Cohen. Join us each Thursday or feel free to drop in just once! All are welcome.

**Every Thursday, 10:15-11:45 a.m. (Note: No sessions on Dec. 25 or Jan. 1.) Both on Zoom and in-person in Weintraub. Contact the Temple office to be added to the email list for weekly and link.**

### Talmud Study Group: *Daf Shevui* (Weekly Page of Talmud)

This lively study group meets every Sunday to study one page of Talmud a week (*daf shevui*).

**Every Sunday, 9:00 a.m. Zoom only. Contact Karen Keely at [karen.keely@gmail.com](mailto:karen.keely@gmail.com) to be added to the weekly meeting email list.**

### Shabbat Morning Torah Study

*with Rabbi Andy Vogel or Rabbi Talia Stein*

Twice a month on Shabbat mornings, Temple Sinai members gather to discuss the ideas presented by the week's Torah portion. We begin with a light breakfast and singing and then explore the Jewish ideas that emerge from a section of the weekly Torah reading. No advance reading is necessary—all are welcome!

**In December: Saturdays, Dec. 13 & 27, 9:00-10:20 a.m. In-person in Weintraub Community Room or on Zoom. Zoom link published weekly.**

## Acknowledgements

### RABBI'S G'MILUT CHASADIM DISCRETIONARY FUND

In memory of Janice Newman by Barry D. Caplan

In memory of Mayor Paul by Rhea Paul

In memory of William Zall by Ina Cutler

In memory of Henry Kaplan by Paula Kaplan

In honor of RuthAnn Laster's birthday by Marsha Goldberg

In memory of Joseph Benjamin Berliner by Allen and Edwina Berliner

In appreciation of Rabbi Vogel by Deborah K. Greenberg

In appreciation of Rabbi Vogel by Ezra and Allison Hausman

### GENERAL FUND

In memory of Shirley Partoll by Dale Mathias

In memory of Robert Johnston by Merry Arnold

In memory of David Fisher by Rena and Michael Silevitch

In the memories of Alvin and Eva Glick by Lili Meisel

In memory of Sonia Singer by Simon Singer

In the memories of Ann Walowitz and Salomon Berenholz by Rochelle and Steven Seltzer

In memory of Edward Neumann by Peter and Hildy Neumann

In memory of Khava Rosa Schiller by Nelli Dorman

In appreciation of High Holy Days Services by Michael and Lynn Reichgott

### ADULT LEARNING FUND

In appreciation of Rabbi Vogel by Zita Samuels

### BUILDING FUND

Donation by Jonathan Heimberg

### DEENA BLAU CARING NETWORK FUND

In memory of Lucille Fine by Janet Fine and Larry Hardoon

In memory of Herbert A. White by Charlotte Alkon

### EDUCATION FUND

In memory of Rhoda S. Ober by Elaine Ober

### MUSIC, PRAYER, & RITUAL FUND

In honor of Josephine Mullins's Brit Bat by Benjamin Gerson

### THURER SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE FUND

In memory of Rose Thurer by Robert and Shari Thurer

# Religious School

## Sunday Religious School classes for Grades K-7

Dec. 7, 14, & 21, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

*No Religious School on Sundays, Dec. 28 or Jan. 4 due to Winter Break.*

## Tuesday Religious School classes for Grades 3-6

Dec. 2, 9, & 16, 4:00-5:30 p.m. (2:30 dropoff option)

*No Religious School on Tuesdays, Dec. 23 or 30 due to Winter Break.*

## K'tonton for 3- and 4-year-olds

Sunday, Dec. 7, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. (early dropoff at 9:30 a.m. and late pickup at 12:30 p.m. are available)

This fun, interactive drop-off program for 3- and 4-year olds introduces children to Jewish holidays and practices through arts and crafts, songs, stories, and games. It's a great way to introduce your child to the joy of Jewish learning. Free and open to both members and nonmembers of Temple Sinai. Led by teacher Karen Halfon, who has been teaching K'tonton for more than 20 years.

## Tot Shabbat

Saturday, Dec. 13, 10:00 a.m. in Religious School

Families with children ages 0-5 are warmly invited to join our Rabbinic Intern Abi Oshins for a tot-friendly Shabbat service followed by a light Kiddush nosh. Together we'll sing Shabbat songs, learn prayers, read stories, and play!

## B'Yachad Havdalah and Journeys Program for Grade PreK-7 Families

Sunday, Dec. 14, 9:30 a.m.

Join us as a family to explore this year's theme of *Machloket L'Shem Shamayim*: disagreement for the sake of heaven. We'll consider the theme from a different perspective as we engage ideas from how we disagree in community to how we approach difficult conversations. We begin at 9:30 in the Sanctuary for B'yachad Havdalah with singing and prayer. At 10:00, adults learn with our rabbis and then participate in learning activities with their children. Come experience our school, meet other families, and model Jewish learning as a family.

## Chanukah Party & Latke Competition!

Sunday, Dec. 14, 5:00-6:30 p.m. (see details on p. 8)

## Sinai Singers

Sinai Singers is a friendly group who loves the joy of making music together. We rehearse on the first and third Tuesday evening of every month. No audition - if you love to sing, please join us! Contact

**Laurie Lasky** at [laurie4kdz@gmail.com](mailto:laurie4kdz@gmail.com) for more info.

**December meetings: Tuesdays, Dec. 2 (in Weintraub) & Dec. 16 (in Ehrenfried), 7:00-9:00 p.m.**

## From a Member: Thinking About High School? Learn More About Gann Academy!

If you're exploring high school options for your child, I'd love to share my experience with Gann Academy. My family has absolutely loved being part of the Gann community—it's an extraordinary place where students are both intellectually challenged and deeply supported. Gann combines outstanding academics with a warm, inclusive Jewish environment, incredible teachers, and a strong sense of values and community. Students at Gann build lifelong friendships, develop confidence as thinkers and leaders, and engage meaningfully with Jewish life in ways that feel relevant and inspiring. The school also offers exceptional arts and athletics programs and a focus on real-world learning through travel and community engagement.

If you'd like to learn more or have any questions about what makes Gann so special, please feel free to reach out to me, **Rachel Rubin**, at [rubin@sparkadmissions.com](mailto:rubin@sparkadmissions.com).

## Yahrzeits

Yakov Agmon	Leonid Dorman
Sidney Mark Alper	Morris Dubrow
Edward Axelrod	Joseph Egdal
Kenneth Balk	Nancy Ellin
David Joseph Bell	Ruth Essinfeld
Robert Berenholz	Jay Finkelstein
Robert Bookstein	Frances Stark Frankel
Nathaniel Brown	Helga Franks
Otis Brown	Abraham Friedman
Phyllis Cohen	Victor Friedman
Ruth Cohen	Robert Garber
Helen Weiss Colton	Edward Gartman
Betsy Storoff Corrin	Israel Gesmer
Herbert David	Lawrence Goodman
Rose dela Paz	Mel Gray
Donald Dennis	
Leonard Devine	

cont. on p. 7

## In Our Lives

We are very sorry to inform you of the death of SallyJane Dweir, mother of our member Dawn Effron, who passed away on Oct. 16 in Lindenhurst, NY. She was 96 years old. We offer our condolences to Dawn, her husband Morris, and to their entire family. May SallyJane's memory be for a blessing.

We are very sorry to inform you of the death of Judy Johanssen, grandmother of our member Glynnis Santeramo, who passed away on Oct. 20. She was 86 years old and passed away peacefully. We offer our condolences to Glynnis and to her entire family. We pray that Glynnis and her family will find comfort and strength as they remember her.

We are happy to inform you of the birth of Mac Leifer on Oct. 9 to Brooke and Alex Leifer. We celebrate with Brooke, Alex, and big sister Mia, and we wish them *mazel tov!*

## Bar Mitzvah

Jonah Simchowitz  
Bar Mitzvah  
Saturday, Dec. 13, 2025



Jonah Simchowitz is a 7th grader at Lawrence School in Brookline. When his head's not buried in a novel, he can usually be found building (and then admiring) a Lego set, beating his parents in ping pong, working on his classical repertoire on violin, or listening to rock and roll. He's (usually) a great big brother to Ari, with whom he enjoys watching and playing baseball. For his Tikkun Olam project, he's planning a food drive to benefit those impacted by food insecurity.

## Yahrzeits, cont. from p. 6

Dr. Wesley Green	Shoshanah Lederer	Marylin Rodenstein	Mina Velloo Kuttie
Gertrude Greenfield	Aaron Levin	Jacob Roseman	Karen Lebow Wassman
Anthony Grieco	Julius Daniel Lewis	Lillian Rosen Corson	Frances Sims Weinograd
Frances Kaminsky Grossman	Bernard Lofchie	Gerald Rosenstrach	Arlene Weintraub
Roberta Grossman	Estelle Lurio	Robert Roy, Jr.	Joseph White
Opal Levitt Hamburger	Herbert Lurio	Sima Rubin	Gertrude Winitzer
Adeline Heimberg	Lucille Cohen Lurio	Lewis William Ruttenberg	Eugene Winters
Albert Henick	Mitchell Lurio	Marc Saidel	Hattie Wolfe
Susan Henkels	Rosalyn Malin	Marie Salamone	Chana Yaschik
Dorothy Holmes	Louis Marks	Edward Sandell	Blossom Ruth Zabarsky
Harry Horowitz	Sherman Marks	Marguerite Santeramo	Jeannette Zall
Dolly Hughes	Sylvia Match	Susan Schneider	Phillip Zall
Charles Isenberg	Thomas McCarthy	Flora Schneidman	Betty Zelouf
Fred Jacobs	Marilyn McLaughlin	Sidney Schnure	
Julius Kaplan	Yolanta Melamed	Sylvia Hillman Schwartz	
Leah Gordon Kaplan	Rose Mezer	Ester Schwartzberg	
Eleanor Kates	Kalliammal Muthu Kannu	Ruth Seltzer	
Phyllis Katz	Don Nimon	Milton Shafran	
Seymour Katz	Kurt Odenheimer	Daniel Sheingold	
Abraham Kauffman	Reuven Opher	Mollie Sibley	
Rose Kauffman	Edward Oppenheim	Jeanne Smith	
Roy Kern	Ida Ostroy	John Smith	
Manya Blacher Kirstein	Eric Palace	Julius "Jay" Sokolow	
Joseph Klein	George Paulson	Maurice Spack	
Richard Klein	Myron Perlman	Maxwell Sugarman	
Rose Rosencranz Kligerman	Jacob J. Polansky	Fannie Ziskind Swareman	
Wayne Kliman	Abraham Poley	Edward Tolkoff	
Zackariah (Zak) Korf	Leonard Puglia	Ethel Toll	
Hannah Kramer	Leon Radin	Beatrice Trachtenberg	
Sara Ruth Krantz	Josephine Reed	Irving Trachtenberg	
Robert Kroin	Marjorie Wolfe Roberts	Glen Trimble	
Glenn Lasky	Mimi Robins	Michael Troderman	





*A Vibrant and Inspiring  
Jewish Community*

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## Celebrate Chanukah at Temple Sinai!

### Chanukah Party & Latke Competition

Sunday, Dec. 14, 5:00-6:30 p.m.

Candle-lighting at 5:00 p.m.

Join the Temple Sinai community as we welcome the first night of Chanukah together! We'll light candles, sing festive songs, play dreidel, enjoy latkes, and more. All ages are invited to celebrate and connect. Don't forget to sign up for our latke competition—bring your most delicious or creative latke! Light refreshments will be served.



*Scan this QR code to register  
for the latke competition!*



### Chanukah Community Dinner

Friday, Dec. 19, 7:15 p.m.

following Erev Shabbat Services



*Scan this QR code to register for the  
Community Dinner by Wed., Dec. 17!*

Celebrate Shabbat with your Sinai community. Join us at 6:00 p.m. for our Erev Shabbat Services. Afterward, we will enjoy a catered Shabbat meal, and come together to connect as a community. All ages are welcome. Please register for the dinner by Wednesday, Dec. 17, using the QR code at left.